

Connection Kit
November 2024

What's in the November Kit?

The theme this month is *From Me to You*. Winston Churchill once said, "We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give." Volunteering makes an immeasurable difference in people's lives. Research has also shown that volunteering offers significant health benefits. It improves physical and mental health. It provides a sense of purpose and teaches valuable skills. And it nurtures new and existing relationships.

This month's Kit helps your company, teams, individuals and families tap into all the benefits that volunteering provides. The Kit includes:

- These **Instructions**, with all the details and how-tos.
- A **Microsoft Word flyer** that you can customize to whatever level you desire. All colors, fonts and text can be modified. If you choose to offer a benefit (such as paid time off) or want to encourage team participation, you can modify the flyer accordingly. If you want to keep this at an individual level, you can use the pre-made **PDF flyer** that is ready to go.
- An **article** entitled "How Volunteering Can Help Your Mental Health." This provides excellent context, especially for your leadership team, around how the simple act of serving others can help all of us improve our own mental health while transforming the lives of others.

How Can I Use It?

The materials are here for you to use in whatever way makes sense for your organization. Here are some things to consider.

- **Objective:** How would you like to orient the kit? Do you want to leverage it to bring teams together? To help people find purpose and achieve better mental health? As an opportunity to teach the next generation? The content can be tailored to fit your needs.
- **Promotion:** there are many ways to get the word out to your employees. Here are a few suggestions.
 - Post on your intranet
 - Introduce in a Town Hall or company meeting
 - Post flyers on restroom doors (Stall Talkers)
 - Email to all employees
 - Post a QR code that links to the flyer by your time clock, employee break room, etc.
 - Ask team leaders to encourage participation and share their own volunteer experiences during team meetings.

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- **Participation:** Determine if and how you want to encourage group participation or reflection. For example:
 - You could provide a pre-determined amount of paid time off for individuals to volunteer.
 - You could provide time off for teams to volunteer together. If teams need guidance choosing an organization, work with [Heart of West Michigan United Way](#) or [United Way of the Lakeshore](#) to identify options.
 - Your teams could each pick an organization that they want to support and come together outside of work hours to serve.
 - You could invite employees to reflect on the ways their volunteer experiences this month have helped reframe their own perspectives on life.
 - You could invite employees to post notes on a bulletin board about what they learned through volunteering.
 - You could encourage employees to adopt this practice with their families, and reflect on positive things together.

Provide Feedback!

We would love to know how you're using the Kit. Tell us how you implemented it, what your employees thought about it, what you loved, or what we could do to make it better. Visit our website and complete the [feedback form](#) to share your thoughts.

Reminders: When and Where Are the Kits Available?

- **Early Bird Access:** Wellness Foundation newsletter subscribers will receive an email each month that contains the Connection Kit materials. We'll send them out approximately two weeks in advance of the targeted implementation month. Know someone who should be on the list? They can subscribe on our [website](#).
- **Anytime Access:** each kit will be uploaded to our [website](#) one week after it is emailed to subscribers. So you'll always have access to all the Connection Kits, even if you missed the email distribution or want to go back later and re-use something.

About North Ottawa Wellness Foundation

The North Ottawa Wellness Foundation is a council of community partners dedicated to facilitating sustainable wellness for our community.

Since 2017, we have worked together through our member organizations to improve health in the overall population. Our collaborative members have implemented many programming changes to help move the health needle in their own constituent groups. Over time, that work is having an impact. Learn more and find additional resources at northottawawellnessfoundation.org.

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