

HELPING

Your

Volunteer

Help

You



.....an illustrated guide for staff

INTRODUCTION

Helping Your Volunteer Help You is dedicated to our staff. It has been published in an effort to minimize the guesswork in learning what motivates volunteers and makes them more effective staff helpers.

This guide has emerged as a joint effort of many volunteers and staff. The responses, based on first hand experience, were chosen for their applicability in guiding volunteers throughout the hospital.

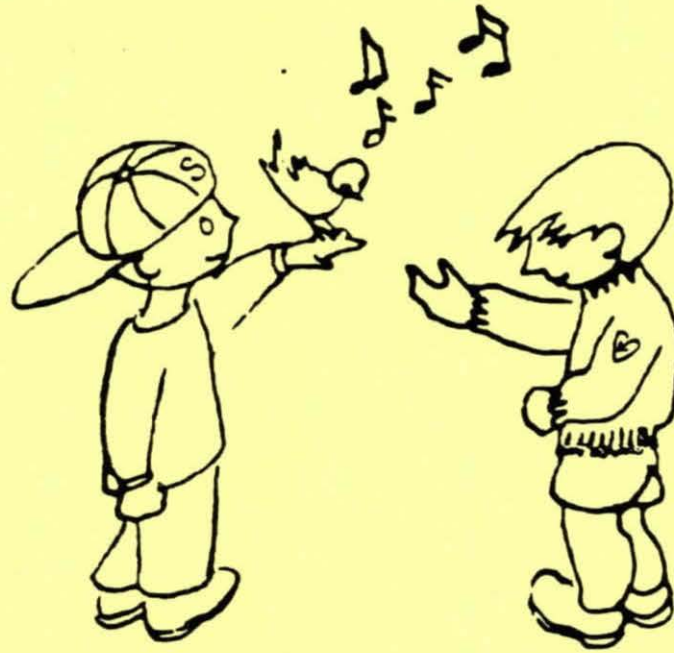
My admiration and gratitude go to Patricia Sloan for her imaginative art work, Evelyn Jackson for her steadfastness in interviewing, Linda Schwartz for her devotion to clarity and lightheartedness, June Nassau for her moral support and Bill Jacobs for his tireless efforts on the word processor.

We hope the reading of this booklet enhances your experience with your volunteer partners. Since we would like the final edition to reflect a still more comprehensive sampling of staff opinion, you are earnestly invited to participate by returning the feedback page attached.

Ruth Saron, CAVS, Director
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CHAPTER I

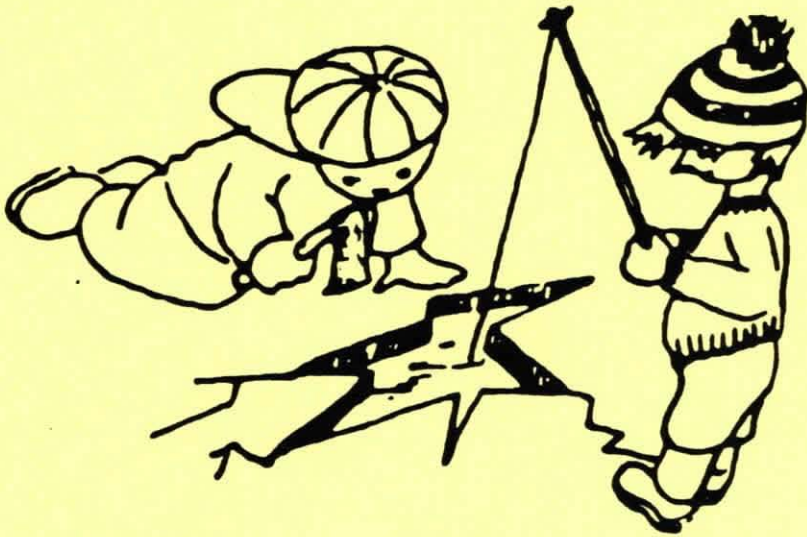
SETTING THE STAGE



Getting off on the right note

ESTABLISHING A RECEPTIVE ATMOSPHERE

Volunteers are likely to feel uncomfortable until they feel accepted and part of your team.



VOLUNTEER: It's hard to believe how nervous I was when I began my placement.

...Fortunately, my supervisor helped me break the ice with the kids.

PHYSICAL THERAPIST: I say, "Hi" (name), shake hands and introduce myself. In my orientation I tell my volunteers we wouldn't have them if we didn't need them and that their contribution can have a great effect. They are not just an extra pair of hands to us. They are another person the children can relate to. (Jed Schwartz)

DVS:* Your volunteers may feel lost on their first day. Possible ways to help might be.....noting the time and place you've agreed to meet them, reviewing their applications to learn about their experience and remembering to introduce them to other staff as well as the children in your area.

* Department of Volunteer Services staff.

FACILITATING THE VOLUNTEER'S LEARNING PROCESS

Volunteers want to learn; with adequate input they can better their job performance.

TEACHER ECC: My success with my volunteers comes about because I sit down with them, explain how our program is run, and make them feel they are a part of my group. It's become sort of a friendly thing- then, if they're not sure about something, they feel comfortable enough to ask me about it. (Bettye Neal)



VOLUNTEER: *I want to know the best way to teach each of the different children*

.... because I realize what works for one does not necessarily work for another.

TEACHER: I stress the children's abilities rather than their disabilities. I tell my volunteers about my goals for the kids, and changes in their medical regimen as we go along. I don't introduce a child as an illness. (Ted Gardiner)

VOLUNTEER: I appreciated being taken into my supervisor's confidence. However, I was not overloaded. I was given the information needed as it came up, e.g. she told me what I had to know about the child's vision problem and that he couldn't hold a pencil.

TEACHER: I work on educating my volunteers. Little by little, I let them know how to help a child, e.g. pinpoint learning styles, management techniques they can use, etc. (Jean Murray)

STRESSING HEALTH & SAFETY FACTORS

Volunteers may be unfamiliar with precautionary measures and need to have them spelled out.

VOLUNTEER: It was startling at first, seeing the children in the different equipment.....

...I was glad someone took the time to show me how to fasten the restrainers and apply the brakes, warn me about sitting on a stretcher and things like that.



What's all this stuff?

ECC TEACHER: Make your volunteers aware of safety factors so accidents may be prevented. Remind them to ask, rather than assume what a child can and cannot do. (Pat Harte)

PHYSICAL THERAPIST: Use common sense, e.g., if a child's head is hanging over the side of the wheelchair, that's wrong... ask the staff to help or bring the child to a therapist. (Jed Schwartz)

RECREATION COUNSELOR: I teach my volunteers how to properly lift, hold and help me transfer each patient (depending on their diagnosis), and tell them not to do this without staff help. (Nat Vacc

NURSE: When necessary, refer volunteers to the Nursing Cardex, specific videotapes or resources available in the Nursing Library or DVS. (Judy Lyons)

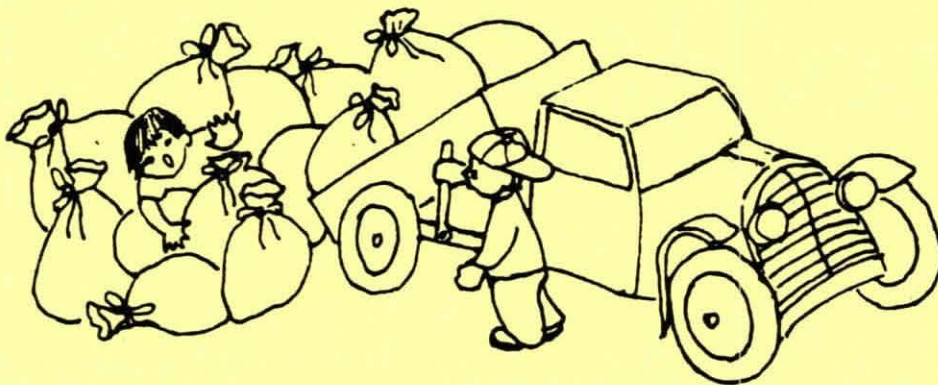
STRESSING HEALTH & SAFETY FACTORS (cont'd.)

INFECTION CONTROL OFFICER: Staff needs to tell volunteers that handwashing before and after patient contact is the single most effective way to prevent the spread of infection.

Volunteers are not assigned to work with certain patients who are on precautions for hepatitis. (Gloria Scherer)

TEACHER: I do mention how we handle children with special problems such as osteogenesis imperfecta, sickle-cell anemia, seizures, asthma and any contagious illness when I have them in my class. (Jim Desimone)

NURSE: Volunteers serving food need to know the specific eating regimen of the children. Inform volunteers of any allergies or restrictions on water intake or any particular food or drink. (Kathy Henry)

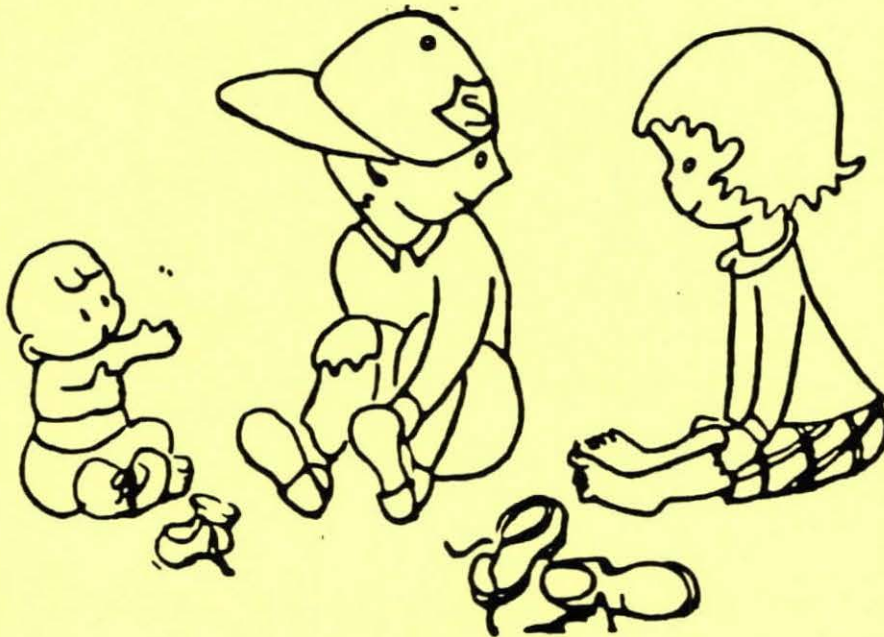


Training in small doses prevents information overload.

RIGHTS OF PRIVACY

Volunteers need to be reminded about confidentiality.

- REC DIRECTOR: I tell about the child's preferences, his ability to communicate, and maybe something about his background, but not everything. If, on the other hand, the volunteer finds out something important for staff to know about the child, ask him to share it with you only. (Lester Simon)
- REC COUNSELOR: I explain to my volunteers why it's best not to ask personal questions of the children. I suggest they concentrate on building a relationship. (Helen Meagher)
- CLINICAL DIR: Don't burden volunteers with details such as poor prognosis or major social problems of a patient. However, volunteers should know that whatever they see or hear about a patient is confidential. They should consider how they would feel if a stranger discussed their personal problems with others. (Dr. Low)



*Putting yourself in someone else's shoes
is a good way to feel if they pinch.*

CHAPTER II

ON STAGE

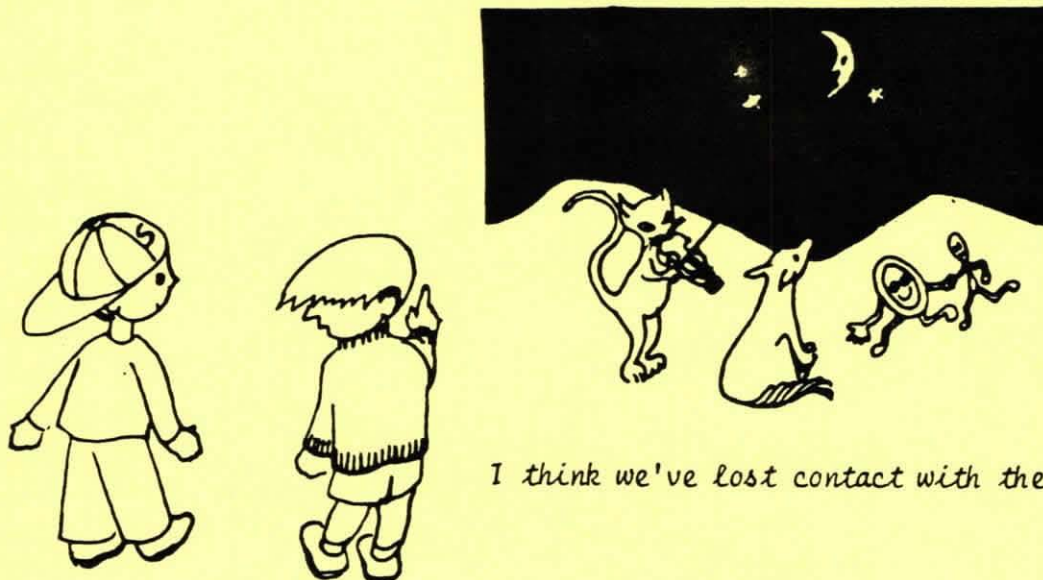


Motivation mounts when we give our volunteers who have proven reliable, extended responsibilities.

(Jed Schwartz)

COMMUNICATING COUNTS

Crucial to the volunteer's adjustment and commitment is understanding and being understood.



I think we've lost contact with the cow.

VOLUNTEER: My supervisor not only told me what she expected from me right from the start, but asked me what I hoped to gain from the experience. This avoided my having to ask a lot of questions or possibly missing something.

TEACHER: Volunteers are here for a reason. I ask them how much they want to take on ...if it's an internship, they may want more. (Jean Murray)

VOLUNTEER: It's nice to know if there are choices about what to do with the kids. e.g., helping with puzzles or paints.

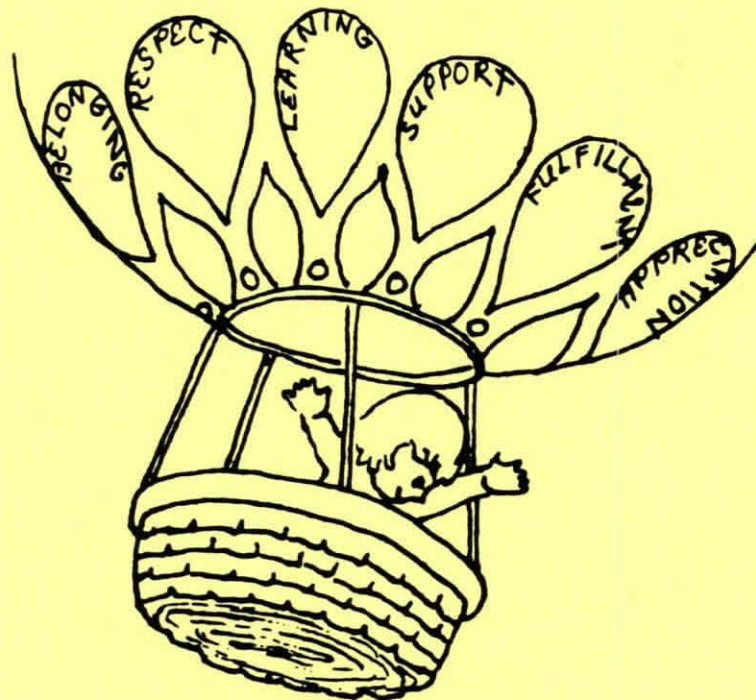
SPEECH THERAPIST: For children with communication problems suggest Instead of asking questions requiring a yes or no answer, give the child a chance; delay your response a bit. First ask for word answers, e.g. "Do you want to stay in or go out?" "Are you hot or cold?" rather than, "Do you want a sweater?" (Ellie Kaufman)

ECC TEACHER: Use common sense: for a non-verbal child, read expressions and gestures. Look for the child's progress in ways other than verbalization. (Pat Harte)

COMMUNICATING COUNTS (con't)

Sometimes only minutes of staff time can make a huge difference.

- VOLUNTEER: It was nice to have the chance to have coffee with my supervisor so it got to feel a little more personal. Its more comfortable when its not a worker/boss situation.
- DVS: Above all acknowledge them as persons, e.g. if someone has been out ill, it's important to remember to ask how they are feeling when they return.
- VOLUNTEER: Please continue giving me encouragement, including me in your conversations, (when possible), and checking to see how I'm doing and if I enjoy it.



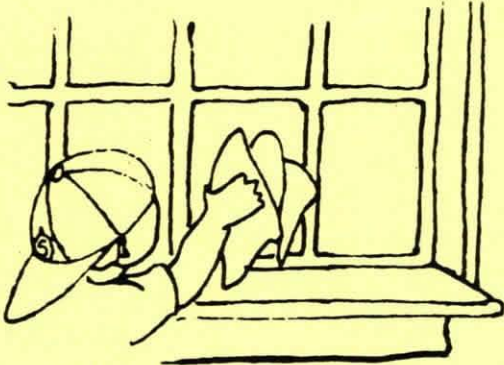
I felt uplifted by my Blythedale experience.

- DVS: Volunteers need an opportunity to express their thoughts and feelings as well as get feedback from you. Consulting with you for a few minutes can often prevent their leaving with unanswered questions, feeling burdened or confused.

TELLING THE "WHY" PAYS OFF

A volunteer responds best when let in on the "why" of what they are asked to do with the child.

REC COUNSELOR: Share goals with your volunteers and keep them informed as they change. A goal clear to you may not be obvious to a volunteer. This will help them understand your priorities and what their role and responsibilities are. (Terese Dana)



Making things clear

VOLUNTEER: I was relieved when my supervisor explained why we were pushing ahead to a new project when a previous one wasn't near completion.

EXEC. SECY.: I help them to see how their work fits in with mine. (Marianne Buettner)

VOLUNTEER: I appreciated knowing what activities were planned for. This helped me think through some of my own ideas concerning the project.



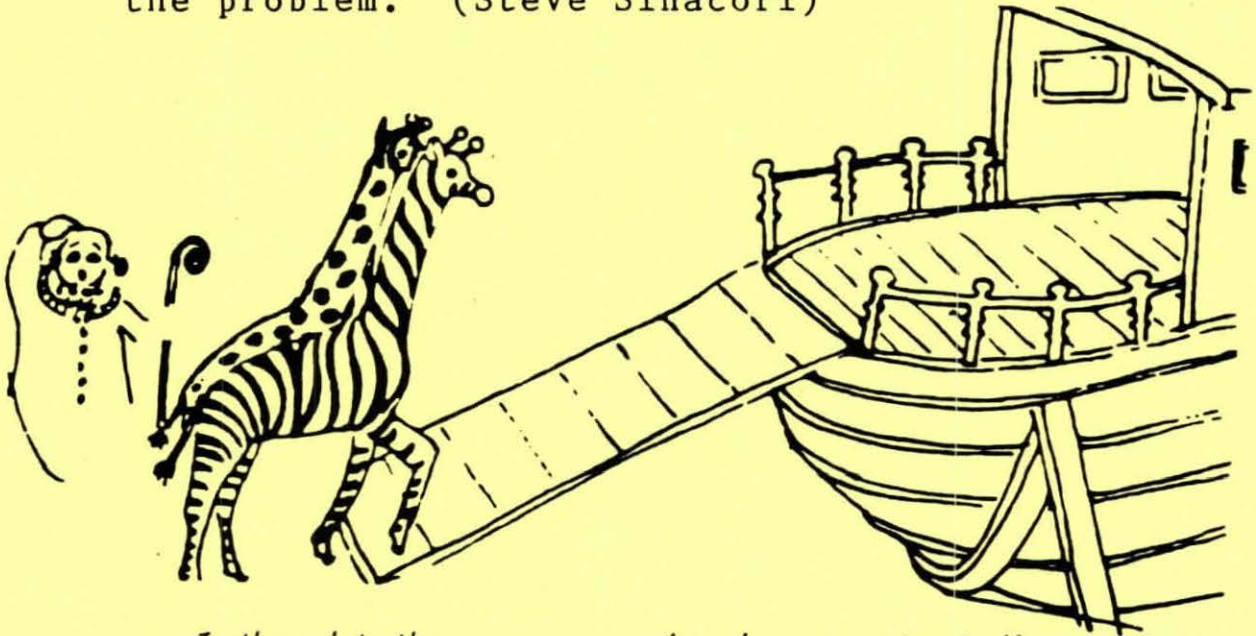
When I don't know what to expect, it puts me at a disadvantage.

VOLUNTEER: I was able to work more independently when I had an explanation of why and how to use the materials.

MATCHING ABILITIES AND PERSONALITIES

Compatibility of staff, volunteers and assignments is a winning combination.

TEACHER: Not everyone's chemistry fits in with everyone else's. If you and your volunteer don't match up, inform the DVS early on so they can help resolve the problem. (Steve Sinacori)



I thought they were a pair when we started!

ECC TEACHER: I try to give my volunteers children they can have some rapport with. (Mary Jo Mayo)

VOLUNTEER: I enjoyed working with the same child each time; she and I developed a warm relationship. I also felt good about having a part in her progress.

DVS: Tune in to your volunteers' needs and abilities, e.g. their level of patience, intellectual capabilities, etc. Give them something to do which is commensurate with what they can do.

TEACHER: Some people can sense what their next step is, while others need more direction. It's important to know and treat volunteers as individuals. (Ellen Adrian)

USING YOUR VOLUNTEER'S TALENTS

Volunteers need to utilize their expertise.

DVS: Your volunteers can be your "goal"-mine!

TEACHER: The background information we get from DVS on the volunteers is useful. I make sure to capitalize on it in my program. (Ted Gardiner)

VOLUNTEER: I taught a lesson to the class one day using my guitar. It was very exciting to be allowed to present something I devised myself.

TEACHER: Sometimes a volunteer may have a certain strength, talent, or thing they like to do. I encourage them to share these with me so the children benefit. (Ted Gardiner)



I've got to be me!

REC COUNSELOR: I enjoy having a volunteer whose abilities compliment my own. I sometimes request a volunteer with skills I do not have. It makes for a more well rounded experience for all. (Pat Fox)

USING VOLUNTEER TIME EFFECTIVELY

*When volunteers are planned for
they are likely to do their best.*

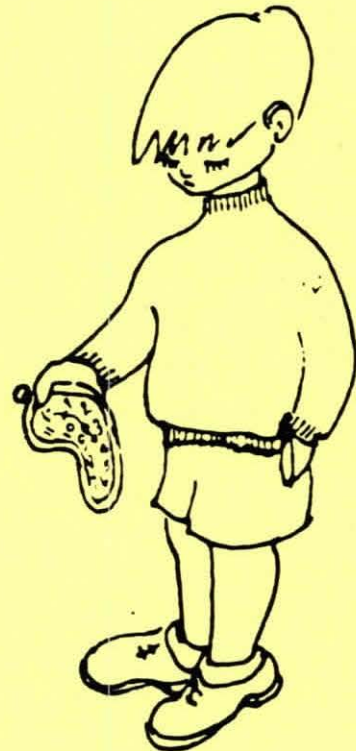
VOLUNTEER: There have been times when I felt my presence was not necessary.

TEACHER: Sometimes your kids "disappear" and you need to be ready with something for your volunteer to do. At those times, you could ask them if they would like to do art work or corrections of a child's paper or if they prefer to help elsewhere for a time (if other staff needs the help), or refer them to your supervisor or the DVS. (Ellen Adrian)

DVS: Volunteers feel respected when their time is well used.

It is as important to report your diminishing needs for the volunteer's time as it was to make your original request.

Never send volunteers home or tell them not to come in, unless the DVS staff is aware, as there are always needs in the hospital.

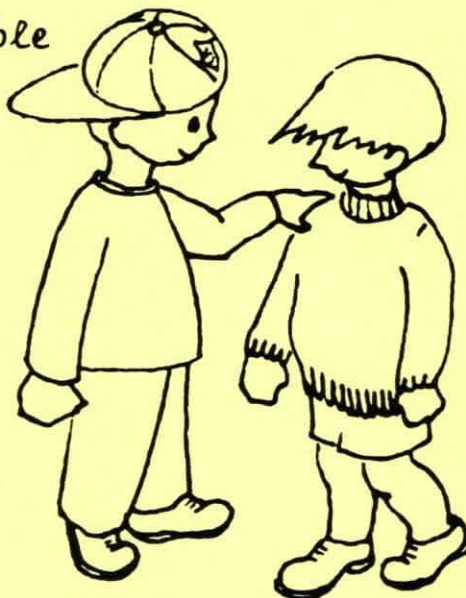


REC SUPERVISOR: If you are a new staff member or are substituting for the day, check with DVS or your department schedule to learn if a volunteer is assigned to your group. (Lee Fleming)

RECOGNITION

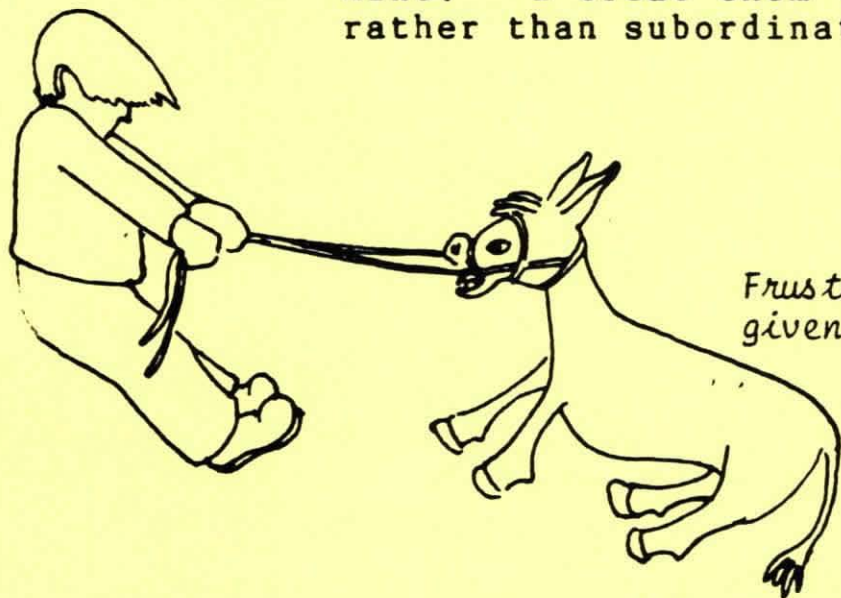
Volunteers need to feel that their services are worthwhile and genuinely appreciated.

DVS: *Prove to volunteers they are valuable and their contribution is valuable and you're there to support their efforts.*



DENTAL HYGIENIST: *It's vital that volunteers feel respected. How do we do this? We thank them sincerely each time. We treat our volunteers as part of the staff. When they're here, the staff can accomplish a lot more. (Fran Morris)*

TEACHER: *With experienced volunteers, I give free access. I would not say, "Don't work with this kid, he's mine." I treat them like colleagues and partners rather than subordinates. (Steve Sinacori)*



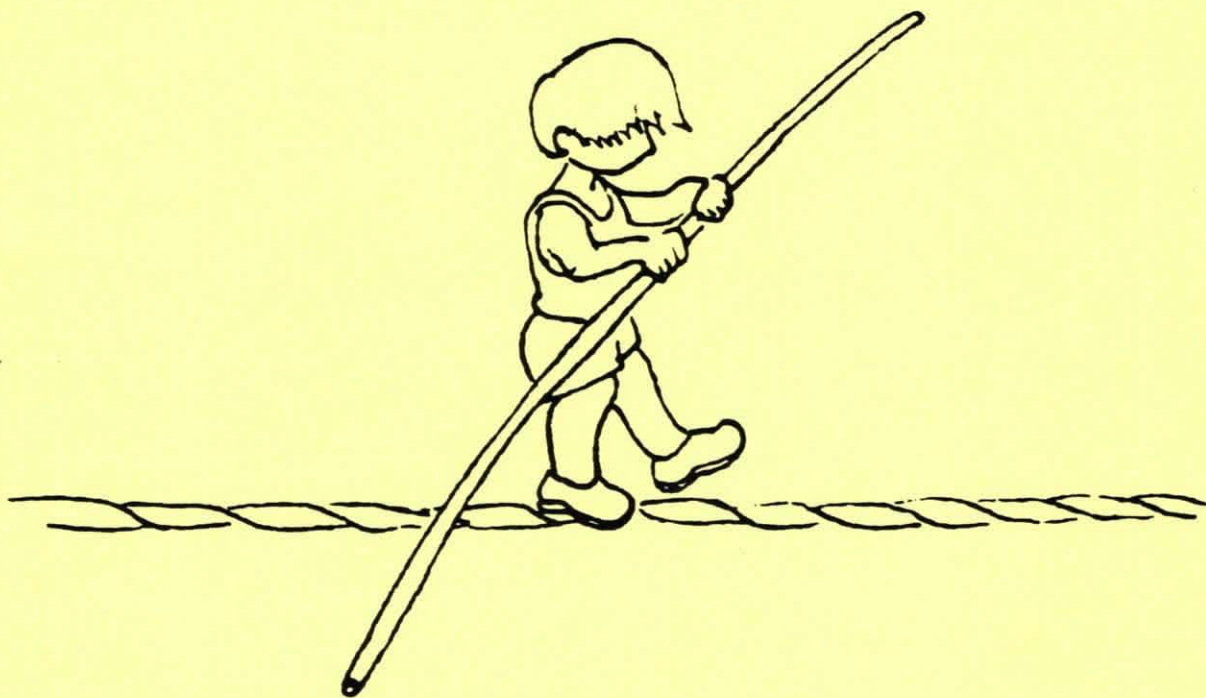
Frustration sets in when volunteers are given a difficult task for too long.

CHAPTER III

IN THE PROMPTER'S BOX



leaving clues along the way.....



The volunteer walks the finest line in the Hospital.

COACHING CONSTRUCTIVELY

Volunteers need to know how to improve their performance.

VOLUNTEER: It was difficult trying to do a job when there was no response my from supervisor as to whether I was handling things correctly.

Rather than just telling me how to interact with specific kids, you showed me, so that I could follow your example.

TEACHER: Suggest changes to volunteers in a positive manner so as not to offend them. (Jim Desimone)



VOLUNTEER: My supervisor didn't make me appear wrong. Instead, she suggested constructive ways of dealing with the situation.

REC STAFF: If you see volunteers being inappropriate take them aside and make an alternative suggestion. Don't tell them in front of the kids. (Helen Meagher)

DVS: Volunteers rather have their "mistakes" brought to their attention than have to wonder how they are doing. Without constructive feedback your volunteer may not be back.

COACHING CONSTRUCTIVELY (cont'd)

TEACHER: I warn my volunteers about doing too much for certain children. Some kids are capable and will try to manipulate you. Allowing this child will not help the child. (Lou Mattutini)



Polish my boots! Go here!

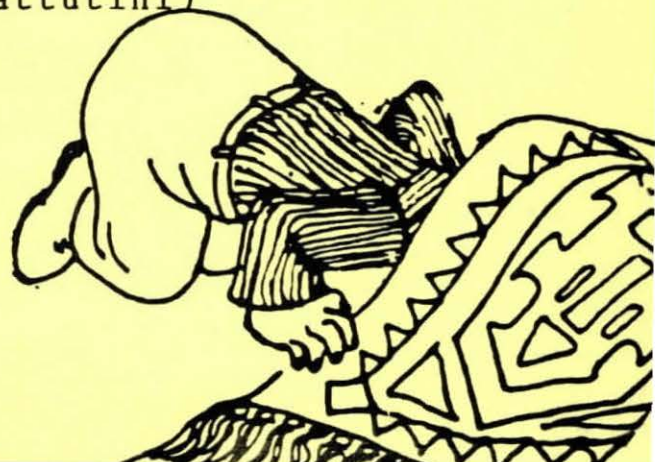
Pick up this and while you're at it ...

TEACHER: It might take a child a whole period to saw a piece of wood. I explain that that's O.K.; the job doesn't have to be perfect as long as the child gains satisfaction from it. (Gary Mancus)

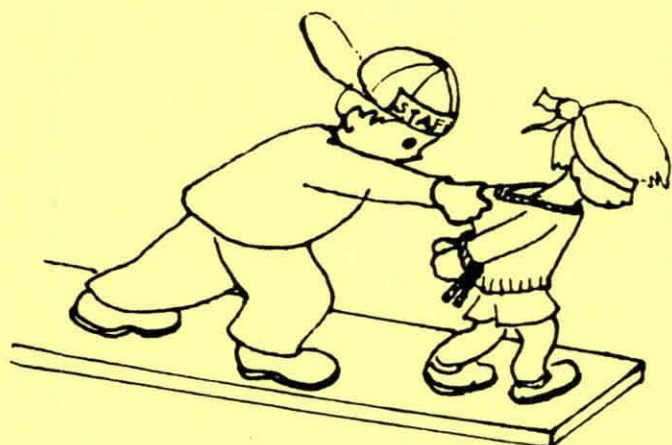
TEACHER: In giving your volunteer feedback, give concrete examples of how improvement can be made. e.g. better than saying, "Don't pay attention to him now," say, "This child needs to be ignored when he talks that way. or we may reinforce his negative behavior." (Ellen Adrian)

TEACHER: I say, when the kids have you at a standstill, then ask me. I'll either tell you how to handle it or step in and handle it myself. I don't like to undermine a volunteer's authority so I give them a choice. (Lou Mattutini)

I realize it's my responsibility to handle counter-productive behavior very early on, rather than wait, hoping my volunteers will "catch on" and that this behavior will "disappear" in time. (Mary Jo Mayo)



COACHING CONSTRUCTIVELY(con't)

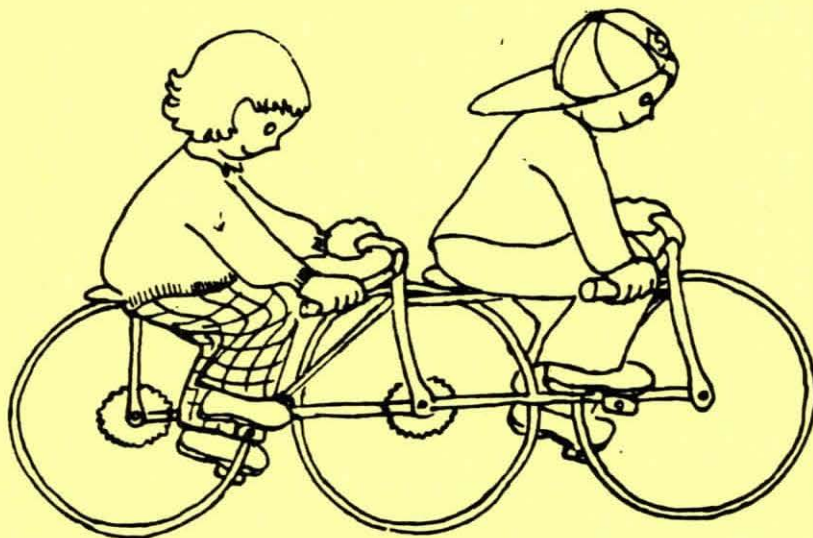


I stay aware and insure that my volunteers don't go off the deep-end and find themselves in water over their heads.

VOLUNTEER: My supervisor helped me understand when it was best not to get involved.

REC COUNSELOR: I say, "It's wise to take a friendly but firm approach so the children won't think you're a pushover and take advantage of you. Set the tone from the beginning because it's hard to reverse things later on." (Pat Fox)

TEACHER: I say, "Many of the kids will test you constantly!"



Be consistent with the staff approach so the children won't be confused."
Lou Mattutini

SOCIAL WORKER: If the volunteer can be encouraged to voice his concerns, re: the child's disability, handling negative behavior, etc., they are likely to be less apprehensive. (Jamie Kreiman)



The children and professionals benefit when volunteers are nourished by encouragement, guidance and feedback from their staff partners.

STAFF FEEDBACK SHEET

Overall I rate: HELPING YOUR VOLUNTEERS HELP YOU

- Circle one: 5 - Very helpful
4 - Moderately helpful
3 - Fairly helpful
2 - Somewhat helpful
1 - Not particularly helpful

Because: _____

To make it more effective
I recommend:

I would like to contribute
the following statement (s):

Dept.: _____

Signature (optional) _____

Please return to Dept., Volunteer Services or Switchboard Box 59

July '85