

64 Ways to Do Good

BY DENISE KERSTEN WILLS

Why Give?

In tough economic times, lots of people hold on tighter to their money, cutting back on everything from lattes to charitable donations.

But studies show that money can buy happiness—just not the way most people think.

In a study published this year in the journal *Science*, researchers asked Americans to rate their overall happiness and report how much they spend on expenses, gifts for themselves and others, and donations to charity. They found that spending on others boosts happiness, while spending on oneself doesn't.

The researchers gave people envelopes containing small amounts of cash. They told some people to put the money toward expenses, others to buy a gift for themselves, and a third group to buy a gift for someone else or make a charitable donation. The third group reported the biggest gains in happiness.

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Where to Give?

Washington is home to more than 8,000 nonprofits, and choosing which ones to support isn't easy. We consulted dozens of local philanthropy experts—including heads of foundations and corporate-giving coordinators—to come up with this list of charities.

Aid a Woman in Trouble

Doorways for Women and Families

Doorways runs the only domestic-violence safe house in Arlington. Only 5 of the 40 women who stayed there last year returned to their abusive partners. The organization recently helped bring together 25 public and private partners to coordinate the county's domestic-violence response. Doorways also operates a shelter for homeless families and provides housing subsidies, training, and services for two years after they leave.

How to help: Help at one of the shelters, answering phones or supporting families in crisis.

Giving: \$250 supplies perishable food for one shelter for a week; \$1,000 pays for 60 hours of financial counseling for one woman.



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DOORWAYS for women and families

Doorways for Women and Families strives to end homelessness and family and intimate partner violence by offering safe shelter and housing, life-changing support services, and community advocacy.

"You helped me become a better mother and a very strong independent woman. You have given me the tools that I will use for the rest of my life and for that words cannot explain my gratitude to you."

—Doorways for Women and Families client

Doorways for Women and Families
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