

Family Volunteerism - Costs and Benefits to families and the organizations they serve.

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PART I: WHAT CAN FAMILY VOLUNTEERING DO FOR YOUR FAMILY?

- the family grows closer
- the family value system is strengthened
- the family builds relationships with others
- the family experiences satisfaction
- the family accomplishes more than the individual



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PART I: WHAT CAN FAMILY VOLUNTEERING DO FOR YOUR FAMILY?

- the children have references and experience for job and college applications
- the children compare life situations with others and feel more fortunate
- the family makes a positive influence on those they help
- the family has fun and spends time constructively

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COSTS OF FAMILY VOLUNTEERING:

- Family experiences financial costs such as transportation, supplies, time away from work, etc.
- Family experiences personal costs such as free time and lack of open doors to family volunteering.
- Family experiences emotional costs such as attachment to the people they are helping and the stress of not being able to do enough.
- Volunteer coordinators experience stress of including children in volunteer activities.

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ADDITIONAL BENEFITS AND COSTS FOR PARENTS AND CHILDREN DIFFER.

Parents

Benefit: leaving a legacy

Costs: none identified

Children

Benefit: expanding their world experience; preparation for the real world

Costs: social stigma

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WHAT FAMILIES HAVE TO SAY:

- Family volunteering saved our family.
- Volunteer awards and recognition validate our service and make the family experience stronger.
- Publicity about family volunteering helps other families see what they could do, gives them a goal to strive for and shows that there are volunteer opportunities everywhere.
- Family volunteering opens a door of opportunity that brings out a natural strength in families.

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WHY VOLUNTEER AS A FAMILY?

- learn about social issues
- provide positive role models
- pass on family values
- provide new learning experiences
- help develop new skills
- increase interpersonal communication
- grow problem-solving abilities

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1. Choose a project.

- Get together and communicate about volunteering as a family.
- Brainstorm a list of ideas about how your family would like to volunteer.
- Talk about how much time you would like to give.
- Identify a project that matches your mission.
- Contact an organization that might host your project.

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2. Get ready.

- Prepare through conversation about what helping means.
- Discuss how others are helping.
- Collect supplies you need for your project.
- Get to know the group you are helping.

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3. Volunteer.

- Be prepared.
- Include everyone.
- Bring snacks.
- Take breaks.
- Check in with your family.
- Have fun!

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4. Reflect.

- Create a helping hand poster.
- Discuss and ask questions.
- Follow up with organization.
- Communicate with the volunteer coordinator.
- Keep a scrapbook or journal.
- Read books that relate to your activity.
- Be proud of what you have accomplished.

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IDEAS FOR PROJECTS

- collect food donations at your birthday party
- ride in a bike-a-thon
- clean a bus shelter
- supply food for workers
- participate in a book drive
- adopt a senior “grandfriend”

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IDEAS FOR PROJECTS

- throw a pet party
- hold a penny drive
- play music at a senior center
- donate new or gently used toys
- serve meals
- walk your neighbor's dog
- make get well cards

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Books to Read:

The Giving Tree by Shel Silverstein

The Berenstain Bears Think of Those in Need by Stan & Jan Berenstain

The Kid's Guide to Service Projects: Over 500 Service Ideas for Young People Who Want to Make a Difference by Barbara A. Lewis

The Busy Family's Guide to Volunteering: Do Good, Have Fun, Make a Difference As a Family by Jenny Lynn Friedman

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On-line resources:

United Way of Champaign County – up-to-date volunteer opportunities in Champaign County

www.uwayhelps.org

ABCD books – a place for literature and service learning connections

www.ABCDbooks.org

Family Cares - An initiative of the Points of Light & Hands On Network , helps to promote compassion through hands-on family projects that help others in need.

www.familycares.org

Kids Care Clubs are dedicated to developing compassion and inspiring a spirit of volunteering in children.

www.kidscare.org

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VolunteerMatch is dedicated to helping everyone find a great place to volunteer. The organization offers a variety of online services to support a community of nonprofit, volunteer and business leaders committed to civic engagement.

www.volunteermatch.org

The mission of Doing Good Together is to inspire and help families volunteer.

www.doinggoodtogether.org

The Volunteer Family encourages and facilitates volunteering with parents while simultaneously assisting local agencies plan and prepare for family volunteers.

www.thevolunteerfamily.com

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Charity Guide's mission is to inspire and facilitate *flexible* volunteerism. by promoting opportunities to make a difference that are entirely flexible and immediately actionable.

www.charityguide.org

Points of Light & Hands On Network - a national nonprofit whose core mission is to inspire, equip and mobilize people to take action that changes the world. www.pointsoflight.org

Youth Service America - Building a global culture of engaged youth who are committed to a lifetime of service, learning, leadership, and achievement

www.ysa.org



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PART II. WHAT CAN FAMILY VOLUNTEERING DO FOR YOUR ORGANIZATION?

- Multiply the number of volunteers
- Increase media attention
- Provide new funding opportunities
- Increase awareness of community needs
- Position your volunteer program as a community advocate

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How to Get Families Involved?

- Go where families go.
- Market to families
- Do the Ask.
- Teach families about volunteering.

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Everyone can do family volunteering.

- If you are new to family volunteering, start slowly.
- If you've been doing some family volunteering, try some new ideas.
- If you have a family volunteer program, look for fresh resources.
- Then try these ways to TWEAK what you do:

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1. Ask call-in referrals if they will bring their family to volunteer.
2. Make a list of family friendly opportunities.
3. Include photos of families in your marketing materials.
4. Recruit where families are.
5. Add family volunteer opportunities to existing events.
6. Create a family volunteer project.
7. Invite families to design their own projects.
8. Give a 5 minute speech on family volunteering to your board, staff or community organization.



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Family-Friendly Project Checklist

ENVIRONMENT

- Facilities – space planned and allotted for activity
- Restrooms and water available
- First-aid, CPR accessible
- Technical expertise on-site
- Accommodations made for all ages
- Volunteer Insurance in place

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Family Friendly Project Checklist CHILD-CONSCIOUS

- 2-3 hour maximum time limit per project
- Age appropriate tasks
- Children acknowledged by staff
- Project is perceived by parents to be valuable to children
- Project is perceived to be interesting and engaging by both parents and children
- Transportation is equipped for children

Family Friendly Project Checklist

TOOLS/TRAINING

- Safe environment
- Volunteers receive proper instruction upon arrival
- Proper equipment is available for related tasks
- Clear, easy to understand direction provided at onset of project

Family Friendly Project Checklist

RECOGNITION

- Volunteers are greeted as a family, names known/acknowledged.
- Fun atmosphere – smiles, food, music
- Recognition/Awards ceremony



Family Friendly Project Checklist COMMITMENT

- Adequate supervision – both staff and parents – includes attention to elderly
- Parents agree to stay with and supervise their children
- Families are kept together
- Provides family oriented practice in community leadership
- Provides meaningful contribution to community

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4 Easy Steps:

1. Create a Project.
2. Start Planning.
3. Project Yourself and Others.
4. Show what they accomplished.

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Family Volunteer Recognition

1. Give away “volunteer gear.”
2. Hand out temporary tattoos.
3. Provide Certificates of Appreciation.
4. Feed them!
5. Put up posters thanking families.
6. Give families gift certificates.
7. Send thank you cards.
8. Hold a Family celebration Day.

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Family Volunteer Recognition

9. Add a Family Volunteer Award to your ongoing program.
10. Write a newspaper article about a special family.
11. Include a family photo in your marketing.
12. Let the family author a letter to the editor about volunteering.
13. Greet families by name.

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Family Volunteer Recognition

14. Give family volunteers special nametags.
15. Introduce families to community leaders.
16. Create family awards in different categories.
17. Publicly thank families in letters to the editor.
18. Ask families to help you in designing projects.