

Peace Talk!

Peace Corps Day is a holiday that is always celebrated on **March 1**. It celebrates the many volunteers of the Peace Corps program.



How did the Peace Corps begin?

1. Walter Reuther, then President of the United Auto Workers, proposed in 1950 that the U.S. establish a voluntary agency for American youth to be sent around the world to perform humanitarian objectives.
2. Senator Hubert H. Humphrey Jr. introduced the first bill to create the Peace Corps in 1957.
3. The program was established by President John F. Kennedy on **March 1, 1961**.

The purpose of the Peace Corps

The volunteers assist certain countries by providing economic and social development while promoting world peace and mutual understanding between Americans and the populations served.

Volunteers can choose to engage in: Agriculture, Environment, Community Economic Development, Health, Education, Women's Empowerment and Youth in Development.

Three months of training are necessary before traveling to the foreign country. Service placement lasts for at least 2 years in which volunteers often gain valuable teaching, cross-cultural, language, leadership, and community development skills. These skills increase their job opportunities after their volunteer experience. Many companies recruit returned Peace Corps volunteers as employees.

After experiencing different countries and cultures, volunteers have a different, more inclusive mindset. The volunteers become more accepting of new things, to having an open mind to ideas they are not accustomed to, and to new ways of doing things.

In 2015, the Peace Corps formed a partnership with the United States Agency for International Development (U.S.A.I.D.) to implement the *Let Girls Learn* initiative.

How many volunteers are there?

Year 1, 1961: 900 volunteers serving in 16 countries

Year 5, 1966: 15,556 volunteers in 52 countries

Year 50, 2011: over 8,500 volunteers serving in 77 countries

As of Year 57, 2018: has been in 141 countries and had 235,000 volunteers

As of Year 62, 2023: now in more than 60 countries with more than 240,000 volunteers since the Peace Corps began



Activity One : Listen to and learn a new Peace Song that unites people from all over the world.

Possible Suggestions:

Bob Marley's 'One Love' <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vdB-8eLEW8g>

'Love Grows' by Carol Johnson <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fTliJvty8K4>

'I Will Be Your Friend' by Guy Davis <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=boaO7QRKQso>

'Songs Around the World' performed by Playing for Change
<https://www.youtube.com/user/playingforchange>

Queries for Reflection:

When do I volunteer to be of service to others? What are my reasons for doing this?

What does the Gwynedd Friends community do to be of service to others that I want to take part in?

Activity Two: Explore the Peace Corps website and learn about some of the many caring stories from around the world.

www.peacecorps.gov