

Cafeteria Plan of Suggested Service Initiatives



A new **"hands-on" service project** can energize and give purpose to a Lions club. Projects that help people:

- revitalize club membership by focusing on measurable outcomes;
- address unmet community needs;
- create community appreciation for the Lions "We Serve" philosophy.

Featured below are **10 service initiatives** that are easy to sponsor and have proven successful for Lions clubs. Your Lions club can select from this "cafeteria menu" of possibilities or adapt a project to meet the specific needs of your community.

1. Environment projects

Plant trees to provide shade and beauty. Plant one tree for each club in the district. Or, plant one tree for every club member. Name the site Lions Park or Lions Grove.

Plant shade trees, palm trees, fruit trees, or other trees suitable to your climate. The planting of trees can provide an enduring and attractive addition to the community.

Adopt a highway, park, school, river, stream, or other community site. Commit to keeping the area clean. This environment project can be a high-visibility, "hands-on" Lions club project.

2. Literacy projects

Collect books, puzzles, educational toys, videotapes, and audiotapes for children. Work with local businesses, libraries, and schools. Request donations and ask to use their facilities as drop-off locations.

On each recycled item, affix a sticker that reads: *Another project of your local Lions club.* Recycle and distribute the educational materials to: children from low-income families; social service agencies; and children who are recent immigrants or refugees and are learning to read a new language.

3. Partnerships for children "at risk"

Assist children in adverse circumstances by establishing local partnerships to: provide food, clothing, or medical attention; facilitate services through social agencies or places of worship; and support local vocational programs.

4. Children's eye screening initiative

As a club World Sight Day project, provide free vision screenings and eyeglasses for local children. Work with your local school system.

Provide eye screening services to children who are recent immigrants or who are members of refugee families.

5. Healthy youth

In developed countries, childhood and adolescent obesity are on the rise. Sponsor a youth sports team or spoils tournament to promote physical fitness and healthy living among young people.

6. Helping hands for youth

Sponsor local youth groups such as Boy or Girl Scouts. Invite these young people to assist with club activities and fundraisers to encourage community service.

Some school systems require the completion of community service hours prior to graduation. By working with Lions, young people can fulfill their community service requirement.

7. Vocational guidance

Invite a secondary school student **to** your work place. The experience will provide the student with a "first-hand" look at a possible career choice. This form of vocational guidance can be expanded to include the adopt-a-buddy mentoring program.

8. Adopt-a-buddy mentoring program

Provide career guidance for a young person in secondary school. Meet with the student at least once each month for a year. Allow the student to learn about your profession. Lions mentors can encourage young people to achieve career goals.

9. Lions outreach initiatives

- Collect and recycle used clothing for men, women and children. Include coats and winter clothing.
- Enter into partnerships with manufacturers that provide surplus clothing and shoes to non-profit organizations.
- Donate vitamins and powdered milk to needy families.
- Contact local businesses such as banks or dry cleaners. Ask if they will serve as drop-off locations for used eyeglasses.
- Ask local businesses or individuals to provide project funding whenever necessary.

10. Bikes-for-life

Bicycles and tricycles (including those for the disabled) provide basic transportation. Ask local bicycle shops to serve as donation centers for used bicycles. Next, ask shop owners to sell bicycle parts to your club at a discounted price. Working together, Lions of all ages can repair used bicycles, tricycles, and even wagons. The club can donate these recycled items to a needy adult or child.