

## Change the world

If you were given \$1000 to change the life of a perfect stranger, what would you do?

Changing the world is possible with little actions. Before you read the text, think about the answers to the following questions.

- 1 What would you do if you had \$1000 to change the world. How would you use the money?
- 2 What can you do without money?

In the past few years, the “Pay it forward” movement has been very popular. Simply put, “paying it forward” means being generous and **kind** to others in order to change the world and at the same time improve your life. Doing nice things feels good. This movement has travelled the world. In Québec, perhaps you have heard of “Payez au suivant.”

On a popular American television show, 300 people were given \$1000 each. They were challenged to find inspiring and creative ways to help others. They came up with many ideas: from helping terminal cancer patients to bringing food to homeless people. They changed the world. Let’s look more closely at some ways these people spent their money.

Johanne Vezina gave her \$1000 to Kangazoo Animal House. The volunteer organization takes in abused, neglected animals and pets with no homes and matches them with loving families. The organization depends on donations to care for its animals. When the volunteers at the **shelter** received the money, they were so happy. “Thank you, thank you!” they exclaimed.

Johanne says it feels wonderful to help a cause she really believes in. “When I was in secondary school, every time I had a writing project in my English class, I always chose to write on animal rights and abuse,” she says. “Now I feel that I finally did something to help these poor animals. This act of kindness will be in my heart for the rest of my life.”

## Smart

## Words

**kind** = nice

**shelter** = a place that offers food and protection temporarily

**beloved** = much loved

**scholarship** = a payment made to help a student's education

Charles Vail used his money to honour a **beloved** teacher who died of cancer. Tracey Thorn taught Spanish to Charles's daughter, Maika. In memory of Tracey, Charles donated his challenge money to a **scholarship** in her name. "She inspired everyone to learn second languages and to travel in order to meet people from around the world," Maika said about her teacher. "I'm glad that my dad is giving the money to her foundation because I know that it is going to a good cause. I truly believe that everyone can make a difference with simple actions." The money will go to a student who plans to become a teacher to help pay for his or her education.

Now, let's get started! It's your turn! Maybe you only have five dollars or maybe you and your friends saved a bit more. There are hundreds of ways you can affect the lives of other people. Use these ideas to start your kindness campaign and to make the world a better place. Pay it forward! Remember, every little bit helps, so whether you buy someone lunch or you smile at an old lady in the street, you are changing lives!

## \$0 – \$25

It's surprising what a few dollars can do. These ideas will make a great impact on someone else.

- Buy lunch for a friend.
- Give away a prepaid card for the city bus.
- Volunteer: it costs nothing but means a lot.
- Buy flowers to cheer up a friend.
- Write a letter to military troops serving in countries at war.
- Clean up a neighbourhood park.
- Buy a board game for a local children's hospital.

## \$100 – \$200

Do you have a little more to spend? Maybe your school has a special fund. There are a lot of ways to change the world.

- Buy school supplies for a needy school in a poor country.
- Buy pet food and supplies for the animals at the shelter.
- Buy theatre tickets for parents with a newborn baby, then baby-sit.
- Buy food and prepare meals for the elderly in your neighbourhood.