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## Christmas gift to guarantee happiness

Shoppers wanting to avoid the last minute dash for the perfect Christmas gift may want to consider volunteering as an alternative way of giving.

Not only will volunteering help spread much needed Christmas cheer to those less fortunate but according to the Australian Unity Wellbeing Index people who volunteer also have an increased sense of wellbeing too.

Professor Robert Cummins of Deakin University and author of the Index, said although throughout the year volunteers often work tirelessly without getting paid, they are still the happiest employment group.

“There is also a significant wellbeing increase for those who volunteer and are full-time employed, full-time retired and unemployed,” Professor Cummins said.

“When we are feeling good we are more likely to contribute to society positively, and what better time to volunteer and make somebody’s day than at Christmas.”

Professor Cummins said while people are born with a base happiness, there are things in our life that cause it to fluctuate.

“Volunteering is just one factor that has a positive effect on not just the volunteers’ wellbeing but also those on the receiving end,” Professor Cummins said.

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