



OPPORTUNITY TO RECRUIT YOUNGER MEMBERS

The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul is blessed with the dedication of long-serving members whose compassion continues to guide our mission. As our work grows, younger volunteers can play an important role by supporting a variety of tasks that strengthen our service to neighbours in need. Their energy and new perspectives complement the wisdom and Vincentian experience of long-standing members, creating a meaningful intergenerational partnership.

Younger volunteers can assist in many ways, including:



- **Digital tasks:** helping with email, online meetings, social media, or simple updates to the Members Portal
- **Community outreach:** parish presentations, awareness initiatives, and social justice campaign
- **Event support:** food drives, clothing collections, fundraising dinners, and seasonal projects
- **Creative projects:** designing posters, videos, or social media content that highlights our impact
- **Direct service:** participating in home visits (age 18+ with training)
- **Prayer & spiritual support:** leading prayer intentions or preparing reflection materials

We encourage Conferences and Councils to connect with local schools, parish youth groups, campus ministries, and young professionals seeking meaningful volunteer opportunities. Welcoming younger volunteers helps ensure our mission remains vibrant, compassionate, and strong for years to come.



GUIDE FOR CONFERENCES AND COUNCILS

Engaging Younger Volunteers to Support SSVP Members



1. Why Involve Younger Volunteers?

- Many long-time SSVP members bring wisdom and compassion but may need help with **digital tools**.
- Younger volunteers can **assist** with data entry, communications, and technology.
- This creates **intergenerational collaboration**, strengthens community ties, and prepares the Society for the future.

2. Identify Tasks for Youth Volunteers

Keep the tasks clear, manageable, and mission-driven. Examples:

- Entering data into the **Members Portal**
- **Updating** contact lists and documents
- **Assisting** with parish bulletins, posters, or social media posts
- **Helping** with food drives, fundraising events, or deliveries
- Providing one-on-one “**tech buddy**” support for members

3. Where to Find Younger Volunteers

- **Parishes:** Announcements at Mass, parish bulletins, or youth/confirmation groups.
- **Schools and Universities:** Contact guidance counselors, campus ministries, or student service programs (many require volunteer hours).
- **Community Channels:** Local volunteer centres, social media, or websites like Volunteer Canada and CharityVillage.
- **Word of Mouth:** Encourage members to ask children, grandchildren, or friends.

4. How to Invite Them

- Use simple, youth-friendly language: “**Help us with tech and make a difference in your community**”.
- Emphasize **flexibility**: 1–2 hours a week or project-based tasks.
- Highlight **benefits**: volunteer hours, skill-building, meaningful service.
- Share flyers or short posts (a one-pager is included separately).



5. Organize and Support Volunteers

- Assign a **point person** (a member who welcomes and guides youth).
- **Start small:** pair one youth volunteer with one or two members.
- Provide a quick **orientation** on SSVP's mission and confidentiality guidelines.
- Create a **task list or checklist** so expectations are clear.
- **Offer encouragement and recognition** — thank them at meetings, parish announcements, or with reference letters.

6. Build Relationships

- Treat younger volunteers as **partners**, not just helpers.
- Encourage members to share their experiences of serving the poor — this deepens **youth engagement**.
- Invite them to participate in occasional SSVP activities beyond tech support, so they feel **connected to the mission**.

7. Sustain the Effort

- **Keep communication open:** ask youth what tasks they enjoy and what skills they'd like to develop.
- **Celebrate success stories** to inspire others (e.g., *"With the help of student volunteers, our Council updated all membership records this year!"*).
- **Encourage ongoing involvement:** some youth may become future Vincentians.

Key Takeaway

Bringing in younger volunteers is not only about technology — it is about **building bridges across generations** and ensuring the Society's mission continues with fresh energy and committed hearts.





CHECKLIST: ENGAGING YOUNGER VOLUNTEERS

For SSVP Conferences & Councils

1. Prepare

- Identify tasks youth can do:** List specific, practical activities such as data entry, helping with the Members Portal, creating flyers, supporting food drives, or assisting with events. This makes it clear where their help is most needed.
- Choose a member as the point person:** Assign one Vincentian to welcome youth, answer questions, and guide them through their tasks. Having a friendly contact helps youth feel valued and supported.
- Create a simple task list or checklist:** Provide step-by-step instructions or a weekly outline of responsibilities so youth volunteers know exactly what is expected of them.

2. Recruit

- Ask parishes to place an announcement in the bulletin / at Mass:** Keep it short and clear — emphasize that youth can help with technology and service projects.
- Reach out to Catholic schools, universities, or campus ministries:** Many students need volunteer hours or are seeking service opportunities rooted in faith.
- Contact local volunteer centres or post on social media:** Use community volunteer boards and parish Facebook pages to reach youth outside the parish.
- Encourage members to invite family or friends:** Personal invitations from trusted adults often lead to the most reliable volunteers.

3. Invite Effectively

- Use simple language:** Instead of formal wording, say “*Help us with tech and make a difference in your community.*” This is more inviting to youth.
- Emphasize small time commitment:** Clarify that even 1–2 hours a week can make a real impact, so the commitment feels manageable.
- Highlight benefits:** Mention volunteer hours, resume-building, new skills, and the satisfaction of helping others.
- Share flyers or one-pagers:** Use visual, youth-friendly materials (like posters or handouts) to capture attention quickly.

4. Welcome & Support

- Provide a short orientation:** Explain SSVP’s mission, confidentiality expectations, and the importance of their role in serving others.
- Pair youth with one or two members:** Encourage teamwork by matching youth with experienced members for guidance and relationship-building.
- Be clear on tasks and expectations:** Avoid confusion by setting out what needs to be done, when, and how.
- Offer encouragement and appreciation:** Regularly thank them, recognize their efforts at meetings, and ensure they feel part of the team.

5. Build & Sustain

- Invite youth to join occasional SSVP events:** Beyond tech help, encourage participation in food drives, visits, or community events so they feel connected to the mission.
- Recognize their contributions publicly:** Highlight their help in parish bulletins, newsletters, or meetings to show appreciation.
- Ask for feedback on what they enjoy:** Listen to what youth find rewarding and adjust tasks so they remain motivated.
- Share success stories to inspire more volunteers:** Celebrate and share how youth involvement has strengthened your Conference or Council.

Key Reminder: Younger volunteers are more than helpers — they are partners in service and potential future Vincentians.

Next Step: Adapt this checklist for your Conference or Council and start inviting youth today!