

HOW YOU CAN HELP DURING THE CORONAVIRUS

The number one thing you can do to help is to stay home and reduce the spread of germs. But if you'd like to do more, and most of us do, here is a list of local and national non-profits with information on how you can support them. We also have a few suggestions on helping your local communities and some creative ideas as well. This list is by no means all-inclusive, but we hope you will find it helpful!

Local Nonprofits

Alzheimer's & Dementia Alliance of Wisconsin (ADAW): Provides support and resources to families impacted by Alzheimer's and other dementia. The disruption of the covid-19 crisis has had significant impacts on ADAW and their ability to meet the increasing needs of individuals with dementia and their caregivers. [You can donate here.](#)

Catholic Charities of La Crosse: Works with individuals, families and communities to help meet their needs, address issues, eliminate oppression and build a just and compassionate society. In partnership with the Salvation Army they have opened a community warming center. This center allows for more space to keep a social distance. They are currently taking donations for food, cleaning supplies, and monetary. [You can donate here.](#)

Dane County Farmers' Market and Fairshare CSA Coalition: These two organizations have partnered to establish a crowd-funding campaign. They hope to raise money to assist farms and food producers whose incomes have been impacted by covid-19. The covid-19 crisis is causing disruption to food systems. Small farms and food producers operate within tight margins such that a disruption to their business can cause financial hardship. Farmers who sell directly to consumers at farmers' markets and to institutions like schools and restaurants are facing cancellations and closures that reduce or eliminate their income. [You can donate here.](#)

Dane County Humane Society: Animals need care during this difficult time too! If you are able, now is a great time to adopt. If you are interested and able, please visit their [website](#) to see animals currently available. In addition to adoption, they are also seeking monetary donations to continue to provide critical care to the community animals currently. [You can donate here.](#)

Domestic Abuse Intervention Services (DAIS): For women who are experiencing domestic violence, mandatory lockdowns to curb the spread of covid-19 have trapped them in their homes with their abusers, isolated from the people and the resources that could help them. Mandated social distancing plus a possible recession puts domestic abuse victims in an even more precarious position than usual. This organization offers a free and confidential 24-hour helpline. [You can donate here](#) to support this critical work.

Feed to Go: Collaboration by the Boys and Girls Club of Dane County, FEED Kitchens, and Selfless Ambition alongside the North Side Planning Council (NPC) to serve families impacted by job loss and school closures as a direct result of covid-19. This program allows those in need to stop by a neighborhood center to pick up a free meal, go home and heat it up to enjoy. [You can donate here.](#)

Goodman Community Center: Although the center has closed its building to the public, they continue to serve the community through various drive-up food pantries, neighborhood dinner deliveries and more. Distributing meals from community center vans at select locations throughout the Madison community. They are also offering drive-through grocery pick up or grocery delivery for seniors. Food pantry services will continue to be offered in a drive-through delivery method. [You can donate here.](#)

Habitat for Humanity: Many Habitat families are working on the frontlines – stocking shelves to make sure the community has supplies, preparing and delivering food, working in critical childcare environments, and even serving in some of the local clinics and hospitals. Other Habitat families are being adversely affected as their work hours are being reduced or cut completely. Habitat is aiming to stabilize both families and communities as a whole. They are seeking monetary donations to help ease the financial burden for homeowners impacted by covid-19. Dane County Chapter – [you can donate here](#). La Crosse Area Chapter – [you can donate here](#).

Porchlight Madison: Strives to reduce homelessness in Dane County by collaborating with the community to provide shelter, affordable housing, and supportive services that eliminate barriers and empower the individuals and families served. Porchlight is in need of the following items: grocery store or Walgreen’s gift cards, surgical masks, and gloves (size large and/or extra-large). These items can be dropped off at their location on N. Brooks Street in Madison or [you can donate here](#).

La Crosse Area Emergency Response Fund: The La Crosse Community Foundation, Great Rivers United Way, and several other generous business and individual supporters have come together to create the La Crosse Area Emergency Response Fund to rapidly deploy resources to charitable organization at the frontline of the covid-19 outbreak in the La Crosse area. [You can donate here](#).

Lussier Community Education Center: A place for people from different walks of life to come together, share gifts, and build community. Many children and families utilize the center for after school activities. The center also offers a food pantry, school supply drive, and holiday gift program. The center is looking for donations to help families in need during this difficult time. [You can donate here](#).

Open Doors for Refugees: Volunteer group to help refugees make a home in the Madison area. Working with refugees from the time they arrive through their first several years here. Providing interpreter services, transportation, cultural orientation, and employment services. They are seeking donations for household items, gift cards for grocery stores, or monetary. [You can donate here](#).

Salvation Army Wisconsin: Remains committed to doing the most good for neighbors in need, especially now due to the response of the coronavirus pandemic. Donations will help fund extra feeding programs, extra cleaning supplies and provide more community outreach. [You can donate here](#).

Sauk Prairie Food Pantry: The food pantry serves all residents within the Sauk Prairie School District that are in need of urgent food assistance. If you are interested in helping out while maintaining social distancing, you can sponsor a meal or meals for those in need. The food pantry is coordinating efforts for any open restaurant in the Sauk Prairie community to offer meal coupons. These coupons are being numbered and tracked and will be handed out by the Sauk Prairie Food Pantry, 6:8, and many other local organizations participating in this effort. If you are interested in sponsoring a meal(s) email: stephmzeman@gmail.com.

Second Harvest Food Bank of Southern Wisconsin: Developed a Care Box campaign to distribute boxes of food to those facing hunger during this national emergency. They are seeking financial donations to help offset the increased costs as a result of the additional community needs. [You can donate here](#).

United Way of Dane County: In collaboration with the Boys and Girls Club of Dane County and Selfless Ambition has developed the Dane County Community Covid-19 Emergency and Recovery Fund to support those affected by this crisis. All emergency funds will be used for essential supplies and food for area residents, children, families and seniors enduring financial hardship due to the pandemic. 100% of the funds will be invested back into the community, United Way will not collect administrative support through this effort. [You can donate here](#).

United Way Great Rivers: In collaboration with various community partners, United Way Great Rivers has created Emergency Response Funds that will rapidly deploy resources to charitable organizations at the frontlines of the covid-19 outbreak throughout its service region. All funds received will remain in the county in which they were raised. [You can donate here.](#)

WAFER Food Pantry: Committed to serving the community through the covid-19 pandemic, with altered processes to keep the community safe and ensure access to food. WAFER food pantry will be providing prepackaged boxes of non-perishable and perishable food for all existing and new clients. Due to the increased demand any food or monetary donations are greatly appreciated. [You can donate here.](#)

YMCA of Dane County: Launched two separate programs to help feed community members. Children 18 years of age and younger are eligible to receive two free meals per day: a lunch for the day and a breakfast for the next morning. Adults, especially seniors, will be eligible to receive meals through the YMCA's drive-up meal program that will distribute approximately 125 meals per day. Those who wish to help support the YMCA's food assistance program can [donate here.](#)

YWCA: Is taking the health and wellbeing of residents, staff, volunteers, and community very seriously with the arrival of the covid-19 virus. The staff is working hard right now to keep meeting the needs of their residents. The best way to support this organization is to consider a donation during this very challenging and uncertain time or donate an item from their wish list. Madison Chapter – [you can donate here](#) or [view wish list](#). La Crosse Chapter – [you can donate here](#) or [view wish list](#).

National Nonprofits

American Red Cross: Due to the cancellation of blood drives, the American Red Cross faces a severe blood shortage. Healthy individuals are needed to donate now to maintain a sufficient supply. [Make an appointment here](#) or call 1-800-RED-CROSS to find a local donation site.

Boys & Girls Clubs of America: Raising funds to provide groceries to kids participating in its more than 2,500 clubs, plus virtual academic support such as digital activities and learning opportunities. [You can donate here.](#)

CDC Foundation: Supports the critical health protection work of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. It is raising emergency response funds to enable the CDC to respond to covid-19. [You can donate here.](#)

Center for Disaster Philanthropy Covid-19 Response Fund: Supports nonprofit organizations working in areas identified as having high numbers of affected individuals and those working with the most vulnerable populations. Areas of emphasis include helping health-care workers with purchases of masks, gowns, gloves and other protective equipment; supporting quarantined and vulnerable individuals; and hygiene promotion campaigns to limit the spread of the virus. [You can donate here.](#)

CERF+: Focuses on safeguarding visual artists' livelihoods. The covid-19 response fund is a safety net for artists who contract the virus and are suffering severe health impacts. [You can donate here.](#)

Direct Relief: Works in the United States and internationally to equip doctors and nurses with lifesaving medical resources. The organization is delivering protective masks, exam gloves and isolation gowns to health-care organizations in areas with confirmed covid-19 cases. [You can donate here.](#)

Feeding America: With a nationwide network of 200 food banks and 60,000 food pantries, donations to its covid-19 response fund will help food banks across the country support the most vulnerable communities affected by the pandemic. [You can donate here](#) or [find your local food bank here.](#)

Feed the Children: Works with thousands of partner agencies across the country including food pantries, shelters, soup kitchens and churches. You can [make a monetary donation here](#). If you want to donate food or hygiene items call 1-800-627-4556.

First Book: Donations will help deliver 7 million books to children in need who don't have Internet access or home libraries to keep learning. [You can donate here](#).

GlobalGiving: Donations go toward medical supplies, delivering essential items to struggling families and older individuals in quarantined cities, feeding children that rely on school meals and more. [You can donate here](#).

Lawyers for Good Government Foundation: Helps thousands of asylum seekers being held in refugee camps at the border and in U.S. detention centers. Donations help volunteer lawyers with travel to provide pro bono services to asylum seekers and families unable to practice social distancing or obtain access to proper sanitation. [You can donate here](#).

March of Dimes: Leads the fight for the health of all moms and babies. Supporting lifesaving research, providing comfort and support to families in NICUs, and advocate for moms and babies. March of Dimes developed the Mom and Baby COVID-19 Intervention and Support Fund, addressing the urgent need to protect moms, babies and families from covid-19. To help protect moms and babies from covid-19, [you can donate here](#).

Meals on Wheels: Delivers nutritious meals to the country's most vulnerable seniors. Donations will replenish food supplies, subsidize additional transportation and personnel, and enable tech-based efforts to check in on isolated elderly recipients. You can contact your [local provider](#) or [donate to the national group here](#).

National Association for the Exchange of Industrial Resources: Collects excess inventory from businesses and redistributes those goods to schools, churches and nonprofit organizations across the country. Businesses can cull inventory, clean out a warehouse and donate unwanted goods, overstocks, obsolete items, factory seconds and more. [Go here for a donation form](#) or call 1-800-562-0955.

No Kid Hungry: Deploys funds to ensure access to free meals continues for children in need, especially with schools closed. It is providing \$1 million in emergency grants immediately — with more to come — to help schools and community groups feed kids during the outbreak and making sure families know how to find meals while schools are closed. [You can donate here](#).

Restaurant Workers' Community Foundation: Directs money to organizations leading on-the-ground efforts in the restaurant community and provides zero-interest loans to businesses to maintain payroll during closure or reopen once the crisis has passed. It will establish a relief fund for individual restaurant workers facing economic hardships or health crises as a direct result of covid-19. [You can donate here](#).

Salvation Army: Ensures people have access to food, shelter and child care through its nationwide network. Outreach includes drive-through food pickups, community-based food delivery through canteens and meals at Salvation Army facilities. It also provides snacks and hydration to first responders. [You can donate here](#).

Team Rubicon: Mobilizes military veterans to help people respond to and recover from disasters. During the covid-19 crisis, the organization is helping local, state and federal partners deliver food, water and shelter; run testing sites; staff call centers; and transport cruise ship passengers who have completed their mandatory quarantine at home. [You can donate here](#).

United Way Worldwide: Supports communities struggling in the wake of the virus by supporting local United Ways and the 211 network, a free emergency support service helping people in crisis. Funds distributed to local United Ways help with everything from connecting families to food pantries to aiding those experiencing financial hardships due to lost wages. [You can donate here.](#)

Want more options, but not sure what's reputable? The charity rating sites [Charity Navigator](#) and [CharityWatch](#) have lists of vetted charities working around the world to address the outbreak.

Local Businesses

If you want to support your local restaurant, consider ordering takeout or purchasing a gift card or merchandise. You also may consider supporting servers and other workers who have been laid off by donating to a fund or nonprofit, such as the Restaurant Workers' Community Foundation.

Be mindful about how many groceries you buy. If you can afford to, buy enough for at least two to three weeks but don't take everything off the shelves. If you know someone who is older, has chronic health conditions or is otherwise at higher risk for complications from the virus, reach out and ask them if you can shop for them.

Elderly in Care Homes

Many nursing homes and other care facilities are [now closed to visitors](#) as a measure to protect the residents.

If you know someone in care, you can help alleviate loneliness with regular phone calls, video calls, video messages and text-based chats. Send photos, fun articles, puzzles, adult coloring books and other items to help keep your loved ones and neighbors feeling connected. Consider establishing an upbeat daily call.

If you don't have a relative living in a nursing home, but would still like to help, you can send flowers, cards or other items to your local care home. Call first to see what their protocol is on receiving outside gifts/donations and hand-written notes or drawings from kids. To find participating senior living facilities within the La Cross community, go to www.usetconnected.org. Or, you can send a letter through an organization called [Love For The Elderly](#).

Remote Volunteering

The company [Alone](#) is an organization that provides companionship to the elderly. There's an option to become a telephone volunteer where you call and check-in at least two hours each week.

[iCouldBe](#) is a student mentorship program where you dedicate one hour each week for the school year. The program provides you with online activities and conversation starters. This could be especially helpful to students who are completing the year as distance learners and need extra assistance with resources and tutoring -- or an extra friend.

You could also volunteer for [Crisis Text Line](#), where you would be a remote crisis counselor. The organization is asking for volunteers especially between 7 p.m. and 3 a.m. PT. The remote volunteer service includes free training on how to answer texts from people who reach out.

Creative & Skill-Based Opportunities

Chalk Your Walk: Draw or write encouraging messages on your driveway or sidewalk with chalk. This is a great way to spread some positivity, kindness, and compassion to neighbors who may be out taking a stroll.

Sewing: Dust off your sewing skills as many local health care facilities are accepting homemade masks, as long as they meet specific criteria. Mask specifications can be found [here](#), along with a [how-to-video](#). Be sure to call the facility first to see what their protocol is on receiving homemade masks.

Signage: Create signs/posters of encouragement and post them in high traffic areas that are visible to the community. Or, simply post them up at your home.