12 Ways to Fight Poverty in Your Community

There are so many different ways in which we can fight poverty in our community. Here are just a few suggestions of both long-term and short-term solutions that you can implement in your area.

1. Educate Yourself

A nationwide lack of affordable housing, sad state of public education, lack of public transportation systems linking commercial and residential neighborhoods, racial injustice, domestic violence, and policies restricting contraception all contribute to an endless cycle of poverty that pervades every state in this country. By reading and education yourself, you can strengthen your understanding of anti-poverty aspects of workers' rights, immigrants' rights, women's rights, reproductive justice, environmental justice and economic human rights movements.

2. Take Legislative Action (sections originally published on www.Change.org)

Citizen-driven resources like GovTrack.us. Support national and local non-profits such as the National Low-Income Housing Coalition and the Washington State Jewish Action Center in their efforts to develop and drive anti-poverty legislation in areas such as affordable housing and education, living wages, food security, universal healthcare, child care, Gulf Coast recovery, adult literacy, early childhood education, prisoner re-entry, and sanctuary for undocumented workers.

3. Donate

You can donate food, money, clothing, toiletry items, old furniture, toys and magazines.

4. Volunteer

You can volunteer with kids, families, the elderly, the disabled, the homeless, women, and the mentally ill; in shelters, soup kitchens, community centers, after school programs, and employment centers. You can teach literacy, resume development, job training courses, ESL, computer class, coach sports, serve food, and provide counseling.

5. Join a Campaign

There are a number of different local and national campaigns that you can join to help combat poverty. Even better, you can ask your local synagogue, church, youth group, community center, workplace, or school to do the same. Locally, you can get involved with Focus and Fight Poverty, Seattle International Human Rights Coalition, and Real Change News. Nationally, you can get involved with Fighting Poverty with Faith; CARE: Defending Dignity, Fighting Poverty; The ONE Campaign; and End Poverty 2015.

6. Organize a Rally

A rally is great way to raise awareness about homelessness in your community. A large gathering of people shows solidarity for a cause, and is a great way to get the attention of the media, businesses, local legislature, and other concerned community members. For more information on how you can organize a rally, check out: http://www.dosomething.org/actnow/actionguide/organize-a-rally

7.Hold a Benefit Concert

A concert is a great way to raise a good deal of money to help combat poverty, and if the music is good, it can draw a huge crowd! For more tips on how to plan a benefit concert, check out: http://www.dosomething.org/actnow/actionguide/how-organize-a-benefit-concert

8. Host a 5k Run

A 5k run is great way to heighten awareness, get the community involved in something constructive, and raise money to donate towards poverty initiatives. For a guide on how to host your own 5k run, take a look at: http://www.dosomething.org/actnow/actionguide/how-host-5k-run-your-cause

9. Write or Start a petition

Petitions are fantastic ways to create change in your local government or neighborhood. You can choose to fight a bad policy, or create a good one. You can write your own petition, or help to propagate one already in existence. For more tips, check out: http://www.dosomething.org/actnow/actionguide/writestart-a-petition

10. Write an Article

An article to your local newspaper about homelessness in your community is a great way to spread the word, and to personalize the matter with statistics and facts that hit close to home. And not only will you educate others, you will also learn a lot in the process. For article-writing and information-gathering tips, check out: http://www.dosomething.org/actnow/actionguide/write-article

11. Put Up Posters on Campus

If you want to educate your fellow students, try getting approval to hang posters with facts and statistics about homelessness and poverty around your school's campus. Facts that hit close to home are one of the best ways to mobilize individuals to make a difference. Don't forget to include ideas for ways to take action!

12. Donate Leftovers

Ever notice how much leftover food is thrown away in your school or workplace cafeteria every day? Try speaking to your school or office administration to find a way to donate all of that leftover food to a local shelter or food bank. There is no need to waste so much when so many people are hungry. Check out http://feedingamerica.org/ to find a food bank that will take leftover food donations, and http://www.foodlifeline.org/hunger/solutions/seattlestable.html to donate leftover food in the Seattle area.

Sources: www.Change.org, www.DoSomething.org

- See more at: http://www.jewishinseattle.org/programs-initiatives/focus-fight/resources/12-ways-fight-poverty#sthash.hpHxBcyr.dpuf