

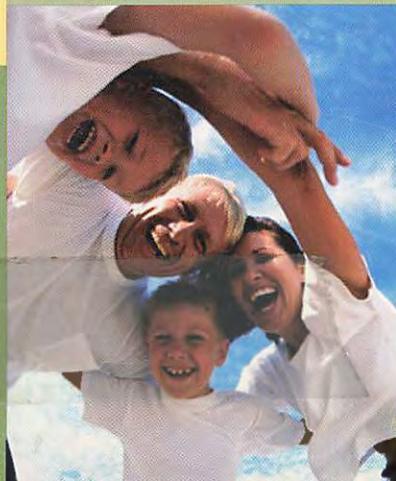
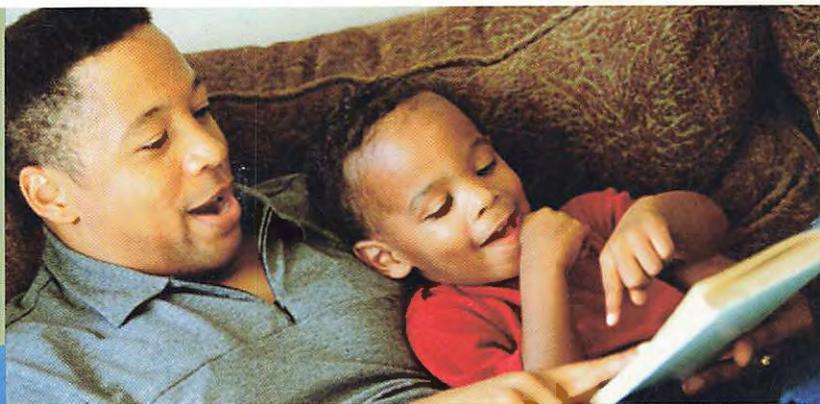
# FAMILY VOLUNTEERING

---

# READY-SET-GO!

A HANDBOOK FOR VOLUNTEER CENTERS

EDITOR MARIE BOUVIER



POINTS  
OF LIGHT  
FOUNDATION  
&  
VOLUNTEER CENTER  
NATIONAL NETWORK

FAMILY VOLUNTEERING

---

**READY-SET-GO!**

A HANDBOOK FOR VOLUNTEER CENTERS

Special thanks to Farmers Insurance Group for their generous help in making this book possible

EDITOR MARIE BOUVIER

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks to all of the people who contributed to the development of this book:

Farmers Insurance Group

The Volunteer Center National Network

The Family Matters Task Force

Marie Bouvier, Volunteer Center of the Lowcountry

Nonie Brennan, Volunteer Center of Battle Creek

Stephen Browning, Volunteer Center of Maricopa County

Robert Chinn, Volunteer Center of Owensboro-Daviess County

Christine Danielson, Volunteer Center of Brown County

Jane Kornblut, Volunteer Fairfax

Adraine LaRoza, Volunteer Services of Manatee County

Phyllis Onstad, Volunteer Center of Sonoma County

Minnie Taylor, Voluntary Action Center of Lorain County

Points of Light Foundation Staff

Mei Cobb

Stacey Dunn-Turner

Rennie Dutton

Diane Fabiyi-King

Emily Hoban-Kirby

Kimberli Meadows

Tracey Navratil

David Styers

Rob Trevino

Kelley Vickery

Nonprofit Risk Management Center

Melanie Herman

Designer

Meredith Peck

Copyright © 2002 The Points of Light Foundation & Volunteer Center National Network

All rights reserved. No part of this work may be reproduced or used in any form without the express written permission of The Points of Light Foundation. Worksheets may be reproduced for use by the purchaser of the book.

# Table of Contents

## INTRODUCTION

<b>Family Volunteering 101</b> .....	<b>5</b>
Has Family Volunteering Touched You? .....	5
What Is Family Volunteering? .....	5
What Is a Family? .....	6
What Is a Family-Friendly Volunteer Opportunity? .....	6
Why Family Volunteering? .....	6
Okay, But Why Should Our Volunteer Center Do It? .....	7
It's Easy! .....	7
Why Would Families Volunteer? .....	8
Why Do Families Volunteer? .....	8
How To Get Families Involved .....	9
Teaching Families about Family Volunteering .....	9

## CHAPTER ONE

<b>Getting Started at Your Volunteer Center</b> .....	<b>11</b>
Get Started! .....	11
Family Volunteering Is Important to Our Mission .....	12
Everyone Can Do Family Volunteering! .....	13
Start with What You Know .....	13
25 Ways to Tweak What You Do .....	13
Need More Help? .....	14
<b>HELPFUL RESOURCES</b> .....	<b>14</b>
Volunteer Center Quiz: Are You Ready for Family Volunteering? .....	15
Five Minutes to Family Volunteering for Your Board and Staff .....	18

## CHAPTER TWO

<b>What Will We Do?</b>	
<b>A Zillion Great Project Ideas</b> .....	<b>19</b>
What On Earth Will We DO? .....	19
What Will We Do, Part II? .....	19
Top Ten Family Volunteer Projects .....	20
100 More Project Ideas .....	21
Consider Days of Service .....	24
Days of Service .....	24

## CHAPTER THREE

<b>Planning Your Family Volunteer Project</b> .....	<b>25</b>
Planning Ahead .....	25
Step One: Create a Project .....	26
Is It Family-Friendly? .....	26
Step Two: Start Planning .....	27
Planning Checklist .....	27
Step Three: Protect Others and Yourself: Risk Management .....	28
Key Questions .....	28
Insurance Policies .....	28
Federal and State Liability Laws .....	28
Volunteer Consent Forms .....	29

Volunteer Screening .....	29
Supervision of Children .....	30
Free Stuff! .....	30
Step Four: Show What They Accomplished .....	31
20 Great Ways to Recognize Family Volunteers .....	31
More Project Planning Tools .....	32
<b>HELPFUL RESOURCES .....</b>	<b>32</b>
Family-Friendly Project Checklist .....	33
Designing a Family Volunteer Opportunity .....	34
Family Volunteer Project Information Sheet .....	36
Volunteer Release and Waiver of Liability .....	37
Sample Interview Questions for Volunteers .....	38

## CHAPTER FOUR

<b>Working with Nonprofit Organizations .....</b>	<b>39</b>
It's a Win/Win Situation .....	39
Benefits to Organizations .....	39
Requesting a Project .....	40
What If They Still Say No? .....	40
Five Reasons Organizations Won't Work with Families—and Five Ways to Turn that Around .....	40
How Can Organizations See if They're Ready? .....	40
Other Groups to Consider .....	41
Training Organizations for Family Volunteering .....	41
Getting Organizations Started .....	41
<b>HELPFUL RESOURCES .....</b>	<b>42</b>
Project Request Letter .....	43
Project Fax-Back Form .....	44
Assessment Tool for Organizations: Are You Family-Friendly? .....	45

## CHAPTER FIVE

<b>Hey, Mom, I'm on TV!!</b>	
<b>Media and Marketing .....</b>	<b>47</b>
Getting Media Attention .....	47
Step One: Identify a Coordinator .....	47
Step Two: Identify a Spokesfamily .....	47
Step Three: Identify a Local Celebrity as Spokesperson .....	48
Step Four: Secure Proclamations .....	48
Step Five: Gain Newspaper, Television, and Radio Coverage .....	49
Media Materials .....	50
Media Contact Timeline .....	52
Step Six: Follow up with the Media .....	53
Step Seven: Create Message Points .....	53
Family Volunteering Message Points .....	54
Step Eight: Prepare for an Interview .....	55
Sample Interview Questions .....	56
Step Nine: Plan Day of Event Logistics .....	57
Media Types and How to Use Them .....	58
Tools for Effective Media Use .....	60
<b>HELPFUL RESOURCES .....</b>	<b>60</b>
News Release .....	61
Fact Sheet .....	62
Media Alert .....	64

Public Service Announcement .....	65
Media List Worksheet .....	66
Print Pitch Letter .....	67
TV Talk Show Pitch Letter .....	67
Radio Pitch Letter .....	68
Community Calendar Entry .....	69
Proclamation Request Letter .....	70
Celebrity Request Letter .....	71
Spokesfamily Thank You/Confirmation Letter .....	72

## CHAPTER SIX

<b>If You Want the Money, Show Me the Evaluation! .....</b>	<b>73</b>
If You Want the Dollars/Grants/Funding, You Have To Show Results .....	73
Ways To Evaluate .....	74
All About Outcomes Measurement .....	75
Volunteer Center Outcomes Report (General) .....	77
Volunteer Center Outcomes Report (Family Volunteering: Level I) .....	78
Volunteer Center Outcomes Report (Family Volunteering: Level II) .....	79
Volunteer Center Outcomes Report (Family Volunteering: Level III) .....	80
Evaluation Tools .....	81
<b>HELPFUL RESOURCES .....</b>	<b>81</b>
Family Volunteer Evaluation Form .....	82
Family Volunteer Site Evaluation Form .....	83
Evaluation Questions for Children .....	84
Volunteer Center Outcomes Report Form .....	85

## CHAPTER SEVEN

<b>More Money, More Stuff: Resources Galore! .....</b>	<b>87</b>
Getting Corporate Partners .....	87
Other Partnership Strategies .....	89
And the Grants Rolled In .....	90
Corporate Funding .....	91
Foundation Funding .....	91
Other Funding Approaches .....	92
Five Essential Elements of a Case Statement .....	92
The Proposal Letter .....	93
Free Stuff .....	93
FamilyCares.org .....	94
Give Me More! .....	94
<b>HELPFUL RESOURCES .....</b>	<b>95</b>
Recruitment Letter for Businesses .....	96
Company Fax-Back Form .....	97
Corporate Benefits Sheet .....	98
Company Confirmation Letter .....	99
Event Flyer .....	100
Family Volunteer Project Information Sheet .....	101
Article to Include in Company Newsletters .....	102
Daily Points of Light Award Submission Guidelines .....	103
Daily Points of Light Award Official Nomination Form .....	104
National Family Volunteer Award Nomination Form .....	105
Points Of Light Foundation National Family Volunteer Awards .....	105
Points of Light Foundation & Volunteer Center National Network Grant Proposal Outline .....	107
Connect America Partners .....	109

# Family Volunteering 101

AMOS MORGAN/GETTY IMAGES



## Has Family Volunteering Touched You?

Why do you work for a Volunteer Center? It's likely that family volunteering has already touched you. Think about your family's influence on you. Maybe your parents asked you to rake leaves for an elderly neighbor. Or your grandparents organized a dinner at the homeless shelter. Perhaps your foster parent became a chaperone for your class trip. The composition of every family is unique, but there is always someone who has the power to inspire. With one shared volunteer opportunity, children, older adults, and youth can learn how they have the ability to change their community for the better.

## What Is Family Volunteering?

Family volunteering is a planned, managed effort that seeks to motivate and enable families to engage in effective community service. Family volunteering encourages all members of a family to volunteer together, as a unit. It can be as simple as drawing cards for children in the hospital. Or as complex as bonding hundreds of families together in a day of volunteer work. However you choose to do it, family volunteering can help to mobilize thousands of new volunteers in service to their communities.

## A TRUE FAMILY LOVE STORY

*Caroline knew she would get many things from volunteering. She didn't expect to find a soulmate. Caroline's volunteer work at Hotline paired her with Nick Greene, another volunteer. They fell in love and got married. Both of them had grown up in families that volunteered, so it was natural for them to volunteer as a family when they adopted their daughter Karen. She says she likes to volunteer because, "I can help people with my family and have fun at the same time!"*

—Charleston, SC  
true story

## What Is a Family?

Simply put, a "family" is any two or more people who consider themselves a family. Due to the ever-changing face of society, the term family must be broad and inclusive. However, in order to get an accurate measurement of the impact of family volunteering, key elements in defining family include:

- ⦿ Intergenerational/blood relation
- ⦿ More than one person
- ⦿ Legal relationships
- ⦿ Are related even if not living together
- ⦿ Emphasis on intergenerational, but includes couples and siblings or others who function as a familial unit (i.e. neighborhood child, Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America, etc.)

The demographics of families have changed over the years—it's no longer a mother, a father and 2.5 children. Now we have a broader, more inclusive definition of family, one that encompasses blood relations of all kinds, adopted

children, blended families, legal relationships, people who live together and even non-related familial units (like Big Brothers/Big Sisters, or a visiting neighbor's child). There are all kinds of families out there. Defining families helps to distinguish them from groups in outcome measurement and assessment—and provide access to new streams of funding and publicity for your Volunteer Center (See chapter six).

## What is a Family-Friendly Volunteer Opportunity?

Family-friendly volunteer opportunities are simply volunteer opportunities that are appropriate for families. Planning them takes into consideration all the special needs of families. For example, safety, environment, and training are all important factors to consider in family volunteering. This book gives you all the information you'll need to help create family-friendly volunteer opportunities in your community.

## Why Family Volunteering?

When families volunteer together, the value of volunteering is instilled into the next generation, who will volunteer for a lifetime.

## Family volunteering has many benefits!

- ⦿ Strengthening family communication
- ⦿ Allowing family members to be role models
- ⦿ Teaching families to make significant contributions to their communities

Statistics prove the critical importance of family volunteering! In 1999, the Independent Sector conducted a poll on giving and volunteering. Among respondents who reported that one or both of their parents had set an example and volunteered when they were young, 69% of them volunteered as adults, and 75% reported having made a charitable contribution. Parental encouragement and involvement was critical in helping to build the habit of volunteering and to continue the spirit of volunteering across generations.

## Okay, But Why Should Our Volunteer Center Do It?

If you had a license to print hundreds of new volunteers, wouldn't you do it? Family volunteering gives your Volunteer Center the power to mobilize an army of new volunteers, ones who will be committed and stay involved. Family volunteers will also be willing to give more time to their volunteer work.

According to the Independent Sector, family volunteers perform, on average, **23% more hours of volunteer work than other volunteers.**

We're all on the lookout for committed, dedicated volunteers, and families give you a ready-made volunteer force!

## What can family volunteering do for you?

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

## It's Easy!!

It's easy to add family volunteering to your Volunteer Center; there are many levels of involvement. This handbook will give you all the tools you need to add family volunteering to what you already have, enhancing existing programs and strengthening families in your community. There are tips and tricks for every Volunteer Center, from inviting families to join Days of Service to creating an entire family volunteering program.

Days of Service is a portfolio of national initiatives that provides opportunities for people to volunteer their time and talents to service projects and activities throughout the year. Six national days of service were designed to promote volunteering and connect people with year-round opportunities to serve.

More than 20 million people volunteer each year to be part of the Days of Service initiative with such programs as Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, National Volunteer Week, National Youth Service Day, The Big Help, Join Hands Day, Make a Difference Day, and National Family Volunteer Day.

National Family Volunteer Day is focused primarily on family volunteering, but all of the days can involve families volunteering together. The Days of Service can be a year-round action plan that can illustrate how a single day of service can grow into an on-going habit for families helping to meet the needs of communities.

Let's get started!

## FIVE SWIMMING BROTHERS!

*Adapted Aquatic got a family deal in the Shuster Brothers! Stephen (20), Justin (18), JP (18), Alex (15), and Matthew (13) are competitive swimmers who volunteer every Saturday afternoon to train Special Olympics Athletes. Thanks to their tireless volunteer work, over 30 Special Olympics athletes each year are learning the joys of achieving through competitive swimming.*

true story —Fairfax, VA

## Why Would Families Volunteer?

Families today are busy! From work to aerobics, from school to soccer practice, there never seems to be a spare minute of time for families. So how will they fit volunteering into their already busy schedules? It's hard to believe, but volunteering can be an oasis of family togetherness in an otherwise whirlwind world.

Because families have so little time to spend together, they value quality time together even more. And volunteering can provide extraordinary family learning opportunities, chances to instill positive values, and ways to strengthen family bonds. Take a look at some of the positive reasons families volunteer.

## Why Do Families Volunteer?

- ⊙ Family members spend meaningful time together and strengthen relationships.
- ⊙ It allows adults to serve as role models to children.
- ⊙ It helps create a new generation of dedicated volunteers.

- ⊙ It teaches kids values like kindness, empathy, respect, friendliness and tolerance.
- ⊙ It allows families to teach the importance of helping others in their community.
- ⊙ Adults and children can share the same goal and a common purpose.
- ⊙ Children gain opportunities to share their time and talents.
- ⊙ Children learn new skills and develop self-confidence.
- ⊙ Family members see one another in a new light and with a fresh perspective. Family members become better at communicating and more supportive of one another.
- ⊙ Children learn the value of community service.
- ⊙ Family members improve their ability to communicate with and support each other.
- ⊙ Families have an opportunity to learn about their community.

With all those benefits, it's no wonder families are interested in volunteering!

## How to Get Families Involved

Many families are looking for ways to spend quality time together. They might not even realize that family volunteering exists as an option. So how do you get families involved? Here are a few quick tips for putting families in your family volunteering!

### 1. Go Where Families Go.

Make your Volunteer Center visible in new places. Bring your existing marketing to:

- ⊙ Schools
- ⊙ Youth service clubs
- ⊙ Faith-based organizations
- ⊙ Grocery stores
- ⊙ Laundromats
- ⊙ Malls
- ⊙ Foster parents groups
- ⊙ Military bases
- ⊙ Sports teams
- ⊙ Doctors' offices
- ⊙ Museums
- ⊙ Libraries
- ⊙ Children's amusements
- ⊙ Parks
- ⊙ Movies

### 2. Market to Families.

You can easily add families to your marketing tools with a few creative ideas. Try the following:

- ⊙ Ask nonprofit organizations to mention family volunteering in their newsletters.
- ⊙ Show a picture of a family volunteering in your marketing brochure or publication.
- ⊙ Submit weekly or monthly newspaper spotlights of family volunteer opportunities.
- ⊙ Create a utility bill insert—a coupon that families can mail in to your organization stating their interest in volunteer work.
- ⊙ Take a family volunteering flyer (with tear-off phone tabs) to places where families might be located.
- ⊙ Have your area fast food restaurant (like McDonald's or Burger King) add family volunteering information to their tray liners.
- ⊙ Offer Volunteer Center staff as speakers

at family-oriented events.

- ⊙ Ask your current pool of volunteers about family involvement.
- ⊙ Hold "Family Days" for recruiting.
- ⊙ Prominently list family opportunities in all promotional materials.
- ⊙ Use personal testimonials from families who are already volunteers.
- ⊙ Bring a "portable" volunteer project to a family-focused event.

### 3. Do the Ask.

Don't be afraid to ASK families to get involved. According to Independent Sector's 2001 Giving and Volunteering survey, 50% of all volunteers did so because they were asked. Families may not have considered becoming volunteers—but only because they did not know that they could. Take the time to ask families if they would like to volunteer together. You may be surprised at the results.

## Teaching Families About Family Volunteering

Families may want some assistance in getting involved in family volunteering. Because different projects require different levels of training, we suggest using the materials in this book and other resources from the Points of Light Foundation to design family volunteer training that is right for you.



# Getting Started at Your Volunteer Center

PATAGONIK WORKS/GETTY IMAGES



## Get Started!

All of us are short on time. How many binders and books full of great program ideas are on your shelf? You probably don't have one extra minute, one extra staff person, one extra dollar to add a new program on top of all of the programs you already run. **The beauty of family volunteering is that you can incorporate it easily into pre-existing programs.**

This book was designed with your needs in mind, to enhance what you already do, not to create a whole new program. There are many different levels on which you can participate, from asking a caller or potential volunteer if they will be volunteering with their family to structuring a family-specific volunteer opportunity. Eighty-six percent of Volunteer Centers already do some form of family volunteering, and with good reason (Volunteer Center Survey 2001). Family volunteering can help you achieve your mission more effectively by providing you with more committed volunteers and more people who will volunteer for a lifetime.

## WHAT DOES YOUR VOLUNTEER CENTER DO?

- *My Volunteer Center doesn't do any family volunteering, but we want to get started.*
- *There is a little family volunteering in our area, and we want to take it to the next level.*
- *Our Volunteer Center has a family volunteering program, but we could use more resources.*

# question

## Family Volunteering Is Important To Our Mission

Your colleagues in the field spent many hours developing the Volunteer Center Standards of Excellence, a rating tool designed to help Volunteer Centers chart their course for a successful future. On that rating tool, they included many principles for Volunteer Centers to consider, and they made it a point to include family volunteering.

### **Level 1: Developing**

The Center provides information and resources about family volunteering to organizations and businesses in their community.

### **Level 2: Advancing**

The Center educates organizations/businesses on how to develop family-friendly opportunities, families on service and connects families with volunteer opportunities.

### **Level 3: Excellence**

The Center is a leader in promoting and supporting family volunteering through training, capacity building, promotion and family involvement.

As an integral part of helping Volunteer Centers build capacity for effective volunteering, family volunteering fits cleanly into the mission of Volunteer Centers. No other national organization (and probably no other local organization) is focusing specifically on family volunteering, which means that Volunteer Centers have the opportunity to be completely cutting edge, to become the acknowledged experts on family volunteering.

The Points of Light Foundation sees family volunteering as a substantial new approach to the realm of community service. As a result it launched Family Matters, a national program on family volunteering. The program rests on a powerful principle: a volunteering family regardless of how it is configured – whether two-parent, single parent, intergenerational, etc. – benefits the community, benefits itself, and the nation at large. Through volunteer activities, families enrich their relationships with one another, gaining insights into the challenges of other human beings.

The focus has been to increase the number of families volunteering together and to discover how nonprofit organizations, educational institutions, faith communities, and corporations can work together to address community needs. The goal is to make family volunteering the norm by increasing

and supporting the number of families volunteering, the opportunities for families to volunteer, and the communities across the country that value family volunteering.

## Everyone Can Do Family Volunteering!

No matter where your Volunteer Center stands, you can get involved in family volunteering. It's easier than you think!

***If you're new to family volunteering, start slowly.*** You might just want to ask callers if they want to bring their family with them to volunteer or identify which opportunities are family-friendly.

***If you've been doing some family volunteering, try some new ideas.*** Maybe you haven't considered doing a graveyard cleanup project or a family volunteer day.

***If you have a family volunteer program, there might be fresh resources for you.*** New funding ideas and resource locators are included, in Chapter 7 as well as great program ideas.

Family Matters can enhance all of your existing programs, with few additional dollars or resources. Let Family Matters work for you!

## Start with What You Know

Take just a moment to think about what your Volunteer Center already does. How do you communicate with nonprofits and volunteers? If you have a newsletter that goes out to organizations or volunteers, maybe you could indicate which volunteer opportunities are family-friendly or just add a line suggesting that volunteers should feel free to bring their families along. Do you have marketing that goes out in the newspaper or through other avenues? Do you include photos of families volunteering together? Do you organize Days of Service Volunteering? Maybe you could indicate which of those opportunities could involve families.

Family volunteering is not about re-inventing the wheel. It's about taking what you already do effectively, and adding families. Check out the **25 Ways to Tweak What You Do** below. It offers some simple ways to add family volunteering to your existing programs, cheaply and easily. It's your choice of how much or how little you want to take on. Before you know it, you can have families volunteering for you!

## 25 Ways to TWEAK What You Do

1. Ask call-in referrals if they will bring their family to volunteer.
2. Make a list of family-friendly opportunities.
3. Identify family-friendly organizations for easy referrals.
4. Include photos of families in Volunteer Center marketing.
5. Go where families are to do recruiting—schools, grocery stores, malls, etc.
6. Add family volunteer opportunities to Day of Service projects/events.
7. Add family volunteer opportunities to existing programs, like environmental clean up or literacy projects.
8. Provide tools to organizations to help them become more family-friendly.
9. Create a family volunteer project.
10. Let families get involved in designing their own volunteer opportunities.
11. Use family volunteering to get more funding and resources.
12. Engage companies and corporate volunteer councils in family volunteering.
13. Think about creative family volunteer opportunities, like food drives or fundraisers.
14. Give a five-minute speech on family volunteering to your board or staff.
15. Give a five-minute speech on family volunteering to your area schools or faith-based organizations.

16. Create family volunteer projects that can be done offsite, like making cards for children in the hospital.
17. Create family volunteer projects that can be done online, like creating address labels from a database.
18. Involve families in evaluations with focus groups or reflections.
19. Add family volunteer opportunities to Volunteer Center or organization newsletters.
20. Use family volunteering to get more publicity—families make great photo ops!
21. Specifically invite families to participate in volunteering through radio or TV ads.
22. Invite families to participate in an advisory committee.
23. Invite families to join your board.
24. Ask families for marketing ideas on how to reach out to other families.
25. Appoint a spokesfamily to help with recruiting, marketing, and volunteering.

## Helpful Resources

1. Volunteer Center Quiz: Are You Ready for Family Volunteering?
2. Five Minutes to Family Volunteering for Board and Staff

## Need More Help?

Take a look at the **HELPFUL RESOURCES** section at the end of the chapter for guidance to a quick start!

The **Volunteer Center Quiz** will help you determine if you are ready for family volunteering. The **Bright Ideas Box** will give you some ideas on how to get started. Look for more information, guidelines, handouts in later chapters.

**Five Minutes to Family Volunteering for Your Board and Staff** is a quick speech designed to introduce your board and staff to the idea of family volunteering. This speech provides them with basic information for a quick start!

# Volunteer Center Quiz

## Are You Ready for Family Volunteering?

### I. WHAT YOU ALREADY DO

#### 1. Do you refer families to nonprofit organizations?

##### Bright Ideas!

- Ask callers if they plan to bring their family with them to volunteer.
- Create a list of family-friendly organizations for easy referrals.
- Provide suggested family-friendly project ideas.

#### 2. Do you promote family volunteering in your community?

##### Bright Ideas!

- Include family volunteer opportunities in Days of Service.
- Create a list of family-friendly volunteer opportunities.
- Include family photos in your Volunteer Center marketing.

#### 3. Are volunteer opportunities easily accessible to families in your community?

##### Bright Ideas!

- Go where families are to recruit—neighborhoods, grocery stores, apartment complexes, etc.
- See if volunteer opportunities are located on public transportation routes.
- Include family volunteering at easy-to-find locations for Days of Service.

#### 4. Are your nonprofit organizations' hours of operation flexible enough to accommodate families?

##### Bright Ideas!

- Schedule volunteer opportunities during special events when organizations will be open additional hours.
- Ask organizations if they would be

willing to try one Saturday or evening shift for volunteers.

- Ask organizations to try family volunteering during a Days of Service volunteer day, e.g. Martin Luther King Jr. Day, National Family Volunteer Day.

#### 5. Can any of the volunteer jobs be done in the homes of families or offsite from nonprofit organizations?

##### Bright Ideas!

- Teach organizations to create volunteer projects that can be done offsite, such as coloring tray liners for hospitals or creating cards for homeless shelters.
- Consider instituting online volunteer opportunities, like doing internet research or creating address labels from a database.
- Ask organizations to allow families to guide donations, such as leading book drives, food collections, or fundraising events.

#### 6. Could families be included in developing volunteer opportunities?

##### Bright Ideas!

- Involve families in advisory committees.
- Partner families with organizations to create their own volunteer opportunities or to foster ideas.
- Ask families to join nonprofit boards.

#### 7. Have you considered making your evaluations family-friendly?

##### Bright Ideas!

- Ask kids what they like best about the volunteer opportunity.
- Consider doing a focus group or reflection rather than written evaluations.
- Gear questions to age levels.

#### 8. Have you considered tracking the number of family volunteers and the hours they serve?

##### Bright Ideas!

- Use family volunteer data to apply for family-oriented grants.

## II. STAFF AND BOARD

### 1. Does your office have a main contact for family volunteering?

#### 💡 Bright Ideas!

- Use existing staff members to promote family volunteering in their own programs.
- Use staff members who already enjoy working with family members such as older adults, youth, etc., since they are most likely to see the importance of family volunteering.
- Use one staff contact to provide families with consistent information.

### 2. Will you provide staff training on family volunteering?

#### 💡 Bright Ideas!

- Consider adding a five-minute talk on family volunteering to your staff meeting.
- Let staff learn how family volunteering can benefit their own programs.
- Allow staff to promote family volunteering in what they do.

### 3. Will you provide board training on family volunteering?

#### 💡 Bright Ideas!

- Consider adding a five-minute talk on family volunteering to your board meeting.
- Let your board learn how family volunteering works well in corporate settings.
- Allow your board to promote family volunteering.

## III. POLICIES

### 1. Has your Volunteer Center spoken to nonprofit organizations about minimum age requirements for volunteer activities?

#### 💡 Bright Ideas!

- Consider accepting children younger than the policy states if an adult accompanies them.

- Think outside the box and find opportunities that can be done by any age.
- Ask nonprofit organizations to allow families to participate in special events, like fundraisers or food drives.

### 2. Do your policies support family volunteering?

#### 💡 Bright Ideas!

- See if family volunteering can be worked into existing policies. For example, if youth aren't allowed to volunteer onsite, maybe they could be given a sheet of ideas on other ways to help.
- Consider minor policy changes that allow more flexibility for families, such as providing one Saturday volunteer opportunity each quarter.
- Change policies to include family-friendly options, like allowing youth to volunteer onsite with supervision.

## IV. LIABILITY

### 1. Do you have liability insurance?

#### 💡 Bright Ideas!

- If you don't have liability insurance, then consider getting it. Family volunteering may engage a population more susceptible to risk.
- Examine existing general liability and personal injury requirements to see if they are adequate. Volunteers may already be covered.
- A volunteer liability policy may be added as a rider or separate policy at small expense.

### 2. Do your nonprofit organizations know how to plan activities that are appropriate for families with children?

#### 💡 Bright Ideas!

- Give organizations some handouts on planning family volunteer activities.
- Provide organization training on family volunteering.

- Provide nonprofit organizations with a list of suggested age-appropriate volunteer activities as inspiration.

**3. Will your nonprofit organizations be able to provide supervision that will help minimize risk to them?**

 Bright Ideas!

- Let organizations know up front that families may be more susceptible to risk than adult volunteers.
- Teach organizations about providing adequate supervision to all family members in order to minimize their own risk.
- Ask organizations to consider providing child care for families with young children.

**4. Do you outline potential risks to family volunteers?**

 Bright Ideas!

- Provide a quick heads-up before volunteer opportunities to remind families to consider potential risks.
- Provide ongoing training to advise families of potential risks.
- Increase organization awareness of risks to families with adequate organization training on family volunteering.

# Five Minutes to Family Volunteering For Your Board and Staff

The Points of Light Foundation & Volunteer Center National Network have just sent us some great material on family volunteering. There are a lot of good reasons for us to get involved, so I thought I'd take a few moments to share the idea with you and see what you think.

Now, we already know that the demographics of volunteering are changing. People aren't committing to long-term, ongoing volunteer opportunities the way they used to. And who can blame them? Everyone is busy with work, with family, and with other activities. We're busy too.

But what we can do is make volunteering more appealing to people who have limited time. We can help them to make a positive impact on their communities in a short period of time and allow them to do it with family members. That's family volunteering in a nutshell.

Most of us are more likely to participate in an activity if we are going along with someone we know. Families provide us with built-in groups of people that are looking for activities to do together. And family volunteering gives them a lot of wonderful benefits.

- Families can see how they have the power to change their own communities for the better.
- Family members get to spend meaningful time together and strengthen their relationships.
- Children can learn new skills and develop self-confidence.
- Family members can be role models for one another.
- Children can gain opportunities to share their time and talents.
- It can help create a new generation of dedicated volunteers.

Family volunteering will offer our Volunteer

Center some wonderful benefits as well. We'll have the opportunity to apply for grants and programs that are family-oriented. We'll be able to reach a new market of volunteers. And families are very media-friendly, meaning we might get more publicity as well.

Luckily, family volunteering doesn't mean we have to start a whole new program. The material we just received suggests that we try to add family volunteering to what we already do. They start with some simple ideas on how to add it to existing programs, such as making lists of existing family-friendly volunteer opportunities or adding photos of families to our Volunteer Center marketing. There is also information on how to plan family-friendly volunteer projects, track down new resources, and provide basic information to organizations if we're interested in doing more.

This seems like a great opportunity for us to get more people committed to volunteering, which is what we're all about. There was a recent study of volunteerism that said that people who reported one or both of their parents had set an example by volunteering when they were young, 69% volunteered when they became adults, and 75% of them had made a contribution to charity (Independent Sector, 2000). So clearly, if we want to have people volunteering and giving to us ten or twenty years from now, we should start trying to reach parents and children now, instilling the importance of volunteering with today's youth.

I'd like to ask all of you to start thinking about ways that we can add families to what we do here at our Volunteer Center. If you have any questions or comments, just let me know. Thanks so much for your time.

# What Will We Do?

## A Zillion Great Project Ideas

JACOBS STOCK PHOTOGRAPHY/GETTY IMAGES



chapter

### What On Earth Will We Do?

Let's start with the fun stuff! Rather than start with the planning, let's start by brainstorming ideas. There are lots of projects that lend themselves to family volunteering. We've compiled a list of the **Top Ten Family Volunteer Project Ideas** to give you a start on developing your own projects. These are all projects that have been run by Volunteer Centers with great results. There are some that are incredibly easy, and others that will take a little more work. There's something for everyone, so take a look to see what's right for you.

### What Will We Do, Part II?

Ten volunteer projects aren't enough for you? To really get rolling, check out **100 More Project Ideas** to keep all the families in your community busy volunteering!

# Top 10 Family Volunteer Projects

## 1. Create a Card

Let families create their own thinking of you, get well, or thank you cards for a children's hospital, veterans' group or senior citizens' home. This can be done in the family's home or in places where families gather. Provide paper, crayons or markers, stickers or stencils, and watch the creativity fly!

## 2. Tidy Tombstones

City and county cemeteries usually have sections for indigent residents. Unfortunately, these sections are often not maintained by city or county employees. Families can volunteer to clean up the burial site. Contact the local government entity for permission, then recruit families to participate in the cleanup. Provide garbage bags, gloves, and refreshments. Families might want to consider returning to map the cemetery or do landscaping.

## 3. Happy Trays

Many hospitals use plain paper to line the trays used to deliver meals. Get a supply of paper from a hospital and allow families to decorate those liners with cheerful messages or drawings. This is a project that can be done at families' homes, schools, or other locations.

## 4. Food Bank Fix-Up

Especially at the holiday season, food banks need assistance organizing the many donations they receive. Families can sort through canned goods and/or package them for distribution. This task can also be done at thrift shops or shelters.

## 5. Weekend in the Woods

Offer a state park ranger a great deal: provide a Saturday afternoon volunteer project in exchange for having camping fees waived for a few families. Typical projects include pulling weeds, painting

park facilities, planting shrubs, clearing trails, etc.

## 6. Meals that Make a Difference

Many homeless shelters have programs that allow families to help prepare a meal. Some meals are prepared onsite; others can be done in the families' own kitchen. Small children can help by setting tables or by helping to serve food.

## 7. Adopt a Grandparent

Too many nursing home, senior citizen home, and hospital residents have no one to visit them. Let families share their children with senior citizens through an Adopt a Grandparent program. This could be a one-time visit, a group visit, or an ongoing project.

## 8. Penny Drive

What do you do with all those pennies? Let families collect them to help their favorite nonprofit organization. Families can also run drives for school supplies for underprivileged children, for pet food for the shelter, or canned food for the food bank.

## 9. Clean It Up!

Organizations often need help with cleanup. Let families organize a "window washing," "spring cleaning," "van washing," or "yardwork" day for a nonprofit organization. Arm them with cleaning supplies, and let their energy take control!

## 10. Weekend Dads

Help divorced dads connect with their kids and their community by sponsoring a weekend volunteer project. Instead of going to the park to play, they might welcome doing a park cleanup together. Don't leave out divorced moms or grandparents too.

## BRIGHT HOSPITALS, BRIGHT HEARTS

*Hospitals can be intimidating places. The Foundation for Hospital Art is working to change that by providing colorful murals to hospitals around the world at no cost. Volunteers, patients and families do the artwork. (The volunteers include men from Carpenter House, a rehabilitation program for the homeless.) The murals are used in the healing process to brighten the walls of hospitals and brighten the hearts of their visitors.*

—Roswell, Georgia

## 100 More Project Ideas!

### Literacy/Reading

1. Collect books to be distributed to families who might not otherwise own books.
2. Write letters for or to senior citizens at a community center.
3. Be a homework helper in an afterschool program.
4. Organize a fundraiser to buy school supplies, puzzles, and books.
5. Write for or read letters to visually-impaired individuals.
6. Create a family story hour and read to children at a nonprofit.
7. Volunteer with a local literacy council to help people learn to read.

### Environmental/Sprucing Up Your Community

8. Refurbish a playground and remove broken glass or other hazards.
9. Pick up trash on neighborhood streets.
10. Clean and paint a family housing shelter.
11. Plant fragrant trees and flowers in

centers for seniors or the visually impaired.

12. Remove trash and debris from beaches.
13. Clean up bus stops and subway stations, then distribute schedules at your school and in your neighborhood.
14. Work with the police to organize a citizen safety watch.
15. Plant and tend a community garden.
16. In towns where no collections are in place, collect recyclables (paper, cans, glass, plastic, batteries) and bring them to a nearby recycling center.
17. Participate in a brush-cleaning hiking trip to help keep park trails in good condition.
18. Create a butterfly garden for a school, community of faith, park or nonprofit organization.
19. Build walk bridges, barbecue pits, picnic tables, or trails at local parks.

### Opening Your Heart and Home

20. Help newly arrived immigrant families celebrate their “New Home” by collecting kitchen supplies, toiletries, clothing, school supplies, and toys.

21. Organize a neighborhood food drive.
22. Introduce a "Holiday Prep Day" for a retirement community, helping them with shopping, holiday decorations, and gift wrapping.
23. Play games, make popcorn, and visit residents at local nursing homes.
24. Participate in a Thanksgiving dinner program, shopping for food and cooking the meal.
25. Deliver meals to the homebound.
26. Assemble and deliver care kits at emergency shelters.
27. Bake cookies and give them to an organization for one of their events.
28. Become a mentor family to another.
29. Prepare food baskets for needy families for Thanksgiving.
30. Make cards or letters for military personnel overseas.
31. Hold a holiday party in your community.
32. Drive homebound residents to doctor appointments, the grocery store, to run errands, or to visit friends.
33. Help to build a home or shelter in your community.
34. Open your home to host volunteer planning meetings with other families.
35. Become a surrogate family for adults who are developmentally disabled and include them in your family activities.
36. Become a foster family and take care of a child in your community who needs help.

### Music/Entertainment/Crafts

37. Perform a puppet show at a local library.
38. Organize a sing-along at the children's hospital.
39. Arrange a youth history hour at a nursing home where older people can talk with children about their lives.
40. Volunteer at a summer camp for children or adults with disabilities, leading activities like craft projects, swimming lessons or sing-alongs.
41. Organize a musical instrument drive and donate the instruments to a charity

or community center. In addition, offer music lessons.

42. Ask a nursing home what entertainment they would like to receive and work with families to organize the event.
43. Teach craft projects at a local homeless shelter, adult daycare, or summer camp.
44. Organize and direct a play at a community center.

### Advice/Current Affairs

45. Attend a city council meeting with other families to express an opinion on a community issue.
46. Write a letter to your legislator about an issue that is important to your family.
47. Tell about your family volunteer experience at community events or in newsletters.
48. Call other friends' families to become family volunteers.
49. Encourage family volunteering in your own classroom or civic activities.
50. Make awareness posters.
51. Help with voter registration campaigns.
52. Fold ribbons for awareness campaigns (breast cancer, AIDS, immunization, etc.).
53. Create family designed flyers for volunteer opportunities.
54. Distribute marketing material for volunteer events at local stores or businesses.
55. Become a spokesfamily for a cause you care about.

### Seniors

56. Improve safety at the homes of low-income, isolated seniors.
57. Maintain yards of older adults.
58. Repair or paint the home of an elderly couple or needy family.
59. Take a homebound elderly friend to lunch or dinner.
60. Visit the Alzheimer's unit of a nursing home.
61. Hug senior citizens in rest homes.
62. Create an intergenerational wisdom

quilt (ask adults or seniors for quotes or advice to youth, write them on pieces of paper, then tape them to the wall).

63. Cut or buy fresh flowers for a nursing home or care facility.
64. Rake yards for the elderly.

## Children

65. Teach kids to swim.
66. Make “New Kid on the Block” survival kits for new kids in the neighborhood or school. Include items like a welcome card, school calendar, cool places to go, etc.
67. Play with children at an organization.
68. Collect school supplies for children in need.
69. Create safe Halloween kits (flashlight, reflective bag, etc.).
70. Make bulletin board decorations for a local school.

## Animals

71. Walk dogs at the animal shelter.
72. Do a puppy wash at the local animal shelter.
73. Help clean the animal shelter.
74. Volunteer at a zoo working with the animals.
75. Care for the pet of a sick person.
76. Provide animal care/aid for community parks or nature preserves.
77. Provide a foster home for pets.
78. Build bird houses or bird feeders.

## Drives/Fundraisers

79. Enjoy a fundraising walk for a cause the family cares about.
80. After food has been harvested from local fields, get permission to “glean” what remains (automatic harvesters often miss usable food) for donating to the local foodbank.
81. Collect teddy bears and suitcases for foster children.
82. Do a pet food and supply drive for the animal shelter.

83. Collect and wrap holiday presents for foster children or adopt-ready children.

84. Distribute water at a city festival or event or race.
85. Collect stuffed animals to donate to children in a homeless shelter.
86. Hold a coat or mitten drive.
87. Organize a fundraiser (run, walk, etc.) to send a child to summer camp.
88. Raise money to sponsor a child to camp or swimming lessons.

## Cleanup

89. Clean shelves, wash windows, etc. at a place of worship.
90. Organize a community “closet cleaning” day/week and donate old clothes and other items to a homeless shelter or other organization.
91. Shovel snow for neighbors.
92. Clean up a local school.
93. Distribute trash bags for keeping communities clean.

## Organization Tasks

94. Design invitations for a nonprofit event.
95. Address letters.
96. Stick address labels or create a mailing database for an organization’s newsletters or mailings.
97. Label and stuff envelopes for a charity.
98. Make blank name cards to personalize shelter beds.
99. Make decorations for hospital wards.

## Volunteer Vacations

100. Contact your local place of worship or medical aid organization about “mission opportunities.” You and your family can provide out-of-state or out-of-country support to families and communities. Activities include medical/clothing dropoffs, building assistance, etc.



# Planning Family Volunteer Projects

RYAN MCVAY/GETTY IMAGES



## Planning Ahead

Planning ahead is the secret to all great volunteer projects. Because families can involve all ages and abilities, you need to take the time to plan ahead for family volunteering.

Whether you are indicating which opportunities are family-friendly or helping agencies design brand new family volunteer opportunities, you need to know a few basics. The following four steps can help you create all types of successful volunteer projects for families:

**Step One: Create a Project**

**Step Two: Start Planning**

**Step Three: Protect Others and Yourself: Risk Management**

**Step Four: Show What They Accomplished**

## THREE GENERATIONS OF VOLUNTEERS

*At the age of 83, Bert Knibbe leads his family in volunteer work. His wife, two daughters, two son-in-laws, and grandchildren have all worked as volunteers on a variety of projects. They contribute approximately 150 hours per month to Habitat for Humanity, with Bert serving as many as 20 hours per week building houses. The Knibbe family demonstrates in a spectacular way how family volunteering passes the spirit of service from one generation to the next.*

—Battle Creek, MI

true story

## Step One: Create a Project

The number of projects you can create is limitless! For great project ideas, think about organization needs, Volunteer Center needs, community needs in newspapers, or current events on television. Conversations with others, brainstorming sessions with families, and your own imagination are all great resources. Chapter Two gave you a good start with 110 ideas, but don't stop there. Create something special for your community.

The **Family-Friendly Project Planning Checklist** in the HELPFUL RESOURCES section at the end of this chapter will provide you with more detailed guidelines to consider for each project.

## Is It Family-Friendly?

Once you have a project idea in mind, use the following questions to help you determine if it is truly a family-friendly opportunity.

### YES NO

- 1. Is the activity active, fun, and hands-on?
- 2. Can the activity be shared among family members?
- 3. Are you providing different activities within the project for various ages, skills and interests?
- 4. Are you flexible in schedule and work site to accommodate family hours?
- 5. Do you offer on-site training for young children and youth?
- 6. Are easy-to-read instructions provided?
- 7. Do you allow for a wide range of experience?
- 8. Does the activity provide a direct, visible impact?
- 9. Is time allotted for families to reflect on the activity and their feelings?
- 10. Is the activity of a limited duration without too many demands on volunteers?

## Step Two: Start Planning

There is no such thing as too much planning! Many of the considerations for family volunteering are the same as for other volunteer projects.

Clearly, planning an effective project means making sure you have a lot of information in place before you get started. ***Designing a Family Volunteer Opportunity*** in the HELPFUL RESOURCES at the end of the chapter will help you ask questions that are relevant for your Volunteer Center as well as for the project site.

Once the opportunity is planned, it can help to provide everyone—Volunteer Center coordinator, nonprofit volunteer coordinator, site coordinator, family volunteers, and others—with a basic information sheet about the project. ***The Family Volunteer Project Information Sheet*** in the HELPFUL RESOURCES section should do the trick. Be sure to make copies for anyone who might need information about the project.

## Planning Checklist

Use the following checklist to help determine what needs to be done in the days and weeks before the project takes place.

- Establish a planning committee.
- Give the project a catchy name that explains the work.
- Make sure there is enough time to plan for the activity.
- Do a site visit to determine how much work needs to be done.
- Make sure there is enough work for the number of volunteers and have back up work planned just in case.
- Plan a “rainy day” project in case the weather changes.
- Identify resource needs (money, supplies, food, etc.) and potential sources of donations.
- Arrange for someone to take pictures.
- Create “to do” lists of which activities are appropriate for which ages.
- Ask any necessary permissions to complete the project (schools, government, etc.).
- Check at least one week ahead of schedule on any products or services that will be delivered, then check again two days ahead.
- Keep on top of work assignments and know the number of volunteers needed for each project.
- Prepare any materials ahead of time, including nametags, written materials, training speeches, etc.
- Make the work fun, interesting, and challenging.
- Remind the organizations or site partners about the event logistics before the event.

## Step Three: Protect Others and Yourself: Risk Management

Risk management strategies are absolutely the best strategies for keeping volunteers out of legal trouble. It is much better to prevent an incident than to try to escape liability for it later. Putting a strong risk management plan into place now will help to protect everyone involved in the volunteer activity from personal harm, property loss, and lawsuits.

### Key Questions

When you are developing a risk management plan, the Nonprofit Risk Management Center in Washington, DC, suggests you ask yourself these four key questions:

#### 1. What could go wrong?

What surprises could occur in each of your key activities or programs?

#### 2. What will we do to prevent these things from going wrong?

What reasonable steps could we take to eliminate those surprises? Or what can the organization adjust or strengthen in the areas of position design, recruitment, screening, training, and supervising volunteers?

#### 3. What will we do if something does go wrong?

What if our attempts to prevent harm fails and something goes wrong anyway? Will the people on site know what to do? What will the organization do, if anything?

#### 4. How will we pay for it?

Do the potential surprises have a price tag? What might it cost if a volunteer damages a client's property? Who should pay for the medical expenses if a volunteer gets hurt? What if the program is sued? What if the volunteer doesn't have medical insurance? Do either the volunteers or the program have adequate insurance coverage or funds on hand to pay for harm?

### Insurance Policies

The types of coverages suitable for a volunteer organization depend on the nature of its operations as well as the decisions it makes about

financing risk. Some organizations are comfortable paying for losses with savings or reserve funds. Others prefer to purchase insurance policies. It is therefore impossible to describe an "adequate" insurance program for all nonprofits. However, most nonprofits should take the time to consider the policies described below as they begin the process of determining the coverage needed by the organization.

#### ◎ **Property Policy**

A property policy protects against loss to the organization's real and/or personal property.

#### ◎ **Accident and Injury Policy**

Accident and injury policies provide coverage for injuries. They may cover volunteers or clients.

#### ◎ **General Liability Policy**

General liability covers bodily injury and property damage claims filed by third parties against the organization or persons acting on its behalf. If the general liability policy does not cover volunteers, consider a separate volunteer liability policy.

#### ◎ **Non-Owned Auto Policy**

A non-owned auto policy protects the organization if a volunteer drives his or her car on behalf of the organization and the nonprofit is sued and the volunteer's personal auto insurance is insufficient to cover the loss.

Many nonprofits develop homegrown risk management programs, using outside advisors on an as-needed basis. It's a good idea to include the organization's insurance professional (agent or broker) and outside attorney on the nonprofit's risk management committee. Evaluate your plan at least annually, and make changes when developing new volunteer jobs or when programs or activities change.

### Federal and State Liability Laws

In some circumstances, the federal Volunteer Protection Act and various state laws provide limited protection to volunteers serving nonprofits or government. The Nonprofit Risk Management Center provides the following summary:

The Volunteer Protection Act [42 U.S.C. § 14503(a)] provides immunity for volunteers serving nonprofits or government for harm caused by their acts or omissions if:

1. The volunteer was acting within the scope of his or her responsibilities at the time of the act/omission.
2. Appropriate or required, the volunteer was properly licensed, certified, or authorized to act.
3. The harm wasn't caused by willful, criminal or reckless misconduct, gross negligence or a conscious, flagrant indifference to the rights or safety of the individual harmed.
4. The harm wasn't caused by the volunteer operating a motor vehicle, vessel or aircraft (where the state requires an operator's license and insurance).

However, there are many instances in which volunteers and their actions are still liable. While every state now has a volunteer protection law, the laws are only intended to keep volunteers from being afraid of being sued as a result of their volunteer duties. You should be aware that the laws leave many gaps.

Want to know about the volunteer protection laws in your state? Download the FREE publication from the Nonprofit Risk Management Center, *State Liability Laws for Charitable Organizations and Volunteers* at [www.nonprofitrisk.org/pubs/pubs.htm](http://www.nonprofitrisk.org/pubs/pubs.htm).

**VOLUNTEER PROTECTION LAWS DO NOT ELIMINATE THE NEED FOR INSURANCE, SINCE THEY DO NOT STOP LAWSUITS FROM BEING FILED OR PROVIDE COMPLETE IMMUNITY.**

## Volunteer Consent Forms

Before making a commitment, volunteers should know exactly what their obligations are and what risks may be involved. Ask adults to sign a consent form for themselves and for their children. The form should state the nature of the activity they will participate in and the risks involved. Adults/parents should sign a consent form stating that they are responsible for supervising and maintaining the safety of their children

during a volunteer activity. The sample **Volunteer Release and Waiver of Liability** provided in the HELPFUL RESOURCES section at the end of the chapter should be considered and adapted for each project. This will provide volunteers with the information they need to make an informed decision about participating in volunteer activities and will provide you with an important step in your risk management plan. Keep in mind that a waiver or consent form may not be bulletproof protection in the event of a lawsuit. But it will help to show that you requested parental consent for participation, and that you informed the parents of the nature of the activity.

## Volunteer Screening

A screening process should be used for every volunteer in your program. The extent of the screening process should be related to the degree of risk posed by the assignment. With rare exceptions, a minimum screening process should include an application, reference checks, and interview. Some organizations require a criminal background check and motor vehicle checks in addition to an application, interview, and reference checks. These may be required by the program's insurers.

**Sample Interview Questions** can be found in the HELPFUL RESOURCES section at the end of the chapter.

Even if a nonprofit organization does not require screening, you should be aware of some other possible restrictions. State regulations tend to be protective of children and may impose additional protective rules. For example, every state has established laws related to the obligation to report child abuse. There may be special restrictions to protect children's privacy. Your community may have special curfews and/or rules on nighttime activities for children. Be sure to check with your state/local law enforcement or state bar association if you have any concerns about laws or restrictions in your area. They may also be able to provide screening forms that are appropriate for your community.

## Supervision of Children

Supervision of children is critical to the success of family volunteering. It is a good idea to make sure that you have policies in place that provide for adequate supervision for children. There are three basic models for supervision; one of them should be observed as the standard for your projects.

1. Parents/guardians supervise children at all times.
2. Staff supervises adult/parent volunteers, who in turn supervise children.
3. Staff supervise adult/parent and child equally.

To assess the appropriate level of supervision for your project, take into consideration the total number of volunteers, the total number of staff, the ages and skill levels of children involved, and the risks associated with the task. Finally, regardless of the model of supervision you choose, make sure that the lines of supervision are clear. It is very important that both adults and children are aware of who has authority.

### Free Stuff!

An excellent source of risk management information is: the Nonprofit Risk Management Center, [www.nonprofitrisk.org](http://www.nonprofitrisk.org), 1001 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20036, Phone: (202) 785-3891, Fax: (202) 296-0349. They offer free tutorials and forms, free online assistance, free technical advice, and a wide range of free and reasonably priced books and information. Take advantage of their great resources for family volunteering and for other projects!

## Step Four: Show What They Accomplished

Be sure to plan to end the project early enough for discussion and reflection time. If you can provide families with a way to make a difference and to see the results of their work, then families will feel proud of their accomplishments and keep coming back to volunteer. Take time to talk about what was done and how it helped the community. Be sure to discuss tangible results as well as intangible results. Sample evaluation forms are provided in Chapter 6.

And remember, just like other volunteers, families respond to encouragement. Recognizing volunteers is probably part of what you do already; making sure you include families is easy. Recognition items can be cheap or even free—and can keep families coming back for more.

**20 Great Ways to Recognize Family Volunteers** provides you with some great ideas to get started.

### 20 Great Ways to Recognize Family Volunteers

1. Give away “Volunteer Gear”: T-shirts, hats, etc.
2. Hand out temporary tattoos (kids love these!).
3. Provide Certificates of Appreciation to all participants.
4. Feed your volunteers snacks, sodas, or cookies.
5. Put up posters at volunteer sites thanking families for participating.
6. Give families gift certificates for ice cream, pizza, etc. (donated by local merchants).
7. Send thank you cards to families after volunteer events.
8. Hold a Family Celebration Day or Family Picnic.
9. Add a Family Volunteer Award to your ongoing awards program.
10. Nominate volunteer families for the Daily Points of Light Award.
11. Nominate volunteer families for a National Family Volunteer Award.
12. Write a newspaper article about a spokesperson on National Family Volunteer Day.
13. Include a family photo in your marketing.
14. Let the family author an article about volunteering for your newsletter or local paper.
15. Greet families by name at volunteer events.
16. Give family volunteers special nametags indicating that they are family volunteers.
17. Introduce families to community leaders.
18. Create family awards in different categories, like Most Enthusiastic Family, Hardest Working Family, or Friendliest Family.
19. Publicly thank families in letters to the editor, newsletters, and newspapers.
20. Ask families to help you in designing family volunteer projects.

## More Project Planning Tools

Take a look at the **HELPFUL RESOURCES** section at the end of the chapter for project planning assistance.

The **Family-Friendly Project Checklist** lists a few things that you should consider when you want to get families involved in volunteering. You'll see that many of these ideas are exactly the same as what you'd consider for any volunteer opportunity. The only real difference is that you keep in mind the needs of families as you consider or develop projects.

**Designing a Family Volunteer Opportunity** provides you with some guidelines for planning your first family volunteer projects. This form may also be helpful to provide to nonprofit organizations as an exercise when you introduce the concept of family volunteering to them.

**The Family Volunteer Project Information Sheet** offers a one-page sheet with basic information about the project. Be sure to make copies for anyone who might be involved.

A **Volunteer Release and Waiver of Liability** should be used with each project. Providing volunteers with the information that they need to make an informed decision about participating in volunteer activities is the best protection for everyone involved.

**Sample Interview Questions** gives you a list of interview questions that can be used when interviewing family or other volunteers. These questions have been used by many Volunteer Centers and are available courtesy of the Kansas City Family Volunteering Project.

## Helpful Resources

1. Family-Friendly Project Checklist
2. Designing a Family Volunteer Opportunity
3. Family Volunteer Project Information Sheet
4. Volunteer Release and Waiver of Liability
5. Sample Interview Questions

# Family-Friendly Project Checklist

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_ Program Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Activities: \_\_\_\_\_ Program Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_ Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

## YES **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

## YES **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

## YES **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

## YES **RECOGNITION**

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

## YES **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

# Designing a Family Volunteer Opportunity

Type of family volunteer project:

---

List three ways families will benefit from participating in this activity:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

List the challenges of designing this volunteer opportunity to accommodate families, such as the schedules of different family members. Then provide a solution for each challenge.

Challenges

Solutions

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

List any special skills needed to participate in this volunteer activity. (For example: This project will require interpersonal skills or the ability to communicate in a foreign language.)

---

---

What is the minimum age required for this activity? \_\_\_\_\_

Tell why this age was selected and not a younger age.

---

Identify any barriers for elderly or physically challenged family members.

---

List any potential hazards for families participating in this activity. Then tell how you would decrease that risk.

Potential Hazards

---

---

---

---

Ways to Decrease Risk

---

---

---

---

List all the tasks that are associated with accomplishing this project and determine the ages that are capable of doing each task.

Potential Hazards	Ways to Decrease Risk
<hr/>	<hr/>

List the minimum number of adults you need for this activity: \_\_\_\_\_

Do families need to be screened for this activity?      Yes    No

What strategy or strategies would you take to screen families?

- Application
- Interview
- Background Check
- Reference Check
- Motor Vehicle Check

What type of orientation will you provide families for this project?

---

---

---

What type of supervision will you provide for this project?

- Parent supervises child
- Organization supervises parent and parent supervises child
- Organization and parent share supervision
- Other

What special measures should be taken to supervise the families?

---

---

What strategies will help entice families to volunteer for this activity with an initial and/or long-term commitment?

---

---

# Family Volunteer Project Information Sheet

Project Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Hours: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Directions to Site: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Activity: \_\_\_\_\_

Instructions: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please Wear: \_\_\_\_\_

Please Bring: \_\_\_\_\_

Rain Plans: \_\_\_\_\_

THANK YOU FOR VOLUNTEERING!

# Volunteer Release and Waiver of Liability

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby release, indemnify, and hold harmless your organization and the sponsors of the volunteer site from any and all liability claims, demands and causes of action, of whatever kind or nature (including any injury caused by negligence) incurred in conjunction with the volunteer service. In addition, your organization has my permission to use any photographs or videos taken for publicity purposes.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**IF VOLUNTEER IS UNDER 18, PARENT OR GUARDIAN MUST SIGN HERE.**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Sample Interview Questions

1. How did you hear about our organization and the volunteer program?
2. Why do you want to volunteer as a family? Why do you want to volunteer with our organization?
3. Describe your previous volunteer experiences.
4. How would you describe yourself?
5. What are your greatest strengths and weaknesses?
6. What special skills and abilities do you have (ex. areas of expertise, experience)?
7. Describe your involvement with other organizations through school, work, or the community.
8. What rewards or benefits do you expect to gain from your volunteer experience?
9. What motivates you to put forth your greatest efforts (in volunteer tasks, if applicant has volunteered before)?
10. How do you like to spend your free time?
11. Describe two accomplishments that have given you the most satisfaction.
12. What have you done as a volunteer (student, employee, etc.) of which you are most proud?
13. What do you see as the role of a volunteer?
14. How do you or would you evaluate your success as a volunteer?
15. Describe the relationship that should exist between a volunteer and his/her supervisor.
16. How do you respond to conflict?
17. How well do you accept direct supervision and constructive criticism?
18. Describe a problem that you encountered in your volunteer work (job, school, etc.), and explain how you dealt with it.
19. What would you do if (describe a situation that may occur on the volunteer job)?
20. What kind of people do you work with the best? Are there types of people with whom you feel you are unable to work?
21. If you were in the situation where you arrived for your volunteer work and something happened which meant that you were not needed, how would you feel? What would you do?
22. What would you consider to be the ideal volunteer job for you?

**Used with permission of the Kansas City Family Volunteering Project**

# Working with Nonprofit Organizations



STEVE COLE/GETTY IMAGES

## It's a Win/Win Situation

Family volunteering offers many benefits to nonprofit organizations. As the statistics below show, organizations understand how family volunteering can benefit everyone. As you introduce family volunteering in your area, it may help to keep the benefits to organizations in mind.

### Benefits to Organizations

Family volunteering benefits organizations in many ways!

- ◉ Increases the number of volunteers for the agency
- ◉ Creates life-long volunteers who are dedicated to the agency's cause
- ◉ Garners media attention for the agency
- ◉ Recruits new populations of volunteers
- ◉ Increases community awareness of agency's mission
- ◉ Provides closer ties to the community the agency serves
- ◉ Increases family awareness of community needs
- ◉ Increases agency support through volunteer communication of mission

## NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS THAT USE FAMILY VOLUNTEERING

97.6%

Report family volunteering to be very effective

96.3%

Report family volunteering offers unique ways to offer services

98.3%

Report benefits to families over and above volunteering alone

1994 Gallup Survey on Family Volunteering

facts

## Requesting a Project

You probably have great working relationships with your nonprofit organizations and are comfortable approaching them to ask them to participate in family volunteering. You might want to share some sample project ideas with them or discuss some potential benefits to their organization. The **Project Request Letter** and **Project Fax Back Form** in the HELPFUL RESOURCES section at the end of the chapter can be sent to organizations for initial project requests.

## What If They Still Say No?

Nonprofit Organizations can sometimes be resistant to adding family volunteering to what they do. And you can certainly understand their perspective: they can have limited dollars, limited staff, and limited hours, so it's difficult to add another project. Your job is to convince them that it will be to their advantage to start doing some type of family volunteering. **Five Reasons Organizations Won't Work with Families—and Five Ways to Turn that Around!** gives you some of the top reasons that organizations resist family volunteering and teaches you how to turn that to your advantage.

## Five Reasons Organizations Won't Work with Families—and Five Ways to Turn that Around!

**1. We allowed kids to volunteer here x number of years ago, and they caused trouble. We don't let kids volunteer anymore.**

Family volunteering can provide built-in supervision of children, which makes it easier for volunteer coordinators. You'd be amazed what kids can accomplish—and what great ideas they can offer—when they're given the opportunity. You can certainly give the families guidelines on appropriate and inappropriate behavior, the same as you would for any other volunteer. Perhaps you could consider trying families for just one volunteer opportunity, limiting the number of children for each opportunity, or enforcing a minimum age limit.

**2. We don't have time to do family volunteering on top of our other programs.**

We're not asking you to do more than you already do. You don't have to do any new

projects. There are probably ways you could consider working family volunteering into your existing volunteer program. Maybe you could involve a family in your next fundraiser. Or invite one or two families to join your regular group of volunteers. It helps to show people how your organization cares about families. How about trying it just once, maybe on a Day of Service?

### 3. We don't have a family-friendly environment.

Okay, so you have a warehouse or construction equipment or work with abuse victims. You're right that it isn't the most appropriate for families, especially those with small children. But maybe there are ways that families could help that wouldn't involve direct contact. Like helping to stuff envelopes for your next event. Or making cards to send out to thank your volunteers. There are lots of creative ways to involve families that still help your organization.

### 4. I don't know what to do with families.

There are lots of activities you can do with families that allow everyone to be included. Take a look at the volunteer opportunities you already do, and see if there are specific tasks that would be appropriate for certain ages. For example, if you're doing a food drive, maybe kids could sort the cans while adults load the bags. Or during a fundraising race, kids could help hand out water and t-shirts. There are probably lots of ways you can involve families you might not have considered.

### 5. Kids won't like our volunteer opportunities.

Volunteer opportunities are not about keeping kids entertained; they're about getting kids involved in helping their communities. By letting parents teach their children about what you do as an organization, you're letting those kids know why your work is important. Volunteer opportunities aren't always glamorous or exciting, and kids understand that. But also keep in mind that kids like to have responsibility, and often the things that adults don't want to do are kids' favorite tasks!

## How Can Organizations See If They're Ready?

Once you've broken the ice, you can offer a simple tool to help determine if an organization is ready for family volunteering. The **Assessment Tool for Organizations: Are You Family-Friendly?** in the HELPFUL RESOURCES section at the end of the chapter can help guide the organization on where to start and what changes to consider. Then you'll both be prepared to start family volunteering!

## Other Groups to Consider

Surprisingly enough, the nonprofit organizations you've always worked with may not always be the best place to start. According to the Independent Sector, 1 out of every 3 family volunteers learned about their volunteer opportunity from their place of worship. Many of the rest found opportunities through their own participation with an organization or group, or from their place of employment. Consider reaching out to groups that are already family-friendly, such as faith-based organizations, PTAs, civic organizations, neighborhood groups, chambers of commerce, and school districts for planning and/or leading volunteer opportunities. Broadening your existing base may prove to be a good way to introduce your nonprofit partners to family volunteering.

## Training Organizations For Family Volunteering

Organizations that are new to the concept of family volunteering may need some additional guidance. You can provide organizations with answers to basic questions, as well as plans for creating their own projects, using the materials in this book and from the Points of Light Foundation.

## Getting Organizations Started

Take a look at the HELPFUL RESOURCES section at the end of the chapter for guidance on getting organizations started with family volunteering.

The **Project Request Letter and Project Fax Back Form** are a great initial approach to organizations to see if they are interested in family volunteering.

The **Assessment Tool for Organizations: Are You Family-Friendly?** offers organizations a great way to self-quiz whether they are ready to accept families into their volunteer programs.

For an additional reference, please order the Points of Light book entitled *Family-Friendly Volunteering: A Guide for Organizations*, through the Volunteer Marketplace Catalog.

## Helpful Resources

1. Project Request Letter
2. Project Fax-Back Form
3. Assessment Tool for Organizations: Are You Family-Friendly?

# Project Request Letter: To be printed on your letterhead and sent to nonprofit organization

*Date*

*Name of Volunteer Coordinator*

*Name of Nonprofit Organization*

*Address*

*City, State ZIP*

Dear *Name of Volunteer Coordinator*:

Let us show you how family volunteering can work for your organization!

We would like to invite you to join us in *Name of City's* family volunteering initiative. The *Name of Volunteer Center* is working closely with the Points of Light Foundation & Volunteer Center National Network to showcase the positive benefits of family volunteering nationwide.

Family volunteering can benefit your organization by:

- 1) Increasing your volunteer base
- 2) Increasing publicity about your organization through anticipated media coverage
- 3) Opening doors for your organization to talk with potential new corporate and civic partners

How can you become involved? We would like to ask your organization to provide a project for volunteer families for *Name of Event on Date of Event*. We hope to have hundreds of volunteers working on family-oriented projects in and around *Name of City*, starting with the *Name of Event*. We can even provide you with some great project ideas and guidance in developing projects for families.

For now, we simply need to know whether you will join the effort. Won't you please take a moment to fill out the attached fax-back form and return it to me at XXX-XXXX?

Please don't hesitate to contact me at XXX-XXXX if you have any questions about family volunteering. We would love for you to join our efforts to strengthen families and provide them with wonderful volunteer opportunities.

Sincerely,

*Signature*

Enclosures

**Enclose the following with this letter: Project fax-back form**

# Project Fax-Back Form: Enclose with Project Request Letter

## **The *Name of Volunteer Center* wants you to join in *Name of Event* in *Name of City*!**

**TO:** *Name of Volunteer Coordinator*  
*Name of Nonprofit Organization*  
*FAX Number*

We hope you will join us *Date of Event*, as we celebrate family volunteering by offering *Name of City* residents the opportunity to give back to our community.

Please check the appropriate box(es) and fax this form back to us. Thanks for your time!

- YES!** Our organization will provide a project for family volunteers *Date of Event*. We also will help in the following ways:
  - Endorse family volunteering in our community. Please feel free to add our name to your list of *Name of City* companies, organizations, and not-for-profit organizations that support this worthwhile effort
  - Include an article on family volunteering in our member newsletter
  - Provide information on family volunteering to our members
  - Post a flyer on our bulletin boards
  - Provide a link from our Web site to your Web site. Our URL is:  
http://\_\_\_\_\_
  - Sorry, this isn't a good year for us, but please keep us in mind for next year!

If your organization is unable to provide a project, please feel free to participate by checking as many of the options listed above as possible.

Thank you!

**Please Fax Back to: Name of Spokesperson | Fax: XXX-XXXX**

# Assessment Tool for Organizations

## Are You Family-Friendly?

1. Does organization management support the idea of family volunteering?  Yes  No
2. Are you aware of what staff may need to implement family volunteering?  Yes  No
3. Have you identified a key person who can help promote and develop family volunteer opportunities?  Yes  No
4. Do you need policy changes to implement family volunteering?  Yes  No
5. Do you have a minimum age requirement for volunteers?  Yes  No
6. Would your organization consider accepting children younger than the policy states if they were accompanied by an adult?  Yes  No
7. Are you aware of families who volunteer in your program?  Yes  No
8. Are families involved in developing family volunteer opportunities?  Yes  No
9. Does your organization have an established policy regarding supervising families, especially those with younger children?  Yes  No
10. Are your organization's work hours flexible enough to accommodate families?  Yes  No
11. Do you currently promote your volunteer program or activities to families in your community?  Yes  No
12. Can any of your volunteer opportunities be done at home?  Yes  No
13. Is adequate supervision provided during activities?  Yes  No
14. Would you consider providing childcare for special projects?  Yes  No
15. Do your publications and other external materials contain images of various types of family units?  Yes  No

16. Do you have the capacity to track the number of family volunteers and the hours they serve?  Yes  No
17. Do you have evaluation tools that can be used with families to help Measure impact?  Yes  No
18. Have you defined family volunteers' jobs clearly, spelling out specific activities to be undertaken with understandable and logical goals?  Yes  No
19. Have you looked at each activity to determine if it is appropriate for families with young children?  Yes  No
20. Do you have liability insurance?  Yes  No

# Hey, Mom, I'm on TV!

## Media and Marketing

RYAN MCVAY/GETTY IMAGES



chapter



### Getting Media Attention

Family volunteering is a great local “feel good” story. You may find you can get more media attention from family volunteering than from other volunteer projects: families working together to change their communities for the better create heartwarming photos and coverage. Here’s how to win great coverage for your family volunteering event in a few simple steps. Sample materials are at the end of the chapter.

#### Step One: Identify a coordinator

It helps to have one central person as a contact for media. That person can serve as a spokesperson, speaking in public and participating in media interviews.

#### Step Two: Identify a spokesfamily

Providing a spokesfamily that symbolizes the theme of family volunteering can give you instant media coverage. Putting a human face on the story is key for media interest. Choose a family whose members are long-term volunteers and who are willing to speak in public and in front of the media. They do not necessarily need

## THE INTERVIEW

*“Hello, Brilliant Volunteer Center Director—Would you please tell our viewers how you built this beautiful volunteer project engaging thousands of volunteers in positive work for our community?”*

imagine this

to be polished or media-savvy; the simplest statements of why someone volunteers can be the most moving. You might also want to choose a backup family in case time concerns or other issues arise.

Make sure to provide the family with clear information or a list of talking points to help guide them in their interviews and make them more comfortable. Covering a spokesperson while they are volunteering is ideal, offering both visual appeal for the media and a comfort zone for the family volunteers.

### Step Three: Identify a Local Celebrity as Spokesperson

You might want to consider inviting well-known local personalities and their families to volunteer. Having a celebrity spokesperson can help raise awareness of your Volunteer Center, winning you support from new segments of the community. Choose people with high visibility—like government officials, sports figures, business leaders, entertainers, and media personalities.

Choose two or three potential celebrity spokespersons. Send a letter to the celebrity. Follow up with a phone call to confirm receipt of

the letter, provide additional information or answer questions. When they confirm participation, send a follow-up letter to say thank you and provide information. Book your celebrity on local radio and television talk shows to recruit family volunteers; interviews should occur two to three weeks before the event. Assign your celebrity and his/her family members to a project. Direct the media to that site for photo opportunities. Make sure the site has lots of activities and good visuals. Send a thank you to the celebrity and his/her family along with any photos or award certificates.

### Step Four: Secure Proclamations

A proclamation from your mayor, county official or governor adds credibility and significance for the work and effort you’ve put forth. The proclamation can be read at volunteer sites. Six weeks before the event, call the government official’s office to determine the name of the person who handles proclamations. Send a letter requesting a proclamation to the contact person and submit supporting materials (news releases, fact sheets). Follow up with a phone call to be certain that the request was received, to determine if additional information is needed, and to find the time frame to expect a

completed proclamation. When you have received the proclamation, send a thank you to the official and/or contact person. Frame your proclamation and visibly display it.

## Step Five: Gain Newspaper, Television, and Radio Coverage

Don't rely on a press release to get you the best media coverage. To "spread the word," you'll need to build a media list of contact names and information at various media outlets.

Remember that media relations are a lot like sales. You may have to talk to many people to close just one deal. If you mail releases and follow up with 20 reporters and you get two to three stories as a result, your efforts will be a great success!

- ◎ Build your media list the same way you build your professional network. Make calls and keep records of names, phone numbers, dates of contact, topics, etc. Make sure you have correct spellings, addresses, fax, and numbers. You will have different contacts for radio, television, and newspaper:

**TV:** News assignment editor, producers of the stations' morning, midday and/or talk shows, the community calendar editor, and public service director.

**Radio:** News director, producer of the stations' morning and/or talk shows, and public service director. Be cautious of approaching "shock jock" stations that may not handle your news in a tasteful manner.

**Print:** Magazine editors, newspaper lifestyle or metro section editors, and/or feature reporters, photo desk editors, community calendar editors, and public service directors. At smaller daily or weekly newspapers, ask for the name, address, phone, and fax numbers of the managing editor or special sections editor.

Relationships are the best starting point when pitching your news story. Find out ahead of time

if any of your personal media contacts are interested. If your contacts tell you they aren't the right reporter or editor, they'll usually be kind enough to refer you to the appropriate person. Update your list with the new contact names.

The following table defines each piece of information you would send out and who would receive it. Samples of each item are available in the HELPFUL RESOURCES section at the end of the chapter.

## Media Materials

Information Piece	Function	Who receives it?
<b>Pitch Letter</b>	Written sales tool, used to pique interest in your event	Specifically customized for each: Photo desk editor (newspaper) Feature reporter (newspaper) Radio news director Magazine editor (magazine) TV/Radio talk show producer
<b>News Release</b>	Generates interest, often becomes the first three paragraphs of the article	Photo desk editor Feature reporter Assignment editor Radio news director TV/Radio talk show producer Magazine editor
<b>Fact Sheet</b>	Provides background information like facts and figures to help reporters build a story	Photo desk editor Feature reporter Assignment editor Radio news director TV/Radio talk show producer Magazine editor
<b>Community Calendar Entry</b>	Short, concise entry for calendar	Community calendar editor
<b>Media Alert</b>	Conveys urgent reminders to the recipient. Sent one to two days before the event	Photo desk editor TV news assignment editor Feature reporters
<b>Site Map</b>	Assists in getting reporters to the actual location of your event	Everyone
<b>Public Service Announcement (PSA)</b>	Brief script delivered to radio and TV to be read on air	TV promotion director or news assignment editor Radio news director
<b>Spokesfamily Biographical Sketch</b>	Provides one-paragraph description of the family's interest	Photo desk editor Feature reporter Assignment editor Radio & TV news director TV/Radio talk show producer Magazine editor

- ⦿ **Send your potential news stories packaged in a “media kit”.** A media kit is typically a glossy folder with the company’s or organization’s logo on the cover with specific information in the left and right pockets. Simply purchase (approximately 25) red enamel-coated pocket folders and adhere a label with your logo and the organization and event name on the outside of the folders.

Paperclip a customized pitch letter to the outside front cover of the media kit folder. Materials should be assembled in the media kit according to the chart below (Order is from top to bottom).

### Left Pocket

Volunteering site map  
Local spokesfamily bio

### Right Pocket

News release  
Fact sheet  
Community calendar entry  
Radio/TV PSA (to radio and TV outlets only)

- ⦿ Mail your materials to the media according to the following timeline. The media’s deadlines are set in stone. If you do not meet them, they will not cover your story.

In general:

**Magazines** usually prefer several months’ notice. Since most city magazines set their own print deadlines, it’s best simply to call and ask how much advance notice they require on a story.

**Daily and Weekly Newspapers, Radio and Television Talk Shows** require about two to three weeks’ notice.

**Local Television** news assignment editors prefer only a few days’ notice.

We’ve included a Media Contact Timeline for more details on when to contact.

**If the media responds, be sure you and your spokesperson or spokesfamily are ready, and be as helpful as possible.** If a TV crew is on the way, be sure everyone (including volunteers and service recipients) is willing to be filmed on camera. Have key people review the message points to prepare for interviews.

**Be sure to meet deadlines.** While your contacts already have the news release, they may require additional information or want to use you as a resource in a related story. Always return phone calls and requests for information in a timely manner. Most publications have specific issue dates and deadlines that can not be extended.

**“Think visual” when showcasing your story to the media.** TV is unlikely to carry a story about a bunch of people standing around talking, but they will respond to scenes that can be shot on television, such as:

- ⦿ Volunteers wearing event day t-shirts
- ⦿ Kids working with parents
- ⦿ You standing next to a banner at the volunteer site with your organization’s logo underneath
- ⦿ People cooking together, cleaning a park together, bathing animals, etc.

## Media Contact Timeline

<b>TASK</b>	<b>DATE TO BE COMPLETED</b>
<b>Send media kit to magazine editors</b>	No later than three weeks before their deadline
<b>Send community calendar entry to newspapers, TV and radio stations</b>	Every Monday morning beginning one month prior to event
<b>Send public service announcement (PSA) script to radio public service or public affairs directors</b>	One month prior to event. Some stations may require longer lead times.
<b>Send media kit and customized pitch letter suggesting an interview with your spokespeople to television talk show and radio guest spot producers</b>	One month prior to event
<b>Send media kit and appropriate pitch letters to newspaper feature reporters, photo desk editors and radio station news directors</b>	No later than three weeks prior to event
<b>Place follow-up calls to television talk show and radio guest spot producers</b>	Three weeks prior to event
<b>Make follow-up calls to newspaper and radio station news directors</b>	Two weeks prior to event
<b>Fax the media alert to everyone listed in the chart</b>	Three days prior to event
<b>Make follow-up calls to television and newspaper editors</b>	Three days prior to event

## Step Six: Follow up with the Media

When working with the media, the most common mishaps occur with the follow-up phone call. Once you've delivered your news on time and in an interesting way, the next step is to pick up the phone.

**Call your media contacts.** This is an opportunity to explain more about why your organization is working with the Points of Light Foundation & Volunteer Center National Network and how family volunteering will make a positive impact in your community. When making calls to your contacts, remember four things:

1. **Reporters, editors and producers are almost always working against deadlines, so keep the conversations brief and to the point.** The best time to reach print reporters is usually after 3 p.m. (unless your city's daily newspaper is an afternoon one instead of a morning one), and television reporters and assignment editors are usually available to discuss story ideas between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m.
2. **Tell the editor or reporter that you sent information about the family volunteering event, and that you hoped it could be shared with (readers/viewers/listeners).** Also offer to tell the reporter or editor more about the event, and why family volunteering is especially important to the community.
3. **Be ready to fax an additional copy of your information.** Journalists receive huge amounts of mail. If the reporter doesn't remember the information, just send another copy.
4. **Emphasize what is new and innovative about family volunteering.** For example, family volunteering will create new opportunities to strengthen families and boost community growth in your hometown. Discuss one of your projects or a local success story to bring your story to life.

## Step Seven: Create Message Points

You've successfully convinced reporters to interview you. Now what? Look to your message points for your answers. Message points are the main ideas you want the media to convey about your topic or event. They keep you focused when pitching and delivering the story.

When you make follow-up calls to your local media, you should answer the question, then refer to your message points. The same is true any time you talk to a reporter. There are three main message points for family volunteering.

These message points are designed to help guide you through the interview. The three numbered themes are your primary messages. If you forget everything else, remember these three messages. Additional comments help develop your theme, particularly for radio and print interviews. If your interview is only two to three minutes, as is likely to happen in television, then lean on the highlights as your primary message points. **NOTE: Do NOT provide these notes to the reporter!!!**

After you've reviewed the following message points, make copies for your spokesperson and/or celebrity spokesperson:

# Family Volunteering Message Points

## 1. Family volunteering works.

### It strengthens the family.

- ⊙ Promotes positive values, creates new opportunities to communicate, and focuses on the importance of teamwork

### It strengthens the community.

- ⊙ Encourages people to get involved, improves the community's overall environment— attracting new business, new people, new commitment, new ideas

### It strengthens local business.

- ⊙ Improves employee morale and creates a greater understanding of family and community concerns

### It strengthens nonprofits.

- ⊙ Increases community awareness of important social needs and expands the volunteer base

## 2. Your organization, the Points of Light Foundation & Volunteer Center National Network work together nationwide to connect families and communities.

- ⊙ (This is a good place to insert information about your organization and what it does to address various social needs in your community.)
- ⊙ The Points of Light Foundation & Volunteer Center National Network create family volunteering opportunities by creating linkages between neighborhoods, businesses, nonprofit organizations and state and local organizations. Just call 1-800-VOLUNTEER (1-800-865-8683) to learn more.
- ⊙ The Points of Light Foundation's goal is to make family volunteering the norm across America.

## 3. There's a role for everyone in family volunteering.

- ⊙ In today's society, there are many definitions of "family." It can include mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, grandparents, and even neighbors or mentors. The bottom line is that all families can make a difference by getting involved in family volunteering.
- ⊙ The corporate community can play two key roles—providing human support by rallying their employees' families to participate, and providing financial support to further the year-round efforts.
- ⊙ And there's certainly a role for nonprofit organizations, community leaders, civic and religious groups. Your organization has taken on the role of coordinating efforts here in your city. Other supporters include the National Tabletop and Giftware Association, KPMG, Alliance for Children & Families, Telephone Pioneers of America, and the Veterans of Foreign Wars. These organizations are involving their members' families in family volunteering nationwide.

Get involved! Call your organization at XXX-XXXX or the Points of Light Foundation at 1-800-VOLUNTEER.

## Step Eight: Prepare for an Interview

If someone from the media is interested in a story about family volunteering, he or she may want to do the interview in person or over the phone. Interviews are always a great chance to share your message with the public and give a call to action, so make sure you are prepared. Here are a few tips for interviews:

**Know what you want to communicate.** Know your message points.

**Rehearse with a friend or co-worker.** It will help you develop clear, concise messages that will benefit your efforts.

**Pace yourself.** If the interview is for a television or radio station, ask if the interview will be live or taped. Live interviews normally last only two or three minutes, and when you are live, there is no opportunity for editing. A taped interview might last 5 or 10 minutes, because the reporter will have time to edit the story to a shorter length before it airs. A newspaper interview can be any length and will be edited to fit the story.

**Remember that the media love visual, interactive stories.** If possible, identify a family that is successfully volunteering in your community. Ask the family if they would be willing to be interviewed by the media. You could invite a reporter to accompany them during one of their volunteer projects. This offers a compelling human interest story with lots of visuals. Newspaper and radio reporters also will appreciate the first person account of what makes family volunteering so special. However, this tactic is not necessary for every media opportunity.

Here is an extra idea for television. Producers like to use on-screen graphics. You might provide text such as this for them to use.

For more information about family volunteering, call the Volunteer Center at 1-800-VOLUNTEER (1-800-865-8683) or visit the Points of Light Foundation's website at [www.pointsoflight.org](http://www.pointsoflight.org)

## Tips for Interviewing:

- ⊙ Know what you want to communicate and don't be afraid to repeat yourself. Live by your message points.
- ⊙ Short answers are better than long ones. Stop talking when you're done making your point.
- ⊙ This is not a confrontational interview. Why not smile when you're talking? You'll sound more enthusiastic.
- ⊙ Don't overlap the interviewer's question. Begin your answer when he or she is finished.
- ⊙ Speak in complete sentences.
- ⊙ Avoid jargon and acronyms. Speak as simply as possible.
- ⊙ Don't repeat a negative. Example: "Aren't you an alien?" Don't answer with, "I'm not an alien."
- ⊙ Keep your hands free, open and animated. Gesture as you normally would.
- ⊙ Plan what you'd like to say if asked, "Is there anything else that you'd like to say?" You should recap each of your message points as a response.
- ⊙ Always assume the camera is on.
- ⊙ Resist the urge to lean into the microphone.
- ⊙ Television is an intimate medium. Speak in personal, anecdotal terms. Use analogies to illustrate your point. Don't be afraid to tell "your story."
- ⊙ Body language is important for television. Practice by talking into a mirror. People will remember how they felt about you more than they'll remember what you said.
- ⊙ Mention the Points of Light website at [www.pointsoflight.org](http://www.pointsoflight.org)
- ⊙ Remember, there is no such thing as "off the record."

**Create your own list of questions similar to the Sample Interview Questions that follow and take them with you to your radio or TV interview.** When you offer the list to the host, say something like, "I'm sure you already know where you want to go with this interview, but I thought it might help to give you some of the typical questions we're asked about family

volunteering.” Print the questions on your letterhead with your name, title, address and phone number, then take it with you to the interview.

**What do I do if and when the general public responds?** Now there’s a problem worth talking about! Get ready for volunteer response by:

- ⦿ Signing volunteers up for the event you’re promoting.
- ⦿ Adding the names of new volunteers to your mailing list, so you’ll be sure to include them in ongoing opportunities and mailings.
- ⦿ Creating a list of organizations that would welcome groups of family volunteers throughout the year.
- ⦿ Sending thank you notes that encourage them to link with neighborhood organizations or religious groups to volunteer. Include a copy of your list of organizations that welcome family volunteers.

## Sample Interview Questions

**Q Families don’t really have time to volunteer, do they?**

**A** Well, taking time to volunteer together provides quality family time, while simultaneously allowing families to make significant contributions to their communities. We just want everyone in (your city) to know that family volunteering really does work.

**Q What is family volunteering all about?**

**A** Family volunteering encourages families to volunteer together, as a unit. Volunteering can provide extraordinary family learning opportunities, chances to instill positive values, and ways to strengthen family bonds.

**Q Why did your organization get involved in family volunteering?**

**A** We believe that family volunteering works for our community. It’s a way to bring families, the companies they work for, nonprofit organizations and the community closer together in addressing important social needs (You can talk briefly here about your organization and its intrinsic value to the local community).

**Q How does it work?**

**A** Families benefit because volunteering together promotes positive values and gives the family a chance to work as a team. The volunteer work strengthens nonprofit organizations by expanding their volunteer base and increasing awareness of their missions. And overall, our city benefits because social needs are addressed, making the community more cohesive and attractive to new business.

### Q Who is involved in family volunteering?

A (List any local companies or organizations that are pitching in and encouraging their employees and their families to participate.)

### Q How do communities get involved with family volunteering?

A We will be (insert local project information here). It should be a great time for everyone, and (insert local celebrity participants) will be on hand to help out as well. We're going to have a lot of fun with hundreds of (your city) families.

### Q How can I sign up?

A Our Volunteer Center and the Points of Light Foundation invite everyone to get involved. Our community needs volunteers year-round. We really want families to understand that family volunteering works, and they can make it part of their lives. If you're interested, just call us at XXX-XXXX.

*Note: If time allows, and you feel that you are getting your message points across, you may consider sharing a personal story about a family you know that has benefited from volunteering together.*

## Step Nine: Plan Day of Event Logistics

- ⦿ **Bring cameras and make sure there's one person at each site designated to take pictures.** Even if you hire a photographer to take "official" photos, you'll want snapshots of all the activity and of the volunteer families, corporate partners, celebrity spokesperson, etc. Consider working with a local college photography class to provide student photographers.
- ⦿ **Be sure to have copies of the news release and fact sheet (or media kits) available at each site.** Often reporters are sent out on a

story without being armed with the background materials. Make sure your spokesperson(s) deliver the key message for family volunteering (NOTE: Message points are for your use only and should NEVER be handed out to the media).

- ⦿ **Carry a list of the locations, directions and telephone numbers of any other family volunteering projects.** If someone shows up at the wrong site, or a reporter needs the location of an additional project to cover, you can direct him or her quickly.
- ⦿ **Consider renting, or if a wireless telephone company is one of your corporate partners, borrowing cell phones for the day.** They will come in handy when you want to check in with staff at each of the project sites, or to alert a project that a reporter is on the way. Make sure all staff have a list of cell phone numbers.
- ⦿ **If possible, have a short welcoming "ceremony" prior to putting the volunteers to work.** Take ten minutes to greet and thank the families for their participation, read the proclamation, acknowledge any dignitaries present, as well as the key staff from the organization that is the day's benefactor. Don't forget to mention key messages about your Volunteer Center and the Points of Light Foundation.
- ⦿ **Make sure you establish an appropriate window of time when the media are invited to cover the event.** You probably want the media to be present during the time when the most volunteers are present and enthusiasm and energy levels are higher.
- ⦿ **Determine the times that your celebrity families and/or other dignitaries will be present.** Because of their busy schedules, they may not be available for an entire day.
- ⦿ **Make every opportunity to engage all volunteers in the project.** It's important that everyone who shows up leaves with a feeling of accomplishment and good will. You want them to get bitten by the family volunteering bug, especially if they're first-timers!

- ⦿ **Make the most of any existing relationships you and other organizations have with the media as you begin your media list research.**

Now sit back and enjoy the positive results of media coverage! Be sure to write personal thank yous to any reporters who took the time to cover your family volunteering story. The next time you run an event, you'll have a good media track record and getting coverage will be even easier. Congratulations on a job well done!

## Media Types and How to Use Them

### TELEVISION

Use television when you are trying to recruit large numbers of volunteers.

#### **Advantages:**

- ⦿ It reaches a wide audience quickly
- ⦿ It provides strong visual images
- ⦿ It motivates people to act

#### **Disadvantages:**

- ⦿ News stories are typically short and therefore may not be able to convey all that you would like about your family volunteering project.
- ⦿ News of the day may preempt your story from airing.
- ⦿ The reporter covering your story may not give it the "spin" you would like or may inadvertently misrepresent the facts.

#### **Types of opportunities to recruit families through television:**

**Feature stories:** When "pitching" a story to a local television station, be sure your story is interesting and compelling. Do not be discouraged if your story is at first rejected. Also, after your story airs, be prepared for a high-volume but short-lived response.

**Talk shows:** The recent explosion of local cable television shows offers numerous opportunities for you to recruit volunteers through these media. Call the producers of the programs you feel are most appropriate and give them good reasons why they should cover your story (e.g., public interest, need to recruit volunteer families, community benefits).

**Public Service Announcements (PSAs):** Good PSAs can generate excellent responses. And because the media often will donate airtime for PSAs, they can be an excellent way of getting your recruitment message to the

public. But before you go to the trouble of producing a PSA, make sure you know its chances of getting on the air. Every broadcaster treats them differently. Television stations, for example, prefer PSAs that look like real commercials.

**Event calendars:** Event calendars provide brief descriptions of local upcoming events, programs and sponsors. Be sure to check the deadlines, which often can be weeks in advance of the airing date.

## PRINTED MATERIALS

Print communication can come in a variety of forms, such as weekly or daily newspapers, magazines, newsletters or computer bulletin board.

### Advantages:

- ⊙ They provide more in-depth coverage than radio or TV.
- ⊙ They can be clipped and easily passed on to other readers.
- ⊙ They can include photos for visual appeal.

### Disadvantages:

- ⊙ Smaller publications have limited circulation.
- ⊙ They have less emotional appeal than TV.
- ⊙ Readers may not read the entire article.

### Types of opportunities to recruit families through print:

**Flyers/Posters:** These should be colorful, friendly and portray images of all types of families. They should be displayed in areas frequented by families such as schools, libraries, places of worship and employment, grocery stores, fast-food restaurants, senior and youth community centers, human service organizations, doctors' offices, etc.

**Publications:** Include articles in publications that target family audiences, and describe the impact your family volunteering program has on the community. Place recruitment notices in your local community newspaper.

**Brochures:** Recruitment brochures should describe, in an informative, easy-to-read style, your family volunteering program and the important role participants play. Mail or hand out the brochure at shopping malls, doctors' offices, community centers, schools, etc. Include contact information and translate your brochures into languages other than English, when appropriate.

**Newsletters and calendars of events:** Use these to inform the public of your organization's volunteer opportunities.

**News releases:** Include contact names and telephone numbers and a description of the organization releasing the news. Limit the news release to two or three pages.

**Editorials:** An editorial in your local newspaper offers high visibility and is an excellent tool for informing the community about the benefits of family volunteering.

## RADIO

Radio stations have a wide variety of formats. Target those that have their own news department.

### Advantages:

- ⊙ Radio offers the opportunity to reach many listeners.
- ⊙ PSAs can be repeated frequently.

### Disadvantages:

- ⊙ Radio news stories are typically short and may not be able to convey all that you would like about your family volunteering project.
- ⊙ No visuals.

### Types of opportunities to recruit families through the radio:

**Talk shows:** Talk-radio programs offer numerous opportunities for recruiting volunteers. Call the producers of the programs you feel are most appropriate and give them good reasons why they should cover your story (e.g., public interest, need to recruit volunteer families, community benefits).

**Public service announcements:** Develop 30-, 15-, and 10-second PSAs. Some stations want only a script that can be read on the air; others may prefer PSAs on CDs or audio reel tapes. Expect a two-week delay before your PSA gets on the air.

## Tools for Effective Media Use

Take a look at the HELPFUL RESOURCES section at the end of the chapter for forms and letters that will help you use the media most effectively to get your message across.

The **News Release** and **Fact Sheet** are sent to all media outlets to notify them of your event.

The **Media Alert** is an urgent reminder of your upcoming event, providing them again with information on what will happen, where and when.

The **Public Service Announcement** is a brief script for radio and television ads spotlighting your event.

The **Media List Worksheet** gives you a record for your contacts. This should be updated on an ongoing basis for all Volunteer Center events.

The **Print Pitch Letter**, **TV Talk Show Pitch Letter**, and **Radio Pitch Letter** provide written requests for coverage and/or appearances.

The **Community Calendar Entry** is a brief update on your event for ongoing publication in community calendars.

The **Proclamation Request Letter** requests an official proclamation to be issued related to your event.

The **Celebrity Request Letter** and **Spokesfamily Thank You/Confirmation Letter** provide written requests for a celebrity and/or spokesfamily to join you in promoting your event.

## Helpful Resources

1. News Release
2. Fact Sheet
3. Media Alert
4. Public Service Announcement
5. Media List Worksheet
6. Print Pitch Letter
7. TV Talk Show Pitch Letter
8. Radio Pitch Letter
9. Community Calendar Entry
10. Proclamation Request Letter
11. Celebrity Request Letter
12. Spokesfamily Thank You/Confirmation Letter

# News Release: Send to news outlets on your letterhead

Contact: *Name of Spokesperson*  
*Name of Volunteer Center*  
*XXX-XXXX*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **NAME OF CITY PARTICIPATES IN NAME OF EVENT**

### **Families unite to volunteer on *Date of Event***

*(Name of City, Name of State—Date of Release)—(Name of City)*, known for its spirit of giving, will link its families with families all across America in volunteering together. On *Date of Event*, *Name of Volunteer Center* will work with area families and businesses to launch *Name of City's Name of Event*. Area families, corporations, not for-profit organizations, civic organizations and *Name of Volunteer Center* have been working diligently to make family volunteering a success in our community. The *Name of Volunteer Center* is working closely with the Points of Light Foundation & Volunteer Center National Network toward the long-term goal of making year-round family volunteering the norm in America.

### **QUOTE FROM SPOKESFAMILY**

*(ex. Introduction of Spokesfamily Member. "We've been involved in many volunteer activities as a family, and we gained a great deal from it. We like being with each other. Working together, we've helped make the community a better place. I can't think of another activity that makes me closer to my family than showing them how to succeed by helping others. I get to be a hero with my family and show them how to be heroes in the community. Family volunteering honors what we've known all along: that one family can make a difference.")*

Locally, *Name of Event* will tackle *Description of Project* at *Location of Project*.

"In today's frantic, fast-paced world, America's families need meaningful opportunities to spend time together," says *Name of Volunteer Center's Name of Spokesperson*. "Family volunteering works. It connects families and communities, and it's easy to get involved. *Name of Event* shows there's a role for everyone. We hope it will be the first step in engaging families in year-round, community-oriented volunteer projects. We encourage families throughout our community to join us for *Name of Event on Date of Event* as we work together to help others."

## Fact Sheet: Send to news outlets on your letterhead

### FAMILY VOLUNTEERING

#### What is Family Volunteering?

Family volunteering encourages families to volunteer together, as a unit. Family volunteering is more common than you may think.

- ⊙ 51% of all volunteers have done volunteer work with a family member (Independent Sector, 2000).

#### How Will Family Volunteering Help Our Community?

Families benefit! Family volunteering:

- ⊙ Provides quality family time
- ⊙ Strengthens family communications
- ⊙ Provides opportunities for family members to be role models
- ⊙ Allows families to make significant contributions to their communities
- ⊙ Family volunteers perform, on average, 23% more hours of volunteer work per week than other volunteers (Independent Sector, 1999).

Nonprofit organizations benefit! Family volunteering:

- ⊙ Creates life-long volunteers who are dedicated to the organization's cause
- ⊙ Increases community awareness of the organization's mission
- ⊙ Increases the organization's number of volunteers
- ⊙ Provides closer ties to the community the organization serves
- ⊙ 97.6% of nonprofit organizations using family volunteering report that it is very effective (Gallup Survey on Family Volunteering, 1994).

#### Information on Name of Event

**Name of Volunteer Center is working with area families and businesses to launch Name of Event!**

**Name of Project, Time of Project, Location of Project, Description of Project**

ex., **Spreading the Joy of Thanksgiving**

9 a.m.–noon • Address, City and State

*Volunteers will share Thanksgiving a week early with children living at the shelter. Activities include baking cookies, creating and writing Thanksgiving cards, and sharing Thanksgiving stories. List any celebrity spokesperson that will also volunteer at this site.*

#### Family Volunteering Has National Support

The Points of Light Foundation & Volunteer Center National Network in Washington, DC have bonded together to bring family volunteering to your community! By offering family volunteer opportunities, your local Volunteer Center will be creating linkages between neighborhoods, businesses, nonprofit organizations and state and local organizations.

**Find out how family volunteering is impacting your neighborhoods!**

**Call 1-800-VOLUNTEER (1-800-865-8683) or XXX-XXXX to learn more.**

## Media Alert: Send to Radio, TV and Print Reporters One Week Prior to Event.

### MEDIA ALERT

Timely and Relevant Local News Story/Photo Opportunities

- WHAT:** ***Name of Event***  
*Name of Volunteer Center* is working with area families and businesses to launch *Name of City's Name of Event*. Families will gather at the following locations to participate in volunteer projects:
- ⦿ *Name of Project*
  - ⦿ *Name of Project*
  - ⦿ *Name of Project*
- WHEN:** ***Date***
- WHO:** Area families, corporations, not for-profit organizations, civic organizations and *Name of Volunteer Center* have been working diligently to make family volunteering a success in our community. The *Name of Spokesfamily* family will be volunteering and available for interviews at the *Name of Project*.
- WHERE:** *Name of Project, Time of Project, Location of Project, Description of Project*  
*ex., **Spreading the Joy of Thanksgiving***  
*g a.m.–noon • Address, City and State*  
*Volunteers will share Thanksgiving a week early with children living at the shelter. Activities include baking cookies, creating and writing Thanksgiving cards, and sharing Thanksgiving stories. List any celebrity spokesperson that will also volunteer at this site.*
- WHY:** Family volunteering works! The *Name of Volunteer Center* is working closely with the Points of Light Foundation & Volunteer Center National Network toward the long-term goal of making year-round family volunteering the norm in America.
- Family volunteering strengthens families, local companies, not-for-profit organizations and the entire community. For more information, call *Name of Spokesperson* at XXX-XXXX.

## **Public Service Announcement: Send to radio and TV every Monday until day of event**

### ***“Name of Event in Name of City”***

**Local Contact:** *Name of Spokesperson*  
*Name of Volunteer Center*  
**Phone:** *XXX-XXXX*  
**Air Dates:** *Dates for Airing PSA {ex. November 8–November 20, 2002}*  
**Length:** 30 seconds

On *Date of Event*, *Name of Volunteer Center* will link families in your city with families all across America in volunteering together.

Family volunteering is a great way to spend quality time with your loved ones while giving back to the community. Organize a project with your church, a local charity or your neighborhood.

Start a new family tradition and help others in your hometown while growing together as a family.

To learn more about volunteering as a family in *Name of City*, call *Name of Volunteer Center* at 1-800-VOLUNTEER or *XXX-XXXX* today!

# Media List Worksheet

Include:

- Magazines:** Managing editor or feature story editor
- Television News:** Assignment editor and morning and/or noon show producers
- Newspapers:** General features reporter or editor/photo desk editor
- Community Calendar Editors:** Newspapers, radio and TV
- Radio News:** News directors and morning show producer
- Public Service/Promotion Directors:** Radio and TV

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Media Outlet \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Notes \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Media Outlet \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Notes \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Media Outlet \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Notes \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Media Outlet \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Notes \_\_\_\_\_

## Print Pitch Letter: Send to newspapers/magazines on your letterhead one month prior to event

*Date*

*Name*

*Title*

*Publication*

*Address*

*City, State ZIP*

Dear *Name*:

The *Family Name* family of *Name of City* proves that family volunteering works! *Insert frequency and participants {Once a month the Smiths, their two sons, an uncle and neighbor} volunteer together at the {Name of organization}, insert Activity {sorting and distributing used clothing for area school children}.* The time they spend together has proven invaluable for building community relationships, teaching their children new values, and carving out quality time together that is fun and meaningful.

On *Date of Project*, the *Family Name* will join many other families to participate in *Name of Event*. *Name of Volunteer Center* is organizing *Name of City's* efforts to join hundreds of communities nationwide in showcasing the positive benefits of family volunteering.

The *Name of Volunteer Center* is working closely with the Points of Light Foundation & Volunteer Center National Network toward the long-term goal of making year-round family volunteering the norm in America.

We have a great project to talk about, and would love the opportunity to share the details of this community service event with your readers. Area corporations, not-for-profit organizations, civic organizations, and *Name of Volunteer Center* have been working diligently to make family volunteering a success in our community.

We hope you'll share this news with your readers as the momentum builds. Our goal is that people will read about the event and be motivated to initiate or join existing volunteer projects at their schools, places of worship, not-for-profit organizations, and civic organizations. In fact, we hope families will be inspired to stay involved in their community all year long.

In the coming days, we will call you to see whether you may be interested in speaking with area families who are committed volunteers in this community or the *Name of Spokesfamily* family, our city's honorary spokesfamily.

Thank you for taking the time to review the enclosed materials. If you have questions or need additional information, please call me at XXX-XXXX.

Sincerely,

*Signature*

Enclosures

**Enclose the following with this letter: Media Kit**

## TV Talk Show Pitch Letter: Send to TV stations on your letterhead one month prior to event

*Date*

*Name, Title*

*Company*

*Address*

*City, State ZIP*

Dear *Name*:

The *Family Name* family of *Name of City* proves that family volunteering works! *Insert frequency and participants {Once a month the Smiths, their two sons, an uncle and neighbor}* volunteer together at the *{Name of Organization}*, *insert Activity {sorting and distributing used clothing for area school children}*. The time the *Family Name* family spends has proven invaluable for building community relationships, passing along a caring tradition to their children, and carving out quality time with their family.

But the *Family Name* family can't keep up with *Name of Organization's* needs by themselves. On *Date of Project*, the *Family Name* will join many other families to participate in *Name of Event*. *Name of Volunteer Center* is organizing *Name of City's* efforts to join hundreds of communities nationwide in showcasing the positive benefits of family volunteering.

The *Name of Volunteer Center* is working closely with the Points of Light Foundation & Volunteer Center National Network toward the long-term goal of making year-round family volunteering the norm in America.

Please help us spread the word about this valuable opportunity. We would love to share the details of this community service event on "*Name of Talk Show/News Program*." Area corporations, not-for-profit organizations, civic organizations, and *Name of Volunteer Center* have been working diligently to make family volunteering a success in our community.

We hope you'll share this news with your viewers as the momentum builds. Our goal is that people will hear about the event and be motivated to initiate or join existing volunteer projects at their schools, places of worship, not-for-profit organizations, and civic organizations.

In the coming days, we will call you to see whether you may be interested in speaking with area families who are committed volunteers in this community or with the *Spokesfamily Name* family, our city's honorary spokesfamily.

Thank you for taking the time to review the enclosed materials. I'll follow up with you in the next few days to discuss your interest in interviewing local participants and planners. If you have questions or need more information, please call me at XXX-XXXX.

Sincerely,

*Signature*

Enclosures

**Enclose the following with this letter: Media Kit**

## Radio Pitch Letter: Send to local radio stations on your letterhead one month prior to event

*Date*

*Name*

*Title*

*Address*

*City, State ZIP*

Dear *Name*:

The *Family Name* family of *Name* of *City* proves that family volunteering works! *Insert frequency and participants {Once a month the Smiths, their two sons, an uncle and neighbor}* volunteer together at the *{Name of Organization}*, *insert Activity {sorting and distributing used clothing for area school children}*. The time they spend together has proven invaluable for building community relationships, teaching their children new values, and carving out quality time together that is fun and meaningful.

On *Date of Project*, the *Family Name* will join many other families to participate in *Name of Event*. *Name of Volunteer Center* is organizing *Name of City's* efforts to join hundreds of communities nationwide in showcasing the positive benefits of family volunteering.

The *Name of Volunteer Center* is working closely with the Points of Light Foundation & Volunteer Center National Network toward the long-term goal of making year-round family volunteering the norm in America.

We have a great project to talk about, and would love the opportunity to share the details of this community service event with your listeners. Area corporations, not-for-profit organizations, civic organizations, and *Name of Volunteer Center* have been working diligently to make family volunteering a success in our community.

We hope you'll share this news with your listeners as the momentum builds. Our goal is that people will hear about the event and be motivated to initiate or join existing volunteer projects at their schools, places of worship, not-for-profit organizations, and civic organizations.

In the coming days, we will call you to see whether you may be interested in speaking with area families who are committed volunteers in this community or with the *Spokesfamily Name* family, our city's honorary spokesfamily.

Thank you for taking the time to review the enclosed materials. If you have questions or need more information, please call me at XXX-XXXX.

Sincerely,

*Signature*

Enclosures

**Enclose the following with this letter: Media Kit**

## Community Calendar Entry: Send to news outlets on your letterhead

### ***Name of City* Joins Hundreds of Cities to Launch Family Volunteering**

On *Date of Project*, on *Date of Event*, *Name of Volunteer Center* will link families in your city with families all across America in volunteering together.

Families are encouraged to join the following family volunteering projects:

***Name of Project, Time of Project, Location of Project, Description of Project***

ex., ***Spreading the Joy of Thanksgiving***

*9 a.m.–noon • Address, City and State.*

*Volunteers will share Thanksgiving a week early with children living at the shelter. Activities include baking cookies, creating and writing Thanksgiving cards, and sharing Thanksgiving stories. List any celebrity spokesperson that will also volunteer at this site.*

To learn more about volunteering as a family in *Name of City*, call *Name of Volunteer Center* at XXX-XXXX or 1-800-VOLUNTEER today!

# Proclamation Request Letter: Send to Contact person for proclamations or your city's Mayor/state's Governor on your letterhead

Date

The Honorable Name of Mayor/Name of Governor

Title — Mayor/Governor

City/State of \_\_\_\_\_

c/o Name of Contact Person

Address

City, State ZIP

Dear Name of Contact Person {or Mayor/Governor Name of Mayor/Name of Governor}:

Name of Volunteer Center is organizing Name of City's efforts to join hundreds of communities nationwide in showcasing the positive benefits of family volunteering. The Name of Volunteer Center is working closely with the Points of Light Foundation & Volunteer Center National Network toward the long-term goal of making year-round family volunteering the norm in America. Through events like Name of Event, hundreds of families across the country will volunteer their skills and time to benefit their communities, enhance family ties, and strengthen relationships between the not-for-profit and business sectors.

## (or if your mayor is already involved in some capacity):

We are looking forward to having you and your family participate in Name of Event in Name of City on Event Date. By volunteering that day, you are leading by example, and we thank you for your leadership.

## (return to letter)

To enhance the spirit of volunteerism, we'd like to ask you to please declare that day, **Event Day, Event Date Name of City/Name of State Family Volunteer Day**. A mayoral/gubernatorial proclamation would help share the message of volunteering throughout the Area/State. If there is any paperwork involved in requesting a proclamation, please mail or fax it to me at XXX-XXXX.

Again, we are grateful for your personal involvement. It's our goal that on Event Date, citizens will turn out to set a lofty standard for many more cities to follow in the years to come.

I have enclosed some background materials for your reference. I'll be in touch, but if you or your staff have questions, please call me at XXX-XXXX.

Sincerely,

Signature

Enclosures

**Enclose the following with this letter: Fact Sheet**

# Celebrity Request Letter: Send to Celebrity, Mayor or other Distinguished Official on your letterhead

Date

Name of Celebrity

Title

Address

City, State ZIP

Dear Name of Celebrity:

We wouldn't dream of holding Name of City's Name of Event without inviting your participation! Your involvement will help guarantee success as Name of City joins hundreds of communities nationwide in showcasing the positive benefits of family volunteering.

We invite your endorsement and support of this wonderful opportunity by asking that you and your family please serve as **Honorary Spokesfamily** for Name of City Name of Event.

The Name of Volunteer Center is working closely with the Points of Light Foundation & Volunteer Center National Network to organize family volunteering in our community to motivate families to get involved in volunteer opportunities year-round. Through events like Name of Event, hundreds of families across the country will volunteer their skills and time to benefit their communities, enhance family ties, and strengthen relationships between the not-for-profit and business sectors.

We know how busy you are, but promise that serving as Honorary Spokesfamily will take just a few hours of your time. As Honorary Spokesfamily, you might participate in the following suggested ways:

- **Endorse the Event:** Provide a quote for a news release.
- **Media/Talk Shows:** Appear on a few radio and television talk shows and conduct newspaper interviews. A local spokesperson for the event will appear with you.
- **Day of Event Participation:** Volunteer at a project on Date of Event and bring your family and friends along.

We will arrange all media appearances and provide you with detailed background information, including message points and media coaching.

I have enclosed additional information regarding Name of Event and will call within a few days to answer any questions you may have. Thank you in advance for considering this invitation. We sincerely believe that you and your family can help make Name of City's Name of Event a major success for our community!

Sincerely,

Signature

Enclosures

**Enclose the following with this letter: Fact Sheet**

## Spokesfamily Thank You/Confirmation Letter: Send to Spokesfamily on your letterhead

*Date*

*Name of Spokesfamily*

*Title*

*Address*

*City, State ZIP*

Dear *Name of Family*:

Congratulations on being selected the spokesfamily for *Name of City's Name of Event!* Your family's contribution to the community is a great message to other families that family volunteering brings families closer! You're doing a great service to your organization and family volunteering by helping us spread the word — family volunteering works!

I'd like to give you a broad scope of some of the support we'll need from you as our spokesfamily:

- Help me draft a quote about your family volunteering attitudes.
- Help me draft a paragraph describing your family for our media kit.
- Appear with me at radio, TV, and/or print interviews.
- Be flexible about times the media may want to meet and interview you. The media may want to meet at odd times, sometimes during regular work hours, but we'll be as respectful as we can about your work day.

Before we attend our first media interview, I'd like to review the message points so that we present a clear and concise story to the press. I look forward to getting to know you better and working with your family as we develop and present our story of community involvement to the local media.

Sincerely,

*Signature*

Enclosures

**Enclose the following with this letter: New Release (with any suggested comments/quotes), Fact Sheet**

# If You Want the Money, Show Me the Evaluation!

RYAN MCVAY/GETTY IMAGES



chapter



## If You Want the Dollars/Funding/Grants, You Have to Show Results

If you want the money, show me the evaluation! Everyone talks about the importance of evaluations and outcomes measurement. But if you want to go after the grants and donations that focus on families, you have to be able to document your results. Here are a few things to remember:

- ⦿ Keep the definition of family in mind as you plan to do evaluations. Families are different than group volunteers or youth volunteers, and they should be treated as such.
- ⦿ Try to do reflections or assessments after each volunteer event that involves families. For outcomes measurement, you want to see the changes or benefits to the agencies where you placed volunteers, to the community at large, and to the volunteers themselves. How have they changed their behaviors/skills/knowledge/attitudes/values or conditions? What was the one most important thing that the volunteer learned as a result of volunteering with his family? You may find that there are significant differences in what families learn from what other groups learn. Families often

## EVALUATIONS RAISE MONEY!

*Ask grant funders what they look for in a program, and the answer is usually one word: results. If you can show a funder how effective your program is, then you have a much better chance of winning the grant. The funds you need are at your fingertips if you are willing to spend a little time up front in planning and evaluation.*

facts

use volunteering as a teaching tool, and reflections can be very enlightening.

- ⦿ Provide questions for the WHOLE family. Too frequently, evaluations and reflections are directed at parents. It's important to know what kids think too. And there are some great sample questions for getting their input. "What did you like about today? Why?" "How does volunteering make you feel? What makes you feel that way?" "What did you learn today? How could you use it?" Everyone should get the opportunity for input.
- ⦿ Ask families for input as to what types of volunteer events they want to do, and in planning future events. Just as with other special populations, don't assume that you know what families want to do. Letting them help with planning can give you some incredibly dynamic and successful volunteer events—and ones that funders will take a look at.

## Ways to Evaluate

There are many ways to evaluate your work. Depending on the information you seek, your evaluations may include one or more of the following methods:

- ⦿ Focus groups

- ⦿ Interviews
- ⦿ Volunteer Reflections
- ⦿ Face-to-face or telephone surveys
- ⦿ Self-administered questionnaires
- ⦿ Conversations/observations

While you probably have similar forms already for volunteer evaluation, we have provided you with a few sample forms to get started. **The Family Volunteer Evaluation Form** and **Family Volunteer Site Evaluation Form** in the HELPFUL RESOURCES section at the end of the chapter can help to give you a snapshot of others' opinions of the project. As you adapt forms for family volunteering evaluation and reflection, be sure to keep the forms accessible to all ages. The **Evaluation Questions for Children** list will give you some ideas on ways to get the opinions of everyone involved in a project.

## All About Outcomes Measurement

Outcomes measurement is a widely accepted model for evaluating the results of nonprofit programs. You probably already monitor the placement and service hours of your volunteers, the receipt of donations and success of fundraising efforts, and the activities of your volunteer programs. Volunteer Centers have

been documenting the inputs, activities and outputs of their programs for many years now.

- ⦿ **Inputs** are those things that you put into your program. For example, staff, staff time, money, equipment, supplies, volunteers, and volunteer time. Resources contributed by nonprofit or corporate partners may also be considered an input.
- ⦿ **Activities** are those things that the program does to accomplish its goals. For example, recruitment and referral of volunteers, training of volunteer coordinators, or effective volunteer management.
- ⦿ **Outputs** are the products of the program's activities. They are simple counts that record what the program has accomplished. Some questions you might want to ask yourself are what actually was accomplished, how many hours family volunteers served, how many people were reached/tutored/mentored, number of kits made, etc.

Measuring outcomes goes a step further in determining the results of the program. In the past, most Volunteer Centers did not track what happened to the volunteers that were referred after the placement. We might know how many hours a volunteer has spent at a volunteer activity, but we would not know how this volunteer activity had changed or helped the organization in which the volunteer was placed, or how the volunteer service benefited the volunteer.

- ⦿ **Outcomes** are the benefits or changes in conditions, people or organizations that result from your Volunteer Center's activities. How have the populations you served changed their behaviors, skills, knowledge, attitudes, values or conditions? Outcomes can be identified by asking the following questions:
  - 1) What was the goal of the activity?
  - 2) What changes were predicted, or what was expected to be different after the activity was completed?
  - 3) What is different?
  - 4) To what extent were the proposed goals accomplished?

5) What will change in the future as a result of this activity?

6) To what extent did the outcomes meet, exceed, or fail to meet expectations?

To demonstrate the difference between outputs and outcomes, use the example of doing a neighborhood clean-up campaign. You might see the following results:

### **Outputs (Accomplishments)**

- Number of organizational meetings
- Number of participants
- Number of volunteer hours served
- Number of blocks cleaned

### **Outcomes**

As a result of the neighborhood clean-up campaign, 90% of the community residents surveyed reported reduced exposure to safety hazards in the neighborhood and an increase in community pride.

Some key points to remember in outcomes measurement:

- ⦿ Use concrete measurements when determining your outcomes.
- ⦿ Use tools like surveys, reflections and feedback forms to get results.
- ⦿ Use measurements and standards that are straightforward and easy to understand.
- ⦿ Be specific—avoid general statements that can't be documented.

It is important to remember that outcomes are not impacts. Outcomes monitoring provides a means to track whether goals are achieved, but it does not document that the activities of the organization **caused** the outcomes. Typically, when researchers talk about "impact," they are referring to changes that have been documented to be a direct result of a program.

Outcomes measures can suggest ways that your program has changed and/or improved your community. While you cannot infer a cause-and-effect relationship from outcomes measures, you can use them as a simple way to document changes or improvements. There are many ways

that you can use this easy-to-understand information. Consider using outcomes measurements to help you:

- ⊙ Recruit and train talented staff
- ⊙ Enlist and motivate volunteers
- ⊙ Engage collaborators and business partners
- ⊙ Retain or increase funding
- ⊙ Demonstrate innovative efforts
- ⊙ Gain favorable public recognition

Being able to show a funder, a potential staff member or a business partner that you have made a concrete, measurable difference within your community can provide you with instant credibility.

Outcomes measures can also help your Volunteer Center to improve its programs and services by:

- ⊙ Identifying staff and volunteer training needs
- ⊙ Developing and justifying budgets
- ⊙ Preparing long-range plans
- ⊙ Focusing board members' attention on programmatic issues

The demonstration of program outcomes has become increasingly crucial in the quest to prove Volunteer Center effectiveness. Federal programs as well as many private funders require human service organizations to measure and report on their outcomes.

The **Volunteer Center Outcomes Report** is a handy reference guide for completing your own reports. A blank **Volunteer Center Outcomes Report** form is provided for you in the HELPFUL RESOURCES section at the end of the chapter.

Following are some **Sample Outcomes Reports** for Volunteer Centers that report Level I, Level II and Level III proficiency (see Chapter 1 for guidelines on determining which category you are). And just for fun, we used the example of family volunteering. Hopefully outcomes measurements will help improve your access to all kinds of resources!

# QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

## VOLUNTEER CENTER OUTCOMES REPORT

Name of Project: \_\_\_\_\_ Sample Questions \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Project: \_\_\_\_\_

### Sponsoring Organization/ Description of Project

*Describe the project.*

- ⊙ What organization sponsored this project?
- ⊙ Where was it being held?
- ⊙ Give a description of the purpose of the organization if necessary.
- ⊙ What was the name of the project?

### Community Need

*Describe the community need that was addressed by the Volunteer Center (use measurable terms when applicable).*

- ⊙ What was the problem, need, issue, or opportunity addressed? For example, 10% of the community was homeless.

### Service Activity

*Describe the work done by the Volunteer Center.*

- ⊙ What tasks were listed on the job description or work/activity plan? For example, volunteers participated in the building of new homes.

### Inputs

*Describe the Volunteer Center resources of money, time, space, and materials that are invested in the project.*

- ⊙ How much staff time was dedicated to the project?
- ⊙ What resources were used?
- ⊙ Note: also include any other resources partners contributed to the project such as tools, work space, etc.

### Accomplishments Outputs

*Describe the accomplishments using simple counts.*

- ⊙ How many hours did the volunteers serve?
- ⊙ How many houses were built?
- ⊙ How many tons of trash were removed?

### Outcomes

*Describe the changes in “quality-of-life indicators” – the long term, community-based results of programs over an extended period of time.*

- ⊙ What are the benefits—for service recipients, volunteers, organizations?
- ⊙ What are the changes in conditions, people, organizations, and policies that are linked to the Volunteer Center and its activities?

# FAMILY VOLUNTEERING/LEVEL I

## SAMPLE VOLUNTEER CENTER OUTCOMES REPORT

Name of Project: \_\_\_\_\_ Family Volunteering Booklet \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Project: \_\_\_\_\_

*A Level I Volunteer Center is a Center that provides information and resources about family volunteering to organizations and businesses in their community.*

### Sponsoring Organization/ Description of Project

Volunteer Center

### Community Need

Community needs to know about family-friendly opportunities.

### Service Activity

Volunteer Center developed and distributed a booklet on family volunteering.

### Inputs

- ⊙ Volunteer Center Staff contributed 50 hours of time to developing and promoting the booklet.
- ⊙ 2 volunteers donated time and money to printing the handbook.
- ⊙ 5 volunteers provided transportation to deliver handbooks.

### Accomplishments Outputs

- ⊙ 500 handbooks were distributed.
- ⊙ 10 partnerships were created to increase the effectiveness of the promotional tool.

### Outcomes

- ⊙ Volunteer Center now identified as a community resource for information on family volunteering.
- ⊙ Organizations are providing an increased number of opportunities for families to volunteer together.

# Family Volunteering: Level II

## SAMPLE VOLUNTEER CENTER OUTCOMES REPORT

Name of Project: Family Volunteering Technical Assistance Date of Project: \_\_\_\_\_

*A Level II Volunteer Center is a Center that provides information and resources about family volunteering to organizations and businesses in their community.*

### Sponsoring Organization/ Description of Project

Volunteer Center

### Inputs

- ⊙ The Volunteer Center staff members spent 50 hours providing technical assistance and trainings.
- ⊙ The local school provided meeting space free of charge to hold trainings.

### Community Need

Area organization volunteer coordinators needed training concerning the concept of family volunteers and the mechanics of working with family volunteers.

### Accomplishments Outputs

- ⊙ 50 training seminars were offered to partner organizations.
- ⊙ 5 family volunteering topics were discussed in trainings.
- ⊙ 250 people were trained.

### Service Activity

- ⊙ The Volunteer Center provided technical assistance to partner organizations on the concept of family volunteering and the mechanics of managing family volunteers. The Volunteer Center provided this assistance through workshops, seminars, training and one-to-one consulting through site visits.

### Outcomes

Partner organizations' staff have the knowledge, tools, resources and skills to effectively recruit and manage family volunteers.

Organizations are able to more clearly describe their needs to recruit volunteer families.

Organizations are better able to match volunteers with volunteer assignments.

# FAMILY VOLUNTEERING/LEVEL III

## SAMPLE VOLUNTEER CENTER OUTCOMES REPORT

Name of Project: Family Volunteering Senior Center Projects Date of Project: \_\_\_\_\_

*A Level III Volunteer Center is a Center that provides information and resources about family volunteering to organizations and businesses in their community.*

### Sponsoring Organization/ Description of Project

Volunteer Center

### Inputs

- ⊙ Volunteer Center staff spent 100 hours arranging service projects.
- ⊙ Businesses, churches, schools, and youth groups spent 50 hours recruiting family volunteers.
- ⊙ \$500 worth of supplies were donated.

### Community Need

Senior Center receives many calls from seniors requesting chores and maintenance help.

### Accomplishments Outputs

- ⊙ The properties of 55 homebound senior citizens were prepared for winter.
- ⊙ Family volunteers served 350.

### Service Activity

Volunteer Center recognized that Senior Center project is a “family friendly” project.

Volunteer Center designed and promoted the project.

Volunteers raked lawns, washed windows, trimmed hedges, mowed lawns, beautified gardens, put on storm windows, swept porches and walkways.

### Outcomes

Senior citizens were able to maintain their properties and the value of their homes.

Participating organizations report increased requests for family volunteering opportunities.

## Evaluation Tools

Take a look at the HELPFUL RESOURCES section at the end of the chapter for simple, easy-to-understand evaluation forms.

The **Family Volunteer Evaluation Form** and **Family Volunteer Site Evaluation Form** will give you simple forms for conducting evaluations. The **Evaluation Questions for Children** list will give you some age-specific questions to help gather the opinions of children and youth involved in a project.

The **Volunteer Center Outcomes Report Form** will help you determine how effective your family volunteer activity was.

## Helpful Resources

1. Family Volunteer Evaluation Form
2. Family Volunteer Site Evaluation Form
3. Evaluation Questions for Children
4. Volunteer Center Outcomes Report Form

# FAMILY VOLUNTEER EVALUATION FORM

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer Event: \_\_\_\_\_

Please take a few minutes to fill out this evaluation to help us understand your feelings about the rewards and challenges of your experience.

1. How did you learn about this family volunteer event (check one)?
  - I learned about it by contacting my Volunteer Center.
  - I was given a brochure on the event.
  - I learned about it through the organization I work for.
  - I read about it in the newspaper.
  - Other (please specify)
  
2. What is the primary reason you volunteered with your family today (check one)?
  - I wanted to spend time with my family while helping my community.
  - I wanted an opportunity for my family to serve as a role model to others.
  - I thought volunteering together would strengthen my family.
  - Other
  
3. Below is a list of things some people have gained from taking part in family volunteering (Please check any which you feel you have gained).
  - Greater confidence
  - Improved communication skills
  - Better understanding of community problems
  - Better understanding of my family
  - Other
  
4. Among the family members who volunteered today, how many were between the ages of:
  - 0-25
  - 26-54
  - 55+
  
5. Would you be interested in receiving information on family volunteering projects in the future?
  - Yes
  - No
  
6. What was the ONE most important thing that you learned from volunteering with your family?
  
7. What projects are most interesting to you and your family?
  
8. What would you change about this project to make it better?

Additional Comments: Please return this form to your project coordinator or to *Name of Volunteer Center, Volunteer Center Address*. Thank you for taking the time to volunteer with your family!

# FAMILY VOLUNTEER SITE EVALUATION FORM

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer Event: \_\_\_\_\_

Please take a few minutes to fill out this evaluation so we can know what worked and what didn't. This will give us a good idea of your feelings about this family volunteer project and help us make future events even better.

1. How would you rate the organization of this family volunteering project?
  - Extremely poor
  - Below average
  - Average
  - Above average
  - Excellent
  
2. As a result of the family volunteering project, please indicate your opinion on the following statement: *"I feel that the family volunteering project helped to make a difference with my organization's clients."*
  - Strongly disagree
  - Disagree
  - Neither disagree or agree
  - Agree
  - Strongly agree
  
3. Were volunteers able to finish the tasks you wished to have completed?
  - Yes     NoAdditional Comments: \_\_\_\_\_
  
4. Circle the response that best reflects how well the family volunteer group that assisted you for this project met your needs.
  - Didn't meet my needs
  - Met some of my needs
  - Met a lot of my needs
  - Met all of my needs
  
5. Did you receive enough support and information from the Volunteer Center?
  - Yes     NoIf no, what information or support do you feel would have made a better event?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Additional Comments: Please return this form to your project coordinator or to *Name of Volunteer Center, Volunteer Center Address*. Thank you for taking the time to volunteer with your family!

# EVALUATION QUESTIONS FOR CHILDREN

NOTE: These questions are best asked in a focus group or through individual interviews so that children who may not be able to read or write can participate.

## **Ages 3 – 8**

What did you like about today? Why?

## **Ages 5 – 11**

How does volunteering make you feel?  
What makes you feel that way?

## **Ages 5 – 13**

What did you learn today?  
How could you use it?

## **Ages 6 – 18**

Would you come again? Why?

## **Ages 8 – 18**

Would you tell your friends and encourage them to come? Why?

## **Ages 11 – 18**

How do you think this project could have been done differently/better?

## **Ages 12 – 18**

How does what we've done today change tomorrow?

# VOLUNTEER CENTER OUTCOMES REPORT

Name of Project: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Project: \_\_\_\_\_

## Sponsoring Organization/ Description of Project

---

---

---

---

---

## Inputs

---

---

---

---

---

## Community Need

---

---

---

---

---

## Accomplishments Outputs

---

---

---

---

---

## Service Activity

---

---

---

---

---

## Outcomes

---

---

---

---

---



# More Money, More Stuff: Resources Galore!

BRYAN MULLENNIX/GETTY IMAGES



## Getting Corporate Partners

What do companies want? MORE publicity, BETTER employee morale, GREATER corporate pride, STRONGER customer relations, and IMPROVED corporate image in the community. And who can give that to them? YOU! That's right, you.

Companies can find many wonderful benefits in family volunteering. Getting large numbers of employees in company t-shirts, volunteering with their families to help the community, can be the kind of instant publicity a company couldn't begin to pay for. Volunteering together can increase employee morale, create greater corporate pride in the workplace, and strengthen relationships among co-workers. There are also positive impacts outside the workplace, such as improving customer relations and enhancing the workplace's image in the community.

What company wouldn't want to be seen as caring about employees and their families? You can capitalize on this by providing companies with the tools they need to be involved in family volunteering. Once you have built a positive relationship with the company, they may be willing to do even more to support your Volunteer Center.

## DRIVING TO SUCCESS!

*The staff of Freedom Automotive knows something about volunteering. They started by planning and participating in National Family Volunteer Day. Employees and their families collected, packaged and distributed supplies for families at area shelters. On the day of the event, employees became Team Captains, registering, training, and supervising other volunteers. They even assisted with fundraising by matching community member donations! The experience was so rewarding that they have made a year-round dedication to family volunteering, planning other projects throughout the year for co-workers and their families.*

—Chesapeake, VA  
true story

### **Recruiting businesses may be easier than you think. There are many tools to help you promote family volunteering with businesses:**

- ⊙ Place articles about family volunteers in corporate newsletters and trade magazines.
- ⊙ Prepare presentations and articles for professional associations or business clubs.
- ⊙ Include promotional information through Chambers of Commerce, convention bureaus, newsletters, magazines, etc.
- ⊙ Distribute information packets/brochures and letters to community affairs/public relations departments.
- ⊙ Conduct informational meetings with human resources or public affairs professionals.

The tools in the HELPFUL RESOURCES section at the end of the chapter will allow you to recruit and assist businesses in becoming involved with your family volunteer projects. There is a **Recruitment Letter for Businesses**, a **Company Fax-Back Form**, and a **Corporate Benefits Sheet**. If that results in positive feedback, you can follow up with a **Company Confirmation Letter**, an **Event Flyer**, a **Family Volunteer Project Information Sheet**, and an **Article to Include in Company Newsletter(s)**.

Some companies that already support family volunteering in various forms include:

- ⊙ Sears Goodlife Alliance
- ⊙ Lowes
- ⊙ Home Depot
- ⊙ Wal-Mart
- ⊙ AT&T
- ⊙ Verizon
- ⊙ Lucent Technologies
- ⊙ Target
- ⊙ Crayola

Be sure to check with local affiliates of these companies and others to see if they can help with funding, resource or supply donations, or employee volunteer time for your projects. And don't neglect to contact small businesses as well, as they can often make quick decisions to help provide support.

## Other Partnership Strategies

In addition to business partners, there are other potential partners you might want to consider for family volunteering. Following is a list of suggested partners—and ways to approach them.

### Local Media

- ◉ Send press releases and information packets to community affairs/public relations departments, news departments, columnists, and television/radio talk show producers (Keep a list of family volunteers who could be contacted for interviews).
- ◉ Position family volunteering as a newsworthy item. Suggest story ideas to the media and prepare news releases from a variety of perspectives.
- ◉ Focus on personal interest stories that highlight critical community issues addressed by family volunteers, such as helping at a hospice, feeding the hungry, or working with at-risk children.
- ◉ Tie into a national story on community service and show how local families are pitching in to help a national cause.
- ◉ Take advantage of seasonal activities. Suggest a story on family volunteering around the holidays or during spring or summer vacations when children are usually out of school.
- ◉ Get involved in local special events. If your community is hosting a walkathon, for example, tell the media how family volunteers are helping out.
- ◉ Develop local public service announcements (PSAs).

- ◉ Work with local television stations to tie into existing media campaigns, such as USA WEEKEND's Make a Difference Day.

## Fraternal/Civic Volunteer Groups and Service Clubs or Community Associations

(Participating groups include the Junior League, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Kiwanis Clubs, Rotary Clubs, America's Fraternal Benefit Societies—like Knights of Columbus and Woodmen of the World—Chambers of Commerce, nonprofit management groups, and social service coalitions).

- ◉ Place articles in organizational newsletters/magazines.
- ◉ Make presentations to members at group meetings (Consider using members that volunteer with their family to conduct a presentation).
- ◉ Send letters and information packets to organizations' public relations/community affairs person.

## Local Governments

- ◉ Submit articles to be included in government newsletters, bulletins and notices.
- ◉ Create interesting and relevant presentations focusing on civic involvement and the value of service to families.
- ◉ Place literature/posters in local offices of welfare/social services.

## Schools

- ◉ Conduct presentations to the board of education, parent teacher associations (PTAs), or faculty.
- ◉ Write articles and feature stories in school/PTA newsletters and student newspapers.
- ◉ Host special events for children and adults/parents.

- ⦿ Develop family advisory committees to create programs.

## Nonprofits

- ⦿ Write articles for publications received by these organizations.
- ⦿ Circulate an information packet to organizations' volunteer coordinators, senior leadership, etc.
- ⦿ Organize a task force of service providers to review issues for organization readiness in the organizations.

## Places of Worship

- ⦿ Make presentations to religious groups.
- ⦿ Place flyers/posters on bulletin board in places of worship.
- ⦿ Create articles for local religious newspapers/newsletters.

## And the Grants Rolled In

Families are hot with many grant funders! Family volunteering can give you the connection to some amazing grant opportunities. The sample **Grant Proposal Outline** in the HELPFUL RESOURCES section at the end of the chapter will provide you with some basic language to get those grants off the ground. Use the Points of Light Foundation, the Independent Sector, KidsCount and the US Census, as well as local resources to help you with statistics on families and volunteering.

You may wish to diversify and find different types of funding for family volunteering. Following are some guidelines on seeking Corporate Funding as well as Foundation Funding.

## Resources for Grant Statistics

### [www.independentsector.org](http://www.independentsector.org)

Statistics on volunteering, kids, families—great information for grantwriting, proposal writing, speeches and more is in here! The Independent Sector website has a complete copy of their Giving and Volunteering Survey available for free download, as well as other great information.

### [www.aecf.org/kidscount](http://www.aecf.org/kidscount)

Without a doubt one of the most important surveys of issues affecting children. Compare data for your area to other areas across the nation, or use national statistics to make your case for helping kids through volunteering. A free copy of the Kids Count data is available online or you can have it mailed to you for free through their publication voice line! See their website for ordering details. They have a ton of useful publications available at no cost to you.

### [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)

Find a wealth of statistics about your state and community through the national census (Keep in mind that the national census is only conducted every 10 years, so there may be more timely resources for information in your local community). Try their State and County Quick Facts for a snapshot of your community.

# Corporate Funding

Corporations can be a great source for additional funding. There are many different ways to approach a company for support, and if you handle the approach correctly, both you and the company can make significant gains.

Corporations are in business to make a profit. So you should think about how you will help them reach that goal. By helping them achieve a better corporate image as a caring company, you are increasing their publicity and their customer base. With a simple donation (or grant, or volunteer project, or in-kind gift), they can link their name to a great cause that helps the community and helps families stay strong. By giving the company a great PR/photo opportunity, a fantastic image for recruiting, and a strong corporate identity as a company involved in its community, you have a lot to offer. Tailor your approach to the end result, and you will be more likely to find success. Following are some types of approaches to consider.

- 1. Corporate Contributions.** These are usually one-time donations to help with a specific project or to participate in a particular event. Large companies may have a budget set aside for corporate contributions.
- 2. Corporate Foundations.** Corporate foundations usually have more formalized, restricted interests and may require an application or grant to receive funds. They frequently reflect causes that the company cares about.
- 3. Public Relations/Human Resources Departments.** These departments may be interested in a softer, more image-related program they can build PR around. These programs may involve using employees as volunteers in visible, photogenic projects like mentoring students or building houses for the homeless. These programs may also produce desired in-house benefits, such as building a sense of teamwork among employees or teaching employees new job or management skills.
- 4. Advertising/Marketing Departments.** The marketing department may be able to pull

funding that helps promote the company name. Supporting large public events, sponsoring big volunteer projects, or building promotions that highlight the corporate logo are all possibilities. Don't forget to consider in-kind contributions, such as brochure/ad design or corporate logo giveaway items.

- 5. Employee Giving.** Employees may have the ability to donate cash or contribute in-kind items. Opportunities range from one-time fundraisers to monthly supply drives.
- 6. Matching Gifts.** Some companies will match their employees' donations to a given cause. It's always worth asking management if they provide matching gifts—or if they would consider doing so.

The best way to repeat your success with corporate funding is to give the company recognition for their gift or contribution. Take the time to write thank you notes to key players, create posters and newsletter articles to show appreciation to employees, do press releases and marketing that highlight the company's gift, or nominate the company for awards. The more you increase their profile, the more willing they'll be to help you the next time you ask.

# Foundation Funding

Foundations exist solely to give away money. Lucky you! But the path can sometimes be challenging, involving lengthy grant applications and long waits for approval. However, it can certainly be worth the time invested if you keep a few things in mind.

Research is key in choosing the right foundation for your project. Foundations usually have a focus on a specific area of interest. Unfortunately, there are very few foundations that focus on volunteering, but you may find a match in one of the many foundations that are interested in children and families. That being said, don't change a project just to fit a foundation's criteria; as much as possible, try to find a foundation that fits your goals and interests. You'll have a better chance of finding ongoing funding when you find a good match.

Once you have determined the right foundation for your project, invest time there. If you're unsure which foundations can help, use a research resource like the Foundation Center ([www.fdncenter.org](http://www.fdncenter.org) provides some leads and allows you to search its listing of cooperating collections to find a library near you) or the Chronicle of Philanthropy ([www.philanthropy.com](http://www.philanthropy.com)).

Large private foundations may seem like the best initial targets since they have more money, but remember that they may also have some very lengthy, formal procedures. Family foundations may provide less money, but they can be approached more like a corporate prospect and can provide more personal response within a shorter time frame. Choose the foundation size that is correct for your project's scope and scale.

Keep in mind that foundations generally prefer to give start-up funding, not ongoing funding. In your letter or proposal, try to show diversified sources of funding, and specify where you will find other sources of support to make this project sustainable.

Foundations like to know who you are. If they take the time to invest in your project, then they want to help you succeed. If they encourage personal contact or visits, take them up on the offer. Often contacts with foundations can help you find additional resources in varying forms. Giving a foundation recognition for its support is less critical than for corporations. Foundations have no project to sell; the benefits to the community are their bottom line. However, you should always ask how a foundation prefers to be listed in any published material, and you should remember that thank you notes to key people are always appropriate. Personal stories and photos of a project's success are often especially welcome when a project is completed; it's a nice recognition that the foundation invested wisely, and one that can be easily displayed to the foundation's donors.

If you need further assistance drafting the grant itself, check the HELPFUL RESOURCES section at the end of the chapter for a **Sample Grant Proposal Outline**.

## Other Funding Approaches

A full-blown grant is not always necessary in order to get money. Sometimes a well-written letter or a case statement can influence someone's wallet. If you're willing to give other funding approaches a try, you may be surprised at their success. Following are some tips in **Five Essential Elements of a Case Statement and The Proposal Letter**.

### Five Essential Elements of a Case Statement

Steal a page from major nonprofits and universities (which raise major dollars!), and draft a case statement for your cause. The case statement is a document written to stimulate the reader to respond positively. It can be used in marketing to help the donor to see how his or her goals and values can be realized through significant involvement with the organization. By clearly outlining what you are doing and how it can be done, it provides the donor with an opportunity, and with a challenge. But how do you do it?

**1. Create a central, easy-to-remember theme that strikes a chord.**

The rest of your case statement gives your theme meaning (e.g., A mind is a terrible thing to waste. A small holiday gift helps a great many lonely people. It shouldn't hurt to be a child).

**2. Appeal to the donor's values.**

Use values that are widely held by your prospective donors, such as achievement, accomplishment, performance or success. Show the donor how to further his or her own values by supporting your cause.

**3. State the business of your cause: what you do, how you help, how you offer solutions to real problems.**

Show how your cause is distinctive from all others. Don't get hung up on your philosophy.

**4. Reflect an accurate, dynamic image of cause and its work.**

The image should be consistent with one held by the people who know about your cause; otherwise, you'll seem phony.

**5. Build a sense of urgency, immediacy.**

When the prospective donor reads the statement, she/he must know, "My contribution is needed now." Show how a great opportunity can be opened up if the prospect acts generously and immediately.

## The Proposal Letter

A proposal letter is similar to a case statement, but it is a more direct and personalized way of approaching a donor or supporter. Use the proposal letter with businesses, local family foundations, community trusts, or individuals. Draft a letter of three pages or less that contains the following elements:

**1. State the purpose!**

(Include a timetable for action steps and amount.)

**2. List the situation and problem.**

**1 brief paragraph**

Explain what the issue is and why you need help.

**3. Show your capabilities.**

**1 paragraph**

Tell what your club/group/organization has done and its ability to carry out project if support is received.

**4. Explain your program methods/operation.**

**2 paragraphs**

Tell what you will do, how you will do it, who will be involved, community organizations, other organizations, donors, etc.

**5. Show the project's impact.**

**1 paragraph**

Explain how youth, families and the community will benefit.

**6. Demonstrate methods of evaluation, reporting and visibility.**

**1 paragraph**

How will success be measured, how will donor be informed, and what visibility will the donor receive?

**7. Show your budget.**

Include when the pledge is needed and the amount of the actual contribution needed.

**8. Offer a summary.**

**1 brief paragraph**

Give a brief recap of the significance of this program for people, the community and the donor.

With these tools, you'll be on the right path to convincing others to support your family volunteer project. Funding and support exist in many forms; good luck in finding the right one for you.

## Free Stuff

Free stuff isn't always easy to find, but it is out there. The Family Matters Task Force offers a few ways to find more bang for your buck.

- ⊙ **Public Transportation.** Most public transportation carries advertising, inside and out. When the company does not have paid advertisements, it may be willing to display your car cards (small billboards with your advertising). A printing company may be willing to produce them for free or at a reduced cost in return for recognition in the ad.
- ⊙ **Newspaper Advertisements.** Newspapers never lay out perfectly. That means there are always "holes" that need to be filled—and fast. If you have public service announcements from the Points of Light Foundation or other organizations, or can convince a local advertising organization or art institute student to donate ad design, your newspaper may be willing to keep those ads on hand to drop in available holes. It can't hurt to ask. If you can provide ads in varying sizes, you're ahead of the game.

- ◎ **Local Sponsors.** Local sponsors with in-house printing facilities may be willing to provide small posters or flyers that can be used in companies, stores, or organizations, or phone stickers promoting your work that could be given to their employees. They may be willing to fund a project through an advertising budget. Or they might be able to help organize volunteers. Keep an open mind!
- ◎ **Automobile Dealers.** If you know a local automobile dealer who is interested in your work, you might be able to arrange for a loan of a van or car for a year (complete with your logo) with a sign saying, “Donated by XYZ Dealership.” Having that van all over town would give your organization great publicity and give the dealer a great tax deduction.
- ◎ **Store Inventories>Returns.** Some stores are willing to donate overstock items and returned items. Check with the individual store to find out when to contact them; some stores are willing to be contacted after each monthly inventory. Free items range from mismatched paint (there’s almost always a big supply at your local home improvement or paint store) to school supplies (try discount department stores) to groceries (items close to expiration dates are fast donations). One Volunteer Center carpeted its entire office—and the offices of three other organizations—with remnants donated by a local carpet company; the carpet company got a great tax writeoff.
- ◎ **Volunteers.** Don’t forget that you can use volunteers for your Volunteer Center, not just for other organizations. And while they’re doing volunteer work, don’t forget to ask them if they know of any place that could help you find a donated phone system or office supplies. You’ll be surprised how often volunteers can help with all kinds of donations.
- ◎ **Wish List.** Once you know what you need, create a wish list and hand it out. The more places you publicize it, the more likely you are to find what you need.
- ◎ **Recycling Programs.** Some communities’ recycling programs are a treasure trove! If you have contacts at the recycling center,

you might find that a truckload of office furniture, bolts of blank newsprint or other needs can be donated to you.

- ◎ **Web/Internet Service.** It’s getting harder to find, but you can still get it for free. Local internet service providers are often willing to sponsor nonprofits on their community page or on their own website. Free email addresses can be obtained at Yahoo ([www.yahoo.com](http://www.yahoo.com)), Hotmail ([www.hotmail.com](http://www.hotmail.com)), and Metacrawler ([www.metacrawler.com](http://www.metacrawler.com)).

## FamilyCares.org

Sometimes families want more information on family volunteering—right now! Turn to some great online resources to help you out. Refer families to [www.familycares.org](http://www.familycares.org) as a way to teach them how to volunteer with their families, how to strengthen their families, or to help them find their own volunteer projects—step by step! FamilyCares.org is a new online educational resource program of the Points of Light Foundation dedicated to increasing family volunteering. FamilyCares.org is a great option for those that are geographically isolated or unable to attend volunteer events. The Points of Light Foundation also manages [kidscares.org](http://kidscares.org) which suggests many projects that can be done independently by children.

## Give Me More!

Take a look at the HELPFUL RESOURCES section at the end of the chapter for more tools to help you get money, resources, and more!

To recruit and assist businesses in becoming involved with your family volunteer projects, there are a **Recruitment Letter for Businesses**, a **Company Fax-Back Form**, and a **Corporate Benefits Sheet**. If that results in positive feedback, you can follow up with a **Company Confirmation Letter**, an **Event Flyer**, a **Family Volunteer Project Information Sheet**, and an **Article to Include in Company Newsletter(s)**.

**The Daily Points of Light Award Submission and Nomination Form and the National Family**

**Volunteer Award Nomination Form** can help you recognize outstanding volunteers.

There is also a **Sample Grant Proposal Outline** to help you get the dollars rolling in around family volunteering. And the **Connect America Partners** may serve as good resources for creating partnerships in local communities and for joint funding opportunities. Keep your eyes open for great opportunities, and you'll be amazed how much family volunteering can bring to you!

## Helpful Resources

1. Recruitment Letter for Businesses
2. Company Fax-Back Form
3. Corporate Benefits Sheet
4. Company Confirmation Letter
5. Event Flyer
6. Family Volunteer Project Information Sheet
7. Article to Include in Company Newsletter(s)
8. Daily Points of Light Award Submission and Nomination Form
9. National Family Volunteer Award Nomination Form
10. Sample Grant Proposal Outline
11. Connect America Partners

## Recruitment Letter for Businesses: (Print on Your Letterhead)

*Date*

*Name of Contact Person*

*Name of Company*

*Address*

*City, State ZIP*

Dear *Name of Contact Person*:

As one of *Name of City's* most civic-minded companies, we don't want you to miss the opportunity for *Name of Company* employees and their families to participate in the *Name of Event*. *Name of Volunteer Center* is organizing *Name of City's* efforts to join hundreds of communities nationwide in showcasing the positive benefits of family volunteering.

As a distinguished member of our business and corporate community, we invite your participation and support, **not in the traditional dollars and cents way**, but in a human way. We need your company's involvement in this important effort, and here is how:

Commit to signing up *Number* of company employees and their families to volunteer at a community project on *Name of Event*.

It's that simple. We need volunteers, and you have the volunteers we need! Not only will the community benefit from your employee families' efforts that day, a study has shown you also will enhance employee morale, productivity and pride in the company. This may be especially helpful if we successfully interest local radio, TV, and newspaper reporters in covering the event. Media coverage is one of our primary goals. Picture your employees in company T-shirts spending a few hours enhancing the community and spending valuable family time together.

Enclosed you will find materials describing *Name of Event* and a fax-back sheet so you can quickly respond regarding your company's decision. Please **check the choices** that apply and **fax the form to me at Fax Number no later than Response Date**. Also enclosed is a description of the projects available in our community and some information about family volunteering.

Thank you in advance for your consideration and for taking the time to learn about *Name of Event*. I will call you in a few days to talk more about this opportunity and to see if you have any questions. We sincerely hope that *Name of Company* will join us in making this family volunteering a major success in *Name of City*!

Sincerely,

*Signature*

Enclosures

**Enclose the following with this letter: Company Fax-Back Form, Corporate Benefits Sheet**

## Company Fax-Back Form

### We want you to join *Name of Event* in *Name of City*!

*Name of Contact*  
*Name of Company*  
*Address*  
*City, State ZIP*

**Please fax back to:** *Spokesperson Name at XXX-XXXX*

We hope you will join us on *Date of Event* as we celebrate family volunteering by offering *Name of City* residents the opportunity to give back to our community. Your company can directly benefit through a proven employee morale booster and media news coverage of the event.

Please indicate how you can help by checking the appropriate box(es) and faxing this form back to us. Thanks for your time!

- YES!** Our company will recruit *Number* employees and their families and commit to volunteer at a community project *Event Date*.

#### **We will:**

- Endorse *Name of Event*. Please feel free to add our name to your list of companies and organizations that support this worthwhile effort.
- Designate a company coordinator to serve as a liaison between *Name of Event* organizers and participating employees.
- Link our company's Web site to the *Name of Volunteer Center* Web site.  
Our URL is: http://
- Tag our company's print, radio or television advertising with "A proud sponsor of *Name of Event, Date of Event*. Call XXX-XXXX to sign up."
- Include an article in our company newsletter.
- Provide registration forms and information to employees.
- Post flyers on company bulletin boards.
- Send information and reminders to employees via e-mail.
- Provide information to employees during staff meetings.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- Sorry, this isn't the year for us. Please let us know about next year's plans for *Name of Event*.

## Corporate Benefits Sheet: (Print on Plain Paper)

### How Does Family Volunteering Benefit Corporations?

- ⊙ Family volunteering increases employee morale and builds a positive attitude in the workplace.
- ⊙ Family volunteering improves the workplace by breaking down barriers among employees, reinforcing team work, and building commitment.
- ⊙ Family volunteering in the workplace adds an extra dimension of sharing, caring and creates a sense of community among employees.
- ⊙ Family volunteering enhances quality time for families by allowing learning opportunities and positive role modeling for children.
- ⊙ Family volunteering provides opportunity for skill development in such areas as leadership, problemsolving, and public speaking, as well as improved organizational skills.
- ⊙ Family volunteering has a positive impact on a company's image in the community; shows a personal side, and demonstrates the commitment of a company, its employees, to the communities in which it is doing business.

### Corporations that promote Family Volunteering report significant results:

- ⊙ 94% improves company's public image.
- ⊙ 93% builds employee teamwork skills.
- ⊙ 91% improves employee morale.
- ⊙ 90% attracts better employees because of image of community concern.

*Conference Board Survey, 1992*

**For more information on family volunteering and how you can get involved, please contact *Name of Volunteer Center* at XXX-XXXX.**

## Company Confirmation Letter: (Print on Your Letterhead)

*Date*

*Name of Contact*

*Name of Company*

*Address*

*City, State ZIP*

Dear *Name of Contact*:

Thank you for volunteering!

We are pleased to confirm your company's participation in the *Name of Event on Date of Event*.

By agreeing to provide *Number of Name of Company* employees and their families as volunteers at the *Name of Event*, you are confirming your commitment to the benefits of family volunteering as a vehicle for improving communities, businesses, and families.

Please distribute the enclosed information to your participating employees and remind them to bring it to the project site *Date of Event*. If you have questions or need additional information, you can call me at XXX-XXXX.

Again, on behalf of *Name of Volunteer Center*, thank you for your support. We look forward to seeing you *Date of Event*!

Sincerely,

*Signature*

Enclosures

**Enclose the following with this letter: Event Flyer, Family Volunteer Project Information Sheet, Article for Company Newsletter**

**Event Flyer: Enclose with recruitment letter to companies**

# **Sign Up Now For *Name of City's* *Name of Event***

## ***Date of Event* *Time of Event***

You and your family are invited to make a difference in *Name of City* and to spend some quality time together!

**Volunteer opportunities are available at:**

- ⊙ *Location of Project*
- ⊙ *Location of Project*
- ⊙ *Location of Project*

**Call *Name of Spokesperson, Name of Volunteer Center,*  
at XXX-XXXX to sign up or learn more!**

The *Name of Volunteer Center* is working closely with the Points of Light Foundation & Volunteer Center National Network to make year-round family volunteering the norm in America. Join other families from your company in helping your community!

# Family Volunteer Project Information Sheet

Project Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Hours: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Directions to Site: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Activity: \_\_\_\_\_

Instructions: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please Wear: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please Bring: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Rain Plans: \_\_\_\_\_

## Article to Include in Company Newsletter(s): Enclose with company recruitment letter

### *Name of Company* Families Needed for *Name of Event*

*Name of Volunteer Center* is organizing *Name of City's* efforts to join hundreds of communities nationwide in showcasing the positive benefits of family volunteering. *Name of Event* will be held on *Date of Event*. This event will give area families an opportunity to spend quality time together, teach important life skills to children, give back to the community, and motivate families to make volunteering a year-round habit.

By participating, *Name of Company* sends the message that our company, its employees and families care about our hometown! We need *Number of* committed employees and their families to volunteer at a community project on *Date of Event*. It's that simple!

For just a few hours of your time, help make a positive difference for our community and its residents and enjoy a fun time with family and friends.

Volunteer opportunities include:

- ◉ *Name of Project, Time of Project, Location of Project, Description of Project*  
{ex., *Spreading the Joy of Thanksgiving*  
9 a.m.–noon • *Address, City and State.*

*Volunteers will share Thanksgiving a week early with children living at the shelter. Activities include baking cookies, creating and writing Thanksgiving cards and sharing Thanksgiving stories. List any celebrity spokesperson that will also volunteer at this sit..}*

If you are interested in participating, contact *Name of Volunteer Center* at XXX-XXXX for more information or to sign up. Please respond by *Response Date*. It's easy to get involved in family volunteering. Try it. You and your family will like it.

# Daily Points of Light Award Submission Guidelines

To nominate an individual or organization for a Daily Point of Light Award, you must submit:

- (A) An Official Nomination Form Required**  
(Use Nomination Form or submit online at [www.pointsoflight.org/dpol/nominationform.htm](http://www.pointsoflight.org/dpol/nominationform.htm))
- (B) A Statement Required**  
(of up to 500 words) as to why you believe the individual or organization being nominated should be recognized as a Daily Point of Light
- (C) Supplementary Materials Optional**  
(up to 10 pages, front and back) in support of the nomination

## All materials should be mailed to:

Daily Points of Light Awards  
Points of Light Foundation  
1400 I Street, NW, Suite 800  
Washington, DC 20005

## or emailed to:

[awards@pointsoflight.org](mailto:awards@pointsoflight.org)

Each of the above items is described in more detail below.

---

## (A) The Nomination Form

**Item I.** Indicate the nominee's complete name, mailing address and telephone number. If the nominee is a group, indicate the appropriate contact person within the group along with his/her address and telephone number.

**Item II.** Categories are used as guidelines in the selection process. Please check the appropriate award category. Because some nominations fit appropriately into more than one category, please choose the one you feel is most suitable.

**Item III.** Because finalists' references will be contacted for verification of their activities and

accomplishments, please choose references that are familiar with and can be available to discuss the nominee's community volunteering and citizen service activities.

**Item IV.** Indicate name, address, and telephone number of the nominator and sign the nomination form. If appropriate, indicate the nominator's title and organization.

## (B) The Statement

Please attach a narrative statement of up to 500 words that describes the nominee's service activities and demonstrates how those activities meet the community's serious social problems. Because the judges will utilize the criteria in the review process, please be sure that you address each of the criteria within the statement. Include information on how and when the activity began. If the nominee receives a stipend or salary for any portion of the nominated activity, please explain the extent of the stipend or salary in the statement and the degree to which the service is beyond the normal activities supported by the stipend.

## (C) Accompanying Materials

Up to 10 pages (front and back) of supplementary material may be submitted along with the nomination. These materials can include letters, testimonials, news clippings, pamphlets, etc. Anything over 10 pages will be discarded. Do not submit audio or videotapes, display materials, films, scrapbooks, as they will not be considered. Accompanying materials must be no larger than 8.5" by 11". All submitted materials become the property of the Points of Light Foundation and will not be returned.

# Daily Points of Light Award Official Nomination Form

## I. NOMINEE:

**Name:** If nominee is an individual, indicate Mr., Miss, Ms., Mrs.;  
If nominee is a group, enter full name of group, organization or business \_\_\_\_\_ (Area Code) Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (Area Code) Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_  
If nominee is a group, enter name of contact person

Complete Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP Code \_\_\_\_\_

Web Address \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address \_\_\_\_\_ Fax Number \_\_\_\_\_

Please check the appropriate classification for your nominee (only one):

- |   |  |                                 |
|---|--|---------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Youth                   | <input type="radio"/> Civic organization     | <input type="radio"/> Business  |
| <input type="radio"/> Adult                   | <input type="radio"/> Media                  | <input type="radio"/> Group     |
| <input type="radio"/> Senior                  | <input type="radio"/> School/School District | <input type="radio"/> Family    |
| <input type="radio"/> Government Organization | <input type="radio"/> Religious organization | <input type="radio"/> Nonprofit |
| <input type="radio"/> Other                   |  |                                 |

## II. AWARD CATEGORY:

Please check the appropriate category (check only one):

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Ongoing relationship with caring persons | <input type="radio"/> Safe communities          |
| <input type="radio"/> Healthy start for a healthy future       | <input type="radio"/> Quality education for all |
| <input type="radio"/> Opportunities for young people to serve  | <input type="radio"/> Community mobilization    |

**III. VERIFICATION:** In order to qualify, a nominee must have three references who may be contacted to verify the scope and extent of the nominee's activities. References should be persons familiar with the community service activities for which the nomination is made and should not include the nominee or any person related to the nominee if an individual.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ (Area Code) Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Title and organization, if appropriate \_\_\_\_\_

Complete Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP Code \_\_\_\_\_

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ (Area Code) Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Title and organization, if appropriate \_\_\_\_\_

Complete Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP Code \_\_\_\_\_

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ (Area Code) Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Title and organization, if appropriate \_\_\_\_\_

Complete Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP Code \_\_\_\_\_

## IV. NOMINATOR:

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ (Area Code) Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Title and organization, if appropriate \_\_\_\_\_

Complete Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP Code \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

# Points Of Light Foundation National Family Volunteer Awards

Volunteering together as a family provides quality family time, strengthens family communication, and provides opportunities for family members to be role models, while simultaneously allowing families to make significant contributions to their communities. Family Matters is a national program of the Points of Light Foundation & Volunteer Center National Network that is spreading the concept of family volunteering across America.

Awards will be presented in the following categories:

- ⦿ Families
- ⦿ Volunteer Centers
- ⦿ Nonprofit Organizations
- ⦿ Businesses/Corporations

## Judging Criteria:

**Achievement** – The nomination must reflect the actual accomplishments achieved through the voluntary service. This includes the impact (immediate and long-term) of family volunteering on both the community and the family(ies) volunteering.

**Community Needs** – The voluntary community service must address real community needs or concerns.

**Innovation** – Activities should reflect innovative or unique approaches to solving serious social problems.

**Mobilization** – Nominated activities should result in or present opportunities for mobilizing other families to volunteer and include families in the planning process.

**Ongoing Involvement** – The voluntary community service should be hands-on and ongoing rather than a one-time activity with the exception of outstanding service for short-term crisis situations or National Family Volunteer Day.

## The Nomination:

Complete the nomination form AND attach a statement of up to 500 words describing the nominee's activities. The narrative should describe the nominee's family volunteer activities and demonstrate how those activities address the community's social problems. Because the judges will utilize the criteria in the review process, please be sure to address each of the criteria within the statement. Remember, nominations may include any family volunteering activities throughout the year.

**In addition to your description, you may include applicable supportive materials.**

- ⦿ Brief description of organization and/or corporate partners, if any, and their contribution to your family volunteer activities
- ⦿ Brief biographical description and photos of your celebrity spokesperson, if applicable
- ⦿ Photos of activities, if possible
- ⦿ Mayoral or gubernatorial proclamation celebrating Family Volunteering
- ⦿ Clips of newspaper stories, footage of TV coverage, tapes of radio interviews
- ⦿ Family reflection statements, letters from families who participated, or other items that can be used to tell your story

**Submitted materials cannot be returned, and through their submission, you are giving permission for their future use in promotions or editorials.**

Questions? Call (202)729-8110 or e-mail FamilyMatters@PointsofLight.org

# Points of Light Foundation National Family Volunteer Award Nomination Form

## I. Nominee:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Daytime Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Which category does this nominee represent:

- Family       Volunteer Center       Nonprofit Organization       Business/Corporation

## II. Volunteer Activity:

Name of Project (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Organization Sponsoring Project (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name for Sponsoring Organization or Reference to Verify Projects not Sponsored by an

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Daytime Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Approx. how many individuals volunteered: \_\_\_\_\_ How many families does this represent: \_\_\_\_\_

If possible, please provide the approximate number of volunteers in the following age ranges:

- 0-5       6-12       13-18       19-30       31-60       61+

How many organizations partnered in this activity, if applicable, and please list each: \_\_\_\_\_

## III. Nominator (if different from nominee):

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Daytime Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Title and organization, if appropriate: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**Submit awards nomination form, description, and materials to:**

National Family Volunteer Award, Points of Light Foundation, 1400 I street, NW, Suite 900, Washington, DC 20005-6526

Fax: 202-729-8100, Attn: **Stacey Dunn-Turner**

# Sample Grant Proposal Outline

*Designed by the Points of Light Foundation & Volunteer Center National Network*

For the program (project or service) you have in mind, please provide the following information:

## I. BACKGROUND

**Why is the program being proposed?** (Define the problem and/or need and explain the significance of the project as it relates to volunteering and serious social issues affecting the community.)

Why is POLF/VCNN/VC the best organization to address this problem? What has POLF/VCNN/VC already done in this area (Indicate which Centers, areas and/or states currently have activity/models in this project area. Project number and demographics of the people who will be helped)?

Who has requested POLF/VCNN/VC to seek funding for this program? Please explain. (Reference any documents supporting development of this program).

## II. PURPOSE

**What do you hope to accomplish?** (List specific objectives, if available, and relate them to the audience being served and the need or problem.)

## III. OPERATION

**How do you plan to accomplish it?** (Describe the proposed methods, programs, activities, techniques, procedures, innovations, etc.) Will any other institutions, organizations, organizations or community resources be involved in this project as partners or collaborators? If so, please list the respective organizations or resources and briefly describe their role in the program/project.

## IV. TIMETABLE

**What is the desired time schedule?** (List when project should start and end. If known, add any specific scheduling for various phases of the project.)

What are the future plans for this program? Will it be continuing or short term in nature? Will continuing expense be assumed by POLF/VCNN/VC, another organization, or the community in the future?

## V. IMPACT

**What will be the benefits of implementing this program**—to the youth, adults and families involved, to their communities, to volunteering and to the sponsor(s)?

## VI. EVALUATION

**How will results be documented and evaluated?**

- ⊙ List outcome measures before the program begins.
- ⊙ Benchmark during the program.
- ⊙ Develop a full evaluation at the end of the program and again at a stated period of time after the completion of a full year/phase/total program in order to measure results.
- ⊙ Report to sponsors.
- ⊙ Development of future activities in the community.)

## VII. VISIBILITY, REPORTING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

**What is the plan for creating program visibility and reporting progress/results** to donors, other key stakeholders, the community, etc.? Clearly define visibility and reporting methodology, messages, and audiences.

## VIII. ANNOTATED EXPENSE BUDGET

**Itemize and describe the proposed annual budget** for completion of the program. If exact cost is not known, please give your best estimate. List each component of the program individually.

Be sure to include the cost of planned ongoing and special media services, evaluation, and program management. If the program will be done by phases or stages, list the budget for each phase/stage.

## **IX. COVER LETTER FROM CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**Prepare a cover letter from the organization's chief executive or highest ranking official.** This demonstrates full organizational support of the program.

## **X. SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

**List key contacts for questions.** Offer key staff vitae on request. Provide list of board members and/or key governing leadership. List of current donors (if any). Include your 501(c)(3) letter.

### **Program Name**

### **Multi-year Program Budget**

- I. Program** (approximately 60% of budget)
  - A. Program Support** (grants, seed money, etc.)
  - B. Program Staff**
  
- II. Materials and Equipment**
  
- III. Volunteer Development and Training**
  - A. Conference**
  - B. Other National/Regional Training Seminars**
  - C. Travel Grants for Participants**
  - D. Resource People**
  
- IV. Evaluation/Studies and Reports**  
(approximately 3% of budget)
  
- V. Program/Management and Media**

## Connect America Partners

100 Black Men of America  
Alliance for Children & Families  
Allstate Insurance Company  
America's Promise  
American Bar Association  
American Red Cross  
American Society of Association Executives  
AmeriCorps Alums, Inc.  
Association for Volunteer Administration  
Association of Fundraising Professionals  
Association of Jewish Family & Children's Organizations  
Association of Junior Leagues, International  
Big Brothers Big Sisters of America  
Camp Fire Boys and Girls  
Character Counts  
Chase Manhattan Foundation  
Child Welfare League of America  
Citizens' Scholarship Foundation of America  
Civil Air Patrol  
Communities in Schools, Inc.  
Compeer  
Corporation for National Service  
Dept. of Veterans Affairs, Volunteer Service Office  
Enterprise Foundation  
FaithWorks  
Family, Career & Community Leaders of America  
Farmers Insurance Group of Companies  
First Book  
Future Business Leaders of America—Phi Beta Lambda  
General Federation of Women's Clubs  
Generations United  
Global Volunteers  
InKindex  
Jewish Women International  
Joint Action in Community Service, Inc.  
Kiwanis International  
March of Dimes  
Michigan Nonprofit Association  
Miss America Organization  
Mothers Against Drunk Driving  
NATSO Foundation  
National 4-H Council  
National Alliance for Youth Sports  
National Assembly  
National Assembly of State Offices of Volunteerism  
National Association for Community Mediation  
National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education  
National Association of Partners in Education  
National Association of Planning Councils  
The National Conference for Community and Justice  
National Consumers League  
National Council of Catholic Women  
National Council of La Raza  
National Council of Negro Women, Inc.  
National Council on Family Relations  
National Crime Prevention Council  
National Exchange Club  
National Fatherhood Initiative  
National Football League  
National Fraternal Congress of America  
National Future Farmers of America Organization  
National Institute for Literacy  
National Interfaith Community Ministry Network  
National Mentoring Partnership  
National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation  
National Safety Council  
NetDay  
Pew Partnership for Civic Change  
Phi Mu Foundation  
Points of Light Foundation  
Project America  
RISE Learning Solutions  
The Salvation Army  
Shell Oil Company  
Telephone Pioneers of America  
United States Junior Chamber of Commerce  
United Way of America  
Urban Family Institute  
Verizon Foundation  
Veterans of Foreign Wars of the US  
Volunteer Center National Network  
Volunteers of America  
Wal-Mart Foundation  
WK Kellogg Foundation  
Women in Community Service  
YMCA of the USA  
Young Adult Professional Associates, Inc.  
Youth Achievers Internationale  
Youth Service America



**POINTS  
OF LIGHT**  
FOUNDATION  
&  
VOLUNTEER CENTER  
NATIONAL NETWORK

The Points of Light Foundation  
1400 I Street, NW  
Suite 800  
Washington, DC 20005  
[www.PointsofLight.org](http://www.PointsofLight.org)