High School Student

VOLUNTEERS

Learning To Serve

Serving To Learn

High School Student VOLUNTEERS

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The recent emergence of high school student volunteer programs convinces me that the high schools of this country offer a most exciting opportunity for expansion of volunteer involvement today. Such programs provide students with avenues for responsible and productive service, benefitting both the community and the student volunteer. The volunteer work is honored as serious effort, while learning is enhanced and made relevant.

In the hope that we can help further the student volunteer movement, ACTION offers this manual as a resource for high schools to use in beginning new programs, or in expanding existing volunteer efforts.

Joseph H. Blatchford
Director

Preface

This manual is written for school officials who want to learn more about the high school volunteer movement, as well as for those who are already involved in coordinating student volunteer activities. It explains what a high school-sponsored volunteer program is, what its advantages are, and how a school can establish and maintain a program of its own.

Following closely in the footsteps of college volunteers, high school students have begun to have a visible impact on our society through voluntary action. Experience has shown that students work most effectively in their communities—and derive the most educational benefits—when the school supplies the essential element of coordination. But many schools still do not have the basic information they need in order to do this.

This manual is an attempt to answer that need. Distilling the experience of a wide variety of successful programs, it shows in detail how to conceive and implement a school-sponsored volunteer effort on a large or small scale. We feel that it can help any administrator, whatever the limits of his school's resources and commitment, to come up with a constructive and imaginative program.

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High School-Sponsored Volunteer Programs: What and Why

In recent years, young people have voiced much concern over social problems that stay unsolved and community needs that go unmet. Many of the most committed have followed up their words with action. Of course, action is not necessarily better than words—it all depends on what one is doing and what difference it makes. Doubtless, some things that have been done in the name of social action have made the wrong kind of difference or no difference at all. At the same time, many young people are doing things which are making the right kind of difference to themselves and to society. To take just a few examples:

—A group of high school students concerned about drug abuse have organized for the purpose of conducting training sessions for parents and teachers—to familiarize the adults with as many aspects as possible of the teenage drug scene. Candid interaction between the two age groups has resulted in heightened awareness of the problem and some concrete efforts to solve it.

—Volunteer hospital aides from another high school are performing a number of services that a short-handed and overworked hospital staff have been forced to neglect, including playing cards with patients, writing letters for those who cannot do so for themselves, and teaching handicrafts. While providing much-needed and much-appreciated assistance, the students are learning more about themselves and the joy of giving.

—Better police/youth relationships is the goal of a high school-sponsored program which allows student volunteers to observe law enforcement personnel in their day-to-day roles, assisting when and where appropriate. Students ride in patrol cars with police, help process police records, and talk informally with law enforcement personnel about how things look from their respective points of view. Barriers to communication and understanding are being broken down as the students and the police begin to form new, more positive images of each other.

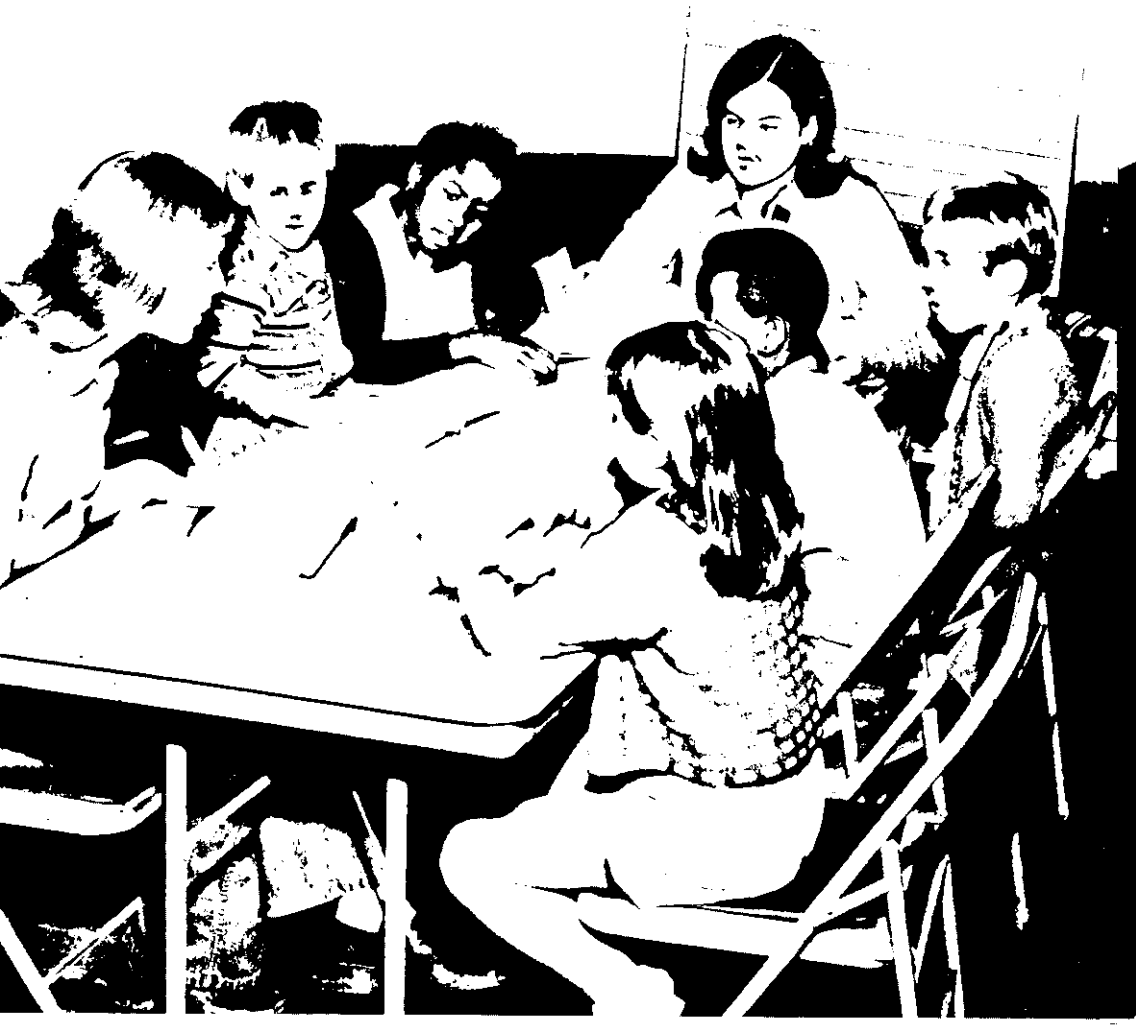
—In one large city three low-cost day care centers for children of welfare recipients are now in operation, thanks to a volunteer staff from three nearby high schools. Home economics classes

prepare lunches in the school kitchen, art students paint with the children, and prospective teachers instruct them in reading and arithmetic.

—High school students in a small town are responsible for having designed and run a recycling center for all solid waste materials. The center has proved so successful that the town government, through its Sanitation Department, has assumed part of the burden of its operation and funding.

—Students working with the local Cancer Society have produced a psychedelic sight/sound show depicting the evils of smoking. Directed to elementary and junior high school students, the show has been put on throughout the school system. The students wrote the script, selected appropriate music, took the photographs, and then coordinated the slides and soundtrack.

—Other high school students are working hard, entirely without pay and on their own initiative, tutoring high school dropouts and manning Opportunity Centers for disadvantaged children, assisting in the distribution of food stamps, painting and repairing rundown dwellings, and even building and marketing low-cost housing.



But this is only the beginning. As young people realized that they need not wait until graduation to begin contributing to the world outside of school, the youth volunteer movement that began with the Peace Corps and VISTA in the early Sixties spread rapidly over the nation's college campuses in the following decade. The high school volunteer effort is the most recent outgrowth of that movement. Like the students whose enthusiasm and dedication it engages, volunteerism in the high schools is itself a fledgling. But it's growing fast. Every day, every week, more students are becoming involved, and those already involved want to do *more*.

The intense concern, high motivation, and enormous energy of these students are a great potential strength for society. What remains is for the schools to turn that strength into something more than a potential by establishing high school-sponsored volunteer programs. Those schools which have systematically incorporated volunteer work into student life have found the results to be highly encouraging. This manual is designed to help you get a volunteer program started in your school, and, once you do get it started, to help you keep it going and keep it growing.

What is a High School-Sponsored Volunteer Program?

The elements of school-sponsored volunteer programs have been in evidence for many years, but rarely in the right combination. High school students have long been involved in work/study and distributive education programs—programs which have taken them out of the school building and into the community. But a true volunteer program is one which does not rely on monetary remuneration for the student, and which chiefly emphasizes what the student can do to help others.

It has, of course, been customary as well for high school students to serve as volunteers, individually and in activities sponsored by church groups and other community agencies. This, too, is no substitute for a school-sponsored program, for when the school's participation is just a matter of approval and encouragement from the sidelines, volunteer programs are prevented from achieving the seriousness and power which only the school's active support can give them.

The concept of high school students doing volunteer work is not new. What is new, what is unique, is the concept of the high school working with the community to organize a volunteer program while putting its authority and resources behind that program. Such a program presupposes three essential ingredients:

1. The community must have needs that can be met by student voluteers.

Of course, it is hard to imagine a community without needs. Needs do not have to take the form of hard-core poverty conditions or injustices that cry out for social change. People get sick, people grow old everywhere. Almost every community has drug abuse problems, pollution problems, or other areas identified as social concerns. Almost every community has many institutions which might welcome assistance from student volunteers—institutions like the Red Cross, the YMCA and YWCA, hospitals, health centers, orphanages, old age homes, prisons, recreation centers, job training centers, and (one of the most important, though often overlooked) the schools themselves.

The trick is to identify the needs which high school students *can do*

something about. These should be real needs, not busy work. Students should have a chance to do something that matters. Locating those problem areas to which high school students can best lend their abilities, and in which they can work most smoothly with community members, is a sensitive task for both school and community officials, and will be elaborated upon in Chapters Four and Five of this manual. But the needs must be there, and must be identified, before there can be a program.

2. Students must be interested in working hard on a volunteer basis to meet those needs.

Like the question of community need, that of student interest is less a question of *whether* than of *what* and *how* and *how much*. Enthusiasm and concern are pervasive among today's students. In some schools, where students are keenly aware of social conditions and there is already a tradition of volunteer service, interest will be evident from the start. In others, where the students do not immediately think of themselves as having skills to contribute, interest may have to be aroused, but it is usually there just the same. It should not be hard to awaken this potential and increase the students' awareness of the possibilities for meaningful action, provided that the recruitment pitch is attuned to actual community needs and actual student capabilities.

3. The school must support the effort by coordinating individual projects into a coherent program.

One volunteer project does not make a program, although a program may start out with one project. Once a school has ascertained the level of community need and student interest, the basis for a volunteer effort is there, but the effort can really begin only when the school makes some provision for coordinating all individual student projects into an umbrella program. The school must supply a structure for the program which will eliminate duplication of effort, minimize the consequences of student inexperience, and give force and direction to idealistic impulses. The selection of a faculty coordinator, to be discussed in Chapter Five, is one of the most crucial steps in building a program.

Why the High Schools?

The reasons for encouraging student volunteer work are evident. Students are anxious to participate, and community needs will be well served. But why organize the program in the schools? Why should a high school take the initiative in bringing together community and school resources to forge a broad-based student volunteer program? Why should the school assume the responsibility for mounting the effort?

We believe that the high school offers the most natural base from which a successful program can be organized and implemented. It is the essential catalyst in the delicate chemistry by which community need and student talent are fused to create social action. The school possesses certain key resources which, when intelligently applied, make the difference between fragmented, directionless programs and dynamic, well-integrated programs:

The school can relate volunteer work to education.

Only the school can focus on and reinforce the volunteer's learning experience, so that this experience will not take place in a theoretical vacuum. Reviewing their community work in class, students become better volunteers; drawing on their experience in

the field, volunteers become better students. Academic, commercial, and industrial curricula all offer unlimited opportunities for integrating classroom learning with experiential learning.

The school can broaden the volunteer programs to attract the greatest number of students.

Some students see volunteer work as a chance to put their creativity to use by devising original projects; others merely enjoy working with fellow volunteers, or want to vary their daily routine, or need the opportunity to explore career possibilities. Only the school can design programs that will be flexible enough to bring all of these varying kinds and levels of commitment under the volunteer service umbrella.

Up to now, only the most highly motivated and disciplined, the most academically and financially secure, have felt free to take the time to volunteer. And only the most aware have wanted to. The school enjoys two special advantages for tapping the skills and energies of those students who have never before considered participating. First, it can expose all students to the *idea* of community service, "reaching" even those who might have never come into contact with the idea. Second, it can free enough of the students' *time* to allow for their participation. Students who are on the edge academically, students who have to earn money during their after-school hours, would get a chance to serve if service were incorporated into their regular school life.

Like it or not, the school establishes priorities for its students by virtue of its almost total command of their time. Since extracurricular volunteer work has generally not been granted academic recognition, many students have had to give it a low priority in allocating their time. This is just another way of saying that for almost all young people, the school serves as the primary agency of socialization and development. If our notion of developmental experience is to be broadened to include volunteer service, as more and more of us are beginning to feel it should, then the high school must lead the way in giving legitimate recognition to this important dimension of personal growth.

The school can insure a sustained effort—the kind that is going to win community support.

Social problems do not "graduate" every four years. The community will put more trust in a program when the school provides a framework for its perpetuation beyond the school careers, let alone the whims and enthusiasms, of a single group of volunteers. School support also gives the program added clout within the community. Faculty coordinators can pull strings and get results where student volunteers may fear to tread.

How much should a school encourage students to volunteer? Along what lines should it support a volunteer program? These are questions every school will have to answer in its own way, relying upon its own view of the proper relationship between school, students, and community. Every school will have to begin where it is and with what it has. But no matter what kind of volunteer effort your school decides to sponsor, we feel that this manual will provide a useful springboard for developing imaginative programs to nurture and actualize the idealism of today's young people.

II
Shared Benefits

A well-run volunteer program is an activity from which everyone involved stands to gain. All three partners benefit when a school makes it possible for students to learn through service to their community.

How the Community Benefits

Where schools have carefully laid the groundwork for student voluntary action, communities have, without exception, participated enthusiastically in the programs. The main reason for this is the obvious one: *high school students can meet real needs, solve real problems.* The contributions students have already made in anti-poverty and anti-pollution work, drug education, child care, and many areas besides, are the best advertisement for any proposed program. Such contributions are also the source of all other benefits to be derived from a program, for the most valuable experience students can gain from volunteer work is that of seeing their actions count for something. At the same time, when something real is accomplished through this work, the school becomes a more active force in the community.

But it is by no means only in needs met, in problems attacked, that communities can measure the impact of student volunteers. Since students by and large work in their own neighborhood communities, what benefits the students benefits the community as well. Everyone gains when *schools and students are more actively involved in the life of the community.* Alienation and discontent are lessened among young people who are given a stake in community affairs. These young people feel a more positive involvement with what is going on around them than do those who have no comparable outlet for their concerns.

More aware, more responsible students make better citizens, and better citizens make a stronger community. And it isn't just the students who get involved. As teachers and parents are swept up in the action, the community finds itself with more and more people alerted to its problems and working toward solutions.

How the Students Benefit

Students benefit from volunteer service because *it makes their education more relevant.* Today's high

school students are being put through a social apprenticeship which is longer than ever before. Few of them, after twelve years of schooling, know what it feels like to get out into the world, to do something real, to solve problems, to be needed. No wonder many of them think of their schools as "four-year aging vats," remote from the "real world." Recent high school graduates have expressed serious doubts about the preparation they have received for the world they are about to enter:

". . . high school life is so sheltered from the real world that it's not even fun. I can't say I know anything about people. . . ."

". . . it worries me—high school doesn't tell anybody what they want to do. It's all a very liimted scope at school. When you get out of high school you don't feel you're educated. . . ."

But in the high schools that have gone ahead and developed programs which enable students to take responsible action through volunteer work, the positive response from students has been overwhelming:

". . . I would say that this program has caused me to hold more respect for myself and others. I feel this is a good experience as far as understanding my own teachers, as two days a week when I tutor, I put myself in their position. . . ."

". . . I am very much in favor of community service because it gives us a chance to meet people and express our ideas. I have found that being a 'Y' advisor is not as easy as it seems —you need a lot of patience and energy. . . ."

". . . I want to be a policeman, so I am at the police department learning. . . ."

". . . I really like being able to work with kids and help them in their learning. Most of the kids I've worked with are from the 'slow' groups or the 'socially maladjusted' groups and they really make you feel needed. I wish that more credit could be given for this course . . ."

Students who are bored and restless, students who don't put anything into their school work because they don't see themselves getting anything out of it, students who are no longer inspired by traditional extracurricular activities like athletics and the school newspaper—these are the ones who discover a sense of purpose and responsibility when they are able to see the immediate benefits of what they accomplish.

Students benefit as well from *the opportunity to know and relate to people of different ages and backgrounds.* Even in relatively homogeneous communities, volunteers working in old age homes, veterans' hospitals, courts, and police stations dip into a range of human experience far beyond that offered them at home and in the classroom. In culturally mixed communities, the benefits can be even greater. Among the students themselves, serving with other volunteers of different backgrounds can increase understanding and lessen inter-group tensions. As psychologists have observed, it is not mere contact that best breaks down prejudice, but the process of working cooperatively toward a common goal.

Volunteer service also gives students *a first-hand look at how the community works.* They learn how problems arise, what steps can realistically be taken toward their solution, and how political and social factors as well as limited resources can sometimes deflect the most ardent impulse to bring about change. They learn that social improvement takes effort and patience—that real progress is incremental, not instant.

Where the students undoubtedly stand to gain the most, however, is in

their *self-development and self-awareness.* Volunteering is an opportunity for them to test and extend their interests, skills, and talents. Motivated to reach beyond what they are usually called upon to achieve, they develop a sense of their own potentials and limitations. This is true for all students, the most able as well as the least. In particular, psychologists and social scientists believe that volunteer work could give most of the students who now show a poor social adjustment the abilities and the understanding that would enable them to lead useful and satisfying lives.

One of the most meaningful forms of self-discovery through community service is *career exploration.* Volunteering is a great way for students to try out some part-time or full-time work that is suited to their interests, level of maturity, and previous experience. This kind of career exploration is especially valuable in that it is not done blindly, but with supervision and counseling. Some students who are planning to discontinue their education after high school may find, as they work in fields like medicine and law, that they need more schooling in order to get into a career they may really want for themselves. Others will be fulfulling "experience" requirements for the jobs they will be applying for upon graduation.

How the School Benefits

It goes without saying that from a program as deeply beneficial to students as this one can be, the school receives an immediate feedback in the form of *improved student morale.* The maturity students gain on the job carries over to their school participation as well. Given adult responsibilities, they begin to act more like adults, to be more adult.

As the school gives education greater relevance for its students, it *enriches its resources for education, experience, and career guidance.* Indeed, many educators view volunteer service as a new dimension in education. In a recent forum on education, James Coleman, Professor of Social Relations at Johns Hopkins University, urged schools to begin focusing on activities that include responsible and productive student action. He summed up his thoughts with:

This . . . does not mean that new educational institutions should neglect the child's learning. It means rather that a much broader conception of learning is necessary: a conception in which the roles, constraints, demands, and responsibilities of adulthood in a complex society are central; a conception in which experience once again becomes important; a conception that includes general strategies of how to make use of the environment to accomplish one's goals.

By enlarging its function in this way, the school simultaneously takes on *an enhanced public posture.* High schools may not suffer from the "town versus gown" community relations problem faced by many colleges, but they often experience an equally distressing problem which grows out of their very acceptance as part of the community—the problem of being taken for granted. Expanding into volunteer service is one of the best ways to change this. As the results of student action become more visible, people will know that their local high school isn't just standing there, it's doing something. The school will not only be doing its job better, but getting credit where it counts—among parents and community leaders.

Not long ago, a Midwestern high school got a striking reminder of many of these benefits when two girls signed up to work with retarded chil-

dren. Both had been disciplinary problems and were thought of as likely dropouts. But the program coordinator took them at their word and placed them with an agency where they would be given the responsibility they asked for—as well as the supervision and guidance they would need.

Before long they were handling their school responsibilities, too, in an entirely new way. School was no longer the place where seemingly arbitrary demands were always being made on them, where they were always being tested and found wanting. It was now the place where their abilities were respected, where they were given a chance to do something worthwhile, where they were made to feel that *they* had something to give. Now they are both going to be graduated after all, and one plans to study nursing so that she can return in a professional capacity to the same neighborhood facility for retarded children. We wouldn't have to look very hard to find equally compelling illustrations of high school-sponsored volunteer programs where the benefits are truly shared—where the benefits to the student, the school, and the community are so closely intermingled that we can barely tell them apart.

III

Some Successful Approaches

There are many roads to volunteerism, many ways to incorporate volunteer community service into the high school experience. All require planning and forethought; none require the imposition of a fixed, pre-established model.

The approaches outlined in this chapter are among those which are now being used successfully in high schools across the country. There is nothing exclusive about these approaches; they can be tried in any combination and with any variations that are in keeping with local needs and local initiative. You will notice that they vary considerably in the levels of school resource commitment and academic sanction they entail. Making use of this variation, you may wish to start with one of the less ambitious, less elaborate programs, and then gradually expand as your school becomes better equipped to handle a larger involvement.

Field Courses.

Some schools have designed courses in which volunteer community service provides field experience that reinforces classroom learning. Field courses, in which volunteer work is linked closely with classroom work, have added an experiential component to traditional academic programs. They are set up in the various academic departments of the high school —in science, social science, English and languages—as well as in the business and industrial arts areas. Each participating teacher works through the school coordinator to determine what kinds of volunteer opportunities in the community relate directly to the subject matter of his course.

An example of what can result is *The Political Process*, a field course in American government. This course is concerned with the role of the individual citizen in the American political system. It tries to show, through study and action, how one can live and work effectively within the system.

The course has two dimensions. The first, which is national in scope, is the examination of the legislative and judicial processes in America, both from a Constitutional and a practical point of view. It explores the channels of individual participation and methods of effecting desired changes. How does the public translate its desires into laws? How does the individual or pressure group effectively lobby for a law? What

are the problems involved in administering the law? Selected readings, independent research, written papers, and community resource people participating in class seminars are employed in this dimension of the course.

The second dimension is the student's active involvement in the political or judicial process of his own community. Students serve in organizations and govenment agencies like the Office of the State Attorney General (Consumer Protection Division) or the Municipal Court (Probation Court). They may sit on a Jury of Peers to advise a juvenile court judge, work with a traffic control group lobbying for legislation, or help a local or national candidate canvass the district. These activities tie in directly with the first dimension of the course.

Here are some other ideas for field courses:

Man and His Environment, a field course in biology:

Enriching his study of general biology, the student confronts specific ecological issues in his community. Students volunteer at state air and water pollution control agencies or work on environmental legislation through state legislative committees or local environmental groups.

Health Education: Needs of the 70's, a field course in health:

While studying health problems such as venereal disease, alcoholism, smoking, and drug abuse, students work with a local community health facility to develop and implement a comprehensive program of health education in the lower grades, featuring skits, comic books, and posters.

Applied Psychology, a field course in psychology:

The student is introduced to general psychology, at the same time spending several hours a week volunteering for a local or state agency performing psychology-related services, e.g., a community mental health center, a university mental retardation and child development center, community mental retardation centers and special education facilities.

Internship in Accounting, a field course in accounting:

As part of an introductory course in accounting, students help set up community organizations such as cooperative buying clubs and teen clubs, for which they then provide simple accounting services. At the same time, they instruct club members in the skills they will need to handle the accounting themselves after student participation ceases.

Building Maintenance, a field course in industrial arts:

This industrial arts class repairs rundown houses, while helping owners to learn simple maintenance techniques. The students also build furniture for day-care centers and for other facilities which cannot afford to purchase it.

The field approach can be adapted to almost any course of study. The only limits to the range of possibilities it opens up are the number of different courses your school offers—and your imagination.

Special Courses.

Recognizing that not every course has to be conducted in a classroom, a high school may offer a course that holds no classes and requires no academic work. The student selects a government agency or a community service organization and spends a school semester volunteering at the agency for a specified number of hours each week, either during or after school hours. This is where students get to try their hand at antici-

pated vocations by selecting assignments related to their interests. In order to accommodate this course within his overall high school program, the student has to plan ahead with his advisor to make sure that he will have fulfilled the standard course and credit requirements upon graduation.

In one such program, a student advisory committee assists the volunteer coordinator in screening course proposals from various agencies or groups and selecting those which seem workable. A faculty advisory committee works with the coordinator in evaluating all aspects of the program. This committee maintains records of student hours, posts service opportunities for students, and recommends individual students to the principal for course credit. When a student accumulates one hundred hours of volunteer work (sometimes over several semesters), he receives credit for the equivalent of a semester course in sociology, economics, or some other related field.

Flexibility in student scheduling contributes to the success of this program. Arrangements have included releasing students from study hall time, and permitting students early departures or late arrivals at school to accommodate the agency.

The activities encompassed by this program are as varied as are the needs of the students and the community agencies. The range of possibilities includes work in political headquarters, tutorial assistance to younger students, service to the ill or shut-ins, park care, teacher assistance, and service to hospitals, children's homes, and homes for the aged.

Student-initiated projects are strongly encouraged and some creative projects have resulted, like the drug education project cited in Chapter One. Students involved in this effort are also actively supporting two drug-related bills in the state legislature. One is intended to halt the sale and production of aphetamines, and the other is designed to allow youths under 21 to receive drug treatment without parental consent.

A Semester in the Classroom, A Semester in the Community.

Another way to combine study with volunteer experience is through the split-semester approach favored by some schools. Under this plan the students spend one semester in the classroom and one semester in some related community work. The two halves of the course may be given in either order, depending on whether the thrust of the program is to furnish background knowledge for the students' community involvement, or to enrich an academic offering with prior exposure in the field.

The full-year course format obviously allows for a broad scope and comprehensiveness in the choice of subject matter. For example, schools in our larger cities can offer an urban studies course, aimed at giving students an in-depth look at the problems of the city. In this course, the city itself is both the subject and the laboratory.

The first semester presents the students with a thorough overview of the urban situation. Students meet to hear lectures and panel discussions given by community resource people on such urban issues as: the political, economic, and social structures of the city; transportation; education; taxes; housing; race; recreation; crime; and the history of the city. During this study phase of the course, students discover how these issues interrelate.

In the second semester—the action phase of the course—students begin testing their newly-acquired knowledge by volunteering in a wide variety of urban community activities. They may serve as aides in an overcrowded classroom, an out-patient clinic at a

city hospital, the tax assessor's office, the public defender's office, and other public or private agencies. Once a week they meet in a group with their teachers to reflect on experiences and problems encountered in their work. At the end of this semester, students submit a paper evaluating their volunteer service.

A Semester Volunteering Full-time.

Other high schools have embraced a concept of volunteer service which allows interested students to be released from their traditional class schedules to devote an entire semester to community service. While engaging full-time in a volunteer project, the student earns the usual academic credit.

A student who elects this option begins to plan his volunteer experience a semester ahead of time. Selecting an activity appropriate to his needs and interests, he submits a comprehensive proposal to support his project. The proposal addresses such questions as:

1. What is the proposed project?
2. What are the student's goals?
3. How will it benefit his community?
4. How will it benefit the student?
5. Where and with whom will the student be working?
6. What will the student specifically be doing?
7. How will the student know if he is succeeding in his goals?
8. What preliminary planning and information will the student need to prepare himself for the project?
9. How will the student share his experiences with others at his school?

The completed proposal is submitted for approval to a review board composed of faculty, students who have previously completed the volunteer experience, representatives of community agencies, and interested citizens. In reviewing a proposal, the board considers the specificity and definition of the project, its feasibility, and its potential benefit to the community and student. Since continuity is not automatically built into this approach, the board also takes into account the possible disruptive effects of letting a project cease abruptly after a student has been working on it full-time. In some cases, the board may determine that such a break will not be harmful to the community. In others, it makes provisions for the project to be continued in some form—perhaps by a group of part-time volunteers—once the semester is over and the original volunteer's involvement is completed.

Once projects are under way, student participants have monthly group meetings with the review board to discuss their experiences in the field. The interchanges that take place in this forum setting are an invaluable part of the program. This is when each student volunteer has a chance to reflect upon what he is—or isn't—accomplishing. The student receives further guidance in bimonthly or monthly meetings with the individual board member assigned to guide his project.

The review board also serves as a mediation board, dealing with practical problems that arise in the course of the work, and assesses each project when completed. At the semester's end, the board evaluates each participant's work in relation to his original proposal. The evaluation is personal and constructive; it is concerned with both the individual and the project. The student, too, submits a brief review of his project, including an estimate of its effect on the participant and the beneficiaries.

These independent study programs have on record student volunteers who

have been involved in the following kinds of work:

- ☐ Mental health aides in a school for the mentally retarded
- ☐ Social welfare aides assisting case workers in child care, family budgeting, and selective shopping
- ☐ Recreational therapy aides in a home for the aged
- ☐ Physical and occupational therapy aides in a school for handicapped children
- ☐ Drop-in center aides organizing and running a teen coffee house

The sample programs surveyed in this chapter are offered in the hope that they will suggest ideas which can be adapted to the needs of your school. Some of these programs provide academic credit, some do not; some involve the use of school time and property, some do not; but all of them are predicated on the assumption that learning can and does take place outside the school building.

IV
Guidelines to Action

There are no "rules" for making a volunteer program work. Based on the experience of high schools which have implemented programs like those described in Chapter Three, however, it is possible at least to lay down a few general guidelines which will help keep your program moving in the right direction. These guidelines underlie all of the step-by-step program suggestions contained in the following chapters, but for convenient reference we have included a brief rundown of them here. One school volunteer coordinator has called them "Principles of Ertia," and that is just what they are—tips for

stimulating action and avoiding the pitfalls that can spell inertia for even the most well-intentioned program.

School Support.

The school must put its full weight behind the student volunteers. It must give its full support in the form of authorization, guidance, coordination, flexible scheduling, and whatever else may be necessary to make the program viable. The program, no matter how modest in its developmental stages, must have high priority, visibility, and prestige. It cannot realize its potential if it is given perfunctory attention and lost in the shuffle of extracurricular activities.

Enthusiastic Participation.

Everything done within the program must be an expression of the spirit of volunteerism. The faculty coordinator must be a person who cares about the students and about the community problems they are trying to do something about. His is a job that has to be done with enthusiasm, not out of a sense of duty or under administrative assignment. Otherwise, he cannot attract students to the program or keep them involved. The students, too, must appreciate the worth of what they are doing. They must want to help others and believe that their individual efforts can make a difference.

Coordination of Student and Community Needs.

No project should be started unless it meets the needs of both groups for whom the program is designed—the students and the community. This might seem a hard point to overlook, but sometimes it happens. If you let yourself be pressured by community requests into setting up a baby-sitting project that turns the students off, or let some students get carried away with their plans for an ecology education project for ghetto residents who have a more immediate interest in learning their legal rights as apartment tenants, then you risk losing one or the other of your two vital constituencies.

Program Flexibility.

A volunteer program should be non-exclusive—open to all and unlimited in scope. While a program that is just getting started may of necessity encourage some kinds of contributions at the expense of others, your goal should be to work toward a program that allows for as many different styles of participation as possible. You will be dealing with students who have different talents and levels of commitment, students with varying amounts of time to spare for community service, students who need different degrees of supervision. All of them have something to give, and there is room for all in a flexible program.

The greater the variety of projects a school sponsors, the more diverse the range of students—and teachers—it can involve in the program. Variety also means finding projects that can be served by one-hour-a-week commitments or ten-hour-a-week commitments, as well as projects that can be run on weekends and during vacation periods for students who cannot volunteer during the normal school week. Structural flexibility is important, too. A volunteer's job should be clearly defined, but he should be left some latitude for innovation and creativity in accomplishing the tasks he is assigned. Some volunteers want more guidance than others, but none want it to the point where it becomes stifling.

Community Involvement.

The needs to be addressed by student volunteers should be identified by

the community itself. Projects must not be imposed on the community simply because they catch the fancy of a group of students or teachers. Helping to set up the volunteer program itself gives a community a stake in its success. Community leaders are much more likely to support a program they have helped to initiate than one the school has started with no advance warning or preparation.

Student Involvement.

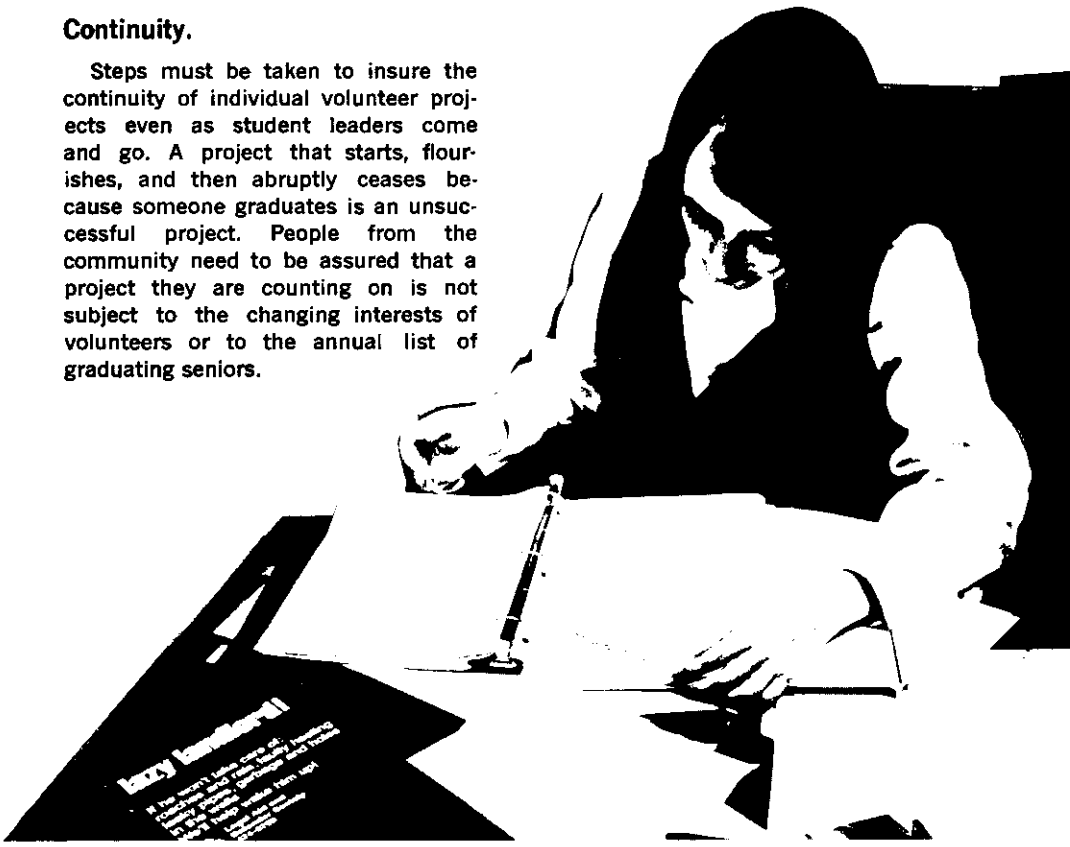
Within the framework of school coordination, student initiative should be preserved as far as possible. Student volunteers should be directly involved in all phases of a program—planning, recruiting, training, scheduling, and evaluating. Unless students have a hand in the running of their program, it may soon lose its vitality and become identified with "official" programs that are begun and operated by school authorities.

Continuity.

Steps must be taken to insure the continuity of individual volunteer projects even as student leaders come and go. A project that starts, flourishes, and then abruptly ceases because someone graduates is an unsuccessful project. People from the community need to be assured that a project they are counting on is not subject to the changing interests of volunteers or to the annual list of graduating seniors.

Realistic Expectations.

In putting together and sustaining a volunteer program, always start small and do it right. Do not launch a dozen projects at once and run the risk of over-committing yourself. It is better to begin with one or two well-developed projects than to raise expectations you cannot satisfy. As the word gets around the community (and it does!) that high school students are working effectively in one or two initial projects, you will have dozens of groups requesting volunteers. The credibility of your whole program will depend on your ability to remain selective and to assist only those groups to whom you can guarantee a continuous and effective commitment. Go slowly, organize properly all along the way, and you will avoid disillusionment.



V
Getting It Started

With these guidelines in mind, you are now ready to tackle the "nuts and bolts" of planning and organizing a student volunteer program. The suggestions which follow are not meant to prescribe a rigid sequence for your initial efforts; some planning functions will necessarily overlap with each other, while some will go on continuously, even after the program is operational. But there are strong reasons, as we hope to show, for taking things on a step-by-step basis and sticking to an orderly course of action.

Selecting the Coordinator

The first and perhaps the single most important step you will have to take in getting your program off the ground is to designate a qualified person to serve as its coordinator. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that the program will stand or fall on the adequacy of the leadership the coordinator provides. The number and diversity of the tasks he must perform, the people he must deal with, the issues he must be sensitive to—all of these considerations dictate a careful selection process to find someone who can really handle the job.

The coordinator should be a person who believes in the program, can relate to students and to people in the community, and has the necessary administrative skills. He or she may be a teacher with free hours during the day, a guidance counselor or other staff member with an open schedule, or someone hired specifically for the job. The coordinator may serve on a part-time or full-time basis, depending on your school's resources and the size of the program you are contemplating. But whoever he is, he must have plenty of time and even more patience, for he will have the overall task of keeping the community and the student volunteers alerted to each other's needs. He will be supervising all projects, representing the school in its dealings with the community, and watching over the day-to-day workings of the program.

Estimating the Cost

The basis on which the coordinator is recruited goes far toward determining the cost your school will incur in running a volunteer program. Obviously, it will be more of a major expense to hire a professional adminis-

trator from outside than to free a faculty or staff member for the position by lightening his normal work load. For this reason, many schools prefer to start by enlisting a part-time coordinator "from the ranks." A full-time person can always be hired later, when the size and success of the program will have justified the additional investment in the eyes of the administration, the school board, and the community. Other operating costs—supplies, transportation, publicity—depend on the resources a school may already have at its disposal for conducting the program (e.g., driver training cars, mimeograph machines), but they are generally less crucial than the coordinator's salary, if he is paid.

In estimating costs you should always bear in mind one hidden but all-important factor—the reduced teacher work load that results when students spend part of their school day outside the school building, working under the supervision of community agencies. This does a lot to defray the cost of the program, as does the support you tend to get from adult volunteers (such as PTA members) who are mobilized by the enthusiasm an active, well-publicized program generates. Once you get your volunteers out into the field, you may find to your surprise that you are running a very low-cost or even a no-cost program.

Making Contact

Once appointed, your program coordinator must expect to lead a busy life, especially at the outset. He has to make contact with everyone who is to be involved in the program, both at school and in the community. By doing so, he accomplishes two important things at once:

1. He obtains essential information about the needs of the community and the capacity and readiness of the students to meet those needs.
2. He makes both the students and the community feel that they are being invited to take an active part in the program from the moment of its inception.

When investigating the needs and existing resources of the *community*, the very first groups to contact are the volunteer clearinghouse organizations, which are already performing a function much like that of the school coordinator. These organizations go by a variety of names; among the most common variations are Volunteer Bureau, Volunteer Service Bureau, Voluntary Action Center, and Volunteers in Action. There should be such a group in your community; if you cannot find one write to the National Center for Voluntary Action, Washington, D.C.

The Volunteer Bureau can tell you what kinds of community agencies are using volunteers, how many volunteers they need, what skills are in demand, which agencies will use school-age personnel, and what modes of transportation are available. The director of the bureau can put you in touch with the agencies, introduce you to their volunteer supervisors, and help arrange for the screening of applicants. Often he will make his staff available to brief the school coordinator and assist in the orientation and training of students. Most important, he has a first-hand, working knowledge of the agencies and programs concerned; he knows the personalities, the idiosyncracies, the things that aren't in writing.

By going first to an umbrella-type agency like the Volunteer Bureau, the coordinator saves himself considerable legwork by tapping the knowledge and experience of an organization that is already plugged into the community's problems and the individual programs that have been set up to do something about them. In the absence of a Volunteer Bureau, you can try the local United Way Affiliate (United

Fund, United Givers Fund, Community Chest, Community Service Fund) or Health and Welfare Council (Community Services Council, Community Planning Council, United Community Services). These groups will know which of their member agencies use volunteers, and will have a Community Service Directory which describes most public service programs in their vicinity. Also, they can help you pinpoint unmet community needs. Similar assistance can be given you by the local Community Action Agency, Model Cities program, or the Office of Economic Opportunity.

Established social agencies—boys' clubs, hospitals, clinics, mental health centers—should be consulted as well. These agencies may need volunteers themselves, or they may know of other agencies or groups that do. Volunteer jobs usually involve direct contact with the people being served, so that a neighborhood center is often a better source of information than a city hall. On the other hand, your city hall may be able to point you in the direction of lower-level city officials—the public housing director, for instance—who will be on top of the community's immediate needs in some vital area. And of course, the support of the city government is well worth having in itself.

At the same time, the coordinator should also be approaching *student groups*, starting with volunteer organizations that already exist in the high school. By virtue of their experience, these groups can serve as the foundation of the new program. Traditional service clubs, such as Tri-Hi-Y, Interact, Key and Keyette Clubs, usually represent committed students who ought to be given a major role in starting a school-sponsored volunteer program.

Student groups that have had (as yet) nothing to do with volunteer work may also have something to offer—namely, organization and a specific talent or interest. Meetings with the biology club, the radio club, the physics club, may spark a desire to get involved in community service. Other groups, such as the glee club, dramatics club, or an athletic team, may not want to participate on a sustained basis, but might wish to take on an occasional project. A one-time commitment to clean up a Head Start play area or to entertain in a veterans' hospital often leads to a greater involvement in the program later on.

The student council can be instrumental in generating interest among the students and assisting in the planning and development of the program. In some schools, the program may never get off the ground without the advice and support of this group.

It is equally essential to make contact with *teachers*. The program needs their understanding, support, and cooperation. The coordinator should take every opportunity to interpret the aims of the program to the faculty, elicit their recommendations, and encourage individual teachers to weave volunteer work into their course offerings. Whenever possible, point out how a volunteer program can give a boost to the work of their departments. Approach the home economics teacher with an idea for a student-run lunch program at a local day-care center or the Spanish instructor with a plan to use student volunteers in teaching English to Mexican-American children.

Along with the teachers, the *school administration* must be consulted. This is where important decisions are made concerning class time, course offerings, and independent study options—decisions that will ultimately determine the shape of the whole program. Because any school's administration will be sensitive to larger issues of public welfare, the coordinator should not hesitate to point out how benefi-

cial volunteer projects are to the community.

Finally, you will want to introduce *parents* to the concept of a volunteer program. At first they may not be willing to allow their children to leave school to do volunteer work, especially where this involves going to "bad neighborhoods" to work on poverty projects. One parent's vociferous fears at a PTA meeting could severely set back the program's progress. On the other hand, parents who see the value of the program can be a big help, as you will find out when one of the students needs the car to get to her project on a Saturday, or calls home one night to say she'll have to stay late at the agency. Parents have a lot to say about how students spend their after-school hours; it will help if they understand why they shouldn't schedule medical or dental appointments for their children that would conflict with planned volunteer work.

The coordinator can enlist parental support by making arrangements to speak at PTA meetings, as well as by calling special meetings for the parents of students who have signed up for a specific project. (He will need to get in touch with these parents in any case, in order to have them sign permission forms.) When handled right, these meetings can end with the parents feeling that *they* are part of the project too. It's a great opportunity to get them interested in community service in their own right.

Getting Everyone Together

In order to develop overall guidelines as well as more detailed plans for the student volunteer program, the coordinator should bring together representatives of the high school staff, the students, and the community. A good way to do this is to hold a conference, sponsored jointly by the school and the community, for the purpose of ascertaining the possible value of a cooperative approach to meeting some of the community's needs. Out of this conference can come several concrete benefits:

1. It can build interest and support among all participating groups.
2. It can begin a dialogue that will increase understanding between community people and students—a must for a successful program.
3. It can generate a number of potential projects, along with the beginnings of an organizational structure for the entire program.
4. It can result in the naming of an advisory board, composed of representatives of all participating groups, to assist the coordinator in organizing and implementing the program.

Don't expect a full set of projects or a polished program design right away; these will come later through special committee meetings among students, teachers, and agency personnel. At these smaller sessions volunteer jobs and responsibilities can be defined, hours and facilities agreed upon, and plans made for initiating projects. Meanwhile, the organizational structure of the program will be taking shape through further meetings of the *advisory board* chosen after the initial conference.

Although the coordinator may want to select some *ad hoc* advisory personnel to assist him in the early stages of making contact with student and community groups, it will usually take him until after these contacts are made, and the first joint meeting held, to find the individuals best qualified to serve on a permanent board. Some of these individuals may be chosen from among those who represented the various groups at the opening conference; others may be recommended by those original representatives. The advisory

board can be a key ingredient in the success of a program, and not simply through the administrative assistance it can give an overworked coordinator.

The success of a program depends on enlisting the cooperation of individuals with divergent viewpoints, and keeping these different perspectives in proper balance when making policy decisions. That's where the advisory board comes in—it serves as a forum for contesting priorities and resolving strains *within* the program. Differences of opinion are bound to come up, whether you provide for them or not. Bringing them inside the program is a way of making sure that the program will *represent* all sides of a diverse constituency, instead of being itself just one special interest among many in the public forum.

The board, composed of representatives (perhaps two apiece) of students, faculty, parents, and community agencies, can conveniently meet at the end of every marking period to discuss administrative, curricular, and community relations problems and submit to the school administration an overall evaluation of the program, with recommendations for any necessary changes. At these meetings, each of the groups represented on the board can express its own point of view about the program:

Student representatives can poll other students to obtain their opinions on the adequacy of the training and orientation they are receiving, their suggestions for modifying courses on the basis of their volunteer participation, and any other reactions they may have to their experiences.

Community representatives can submit their personnel requests for the coming period, and also bring to the school's attention any problems that occur in student-community relations.

Teachers can give their evaluation of student performance in projects where academic credit is granted, along with their observations on the impact the program has had on course work, course structure, and the quality of instruction.

Parents can report on the problems participation causes for the students' home lives, as well as on the signs of personal growth and maturation that may be traceable to volunteering.

The school coordinator, in addition to chairing the board meetings and mediating conflicts of viewpoint, can report on administrative difficulties (transportation, insurance, funding).

These individual reports can then be embodied in periodic formal reports submitted by the board to the principal. This would give the school an ongoing record of the program which would reflect the attitudes and opinions of all concerned.

By the time the first organizational meeting has been held and the advisory board set up, the coordinator should establish a *central office* for the program at the school and make sure everyone knows where it is. Having a central office to handle volunteer placement is an essential feature of school coordination, and has several advantages over letting students apply to individual agencies. Where a student is turned down because he would not work out in a particular project, or because a popular agency cannot accommodate all of the students who apply, the central office can immediately forward his application to another project. Students who create their own projects can also keep a file at the office and make use of its referral system. And it is much better for community agencies to have access to a single pool of applicants than to have to make a direct appeal to potential volunteers. Since the agencies must go through the central office, it can exert substantial leverage over the

way they use the program; the office, after all, channels the manpower.

Sharing Responsibility

In order for the program to function effectively, each party involved must accept its share of the overall responsibility and must know exactly what that share is. The first meetings of the advisory board should be dedicated to defining clearly who does what, and when.

The School.

The school bears the major responsibility for organizing, operating, and evaluating the student volunteer program. It discharges this responsibility primarily through the *school volunteer coordinator,* who supervises the daily operation of the program. It is the coordinator, more than anyone else, who brings together student interest and community need. He helps students recruit volunteers, helps teachers devise standards for evaluating class-related projects, helps agencies place students in appropriate positions. In short, he helps create an atmosphere in which students, faculty, and community people can work creatively and effectively together.

The coordinator must make sure that the assistance students provide is in the best interests of the community served and of the students themselves. He sees that each group involved in the program understands its duties and carries them out. He helps to strengthen any weak parts of the program, tries to maintain open channels of communication, and prods slow-moving bureaucracies inside and outside of school to elicit the necessary cooperation.

Much of his time will be spent on the telephone and in meetings, but his legwork is by no means over when he has established contact with community agencies and initiated the program. After students are placed, he makes frequent trips to visit them on the job. This enables him:

1. To give volunteers in-the-field support.
2. To check on orientation and training.
3. To mediate student-community relations problems on the spot.
4. To evaluate the performance of volunteers.
5. To unearth additional manpower needs and new project possibilities.

One special function of the coordinator is to act as a resource person. When a community agency has never used volunteers, he helps it find meaningful jobs that will expand and improve its service; he has answers—or finds answers—for student groups that ask what they can do to help; he knows which businesses in town might provide the free materials—the paint, the nails, the dump truck—that are necessary to undertake a project; he may even know where students can go to raise money for their projects. A coordinator coordinates things as well as people.

The coordinator must be backed up in these efforts by the faculty and staff of the school. *Teachers* are responsible for making volunteer service an integral part of their educational offerings, especially if academic credit is involved. They must help to set the educational objectives for volunteer participation, play a major role in evaluating student performance, and provide the necessary supplementary knowledge to maximize learning. The school *administration* must give the program the necessary support and implementation in the areas of authorization, scheduling, funding, course credit, and equipment and supplies.

Students.

Students must recognize that their volunteer service is important and that they are expected to fulfill their job responsibilities. It is their obligation to inform the agency or project leaders if they expect to be absent. They must cooperate with the agency by maintaining a high standard of personal conduct. They are responsible for knowing the facilities, policies, and personnel where they serve, and to that end should understand the value of the orientation and training programs in which they are asked to participate.

Community Agencies.

Community agencies are responsible for making sure that volunteer projects have educational value, and that students are not exploited as unpaid labor. The agencies are usually responsible for any necessary training or orientation and for providing responsible supervision. Adequate provisions must always be made to protect the physical and emotional well-being of the student volunteers. If a student receives academic credit for his involvement, the agency should also expect to play a role in evaluating his performance and in certifying the number of hours served.

Before any specific project is undertaken, it is usually advisable for the coordinator to call a meeting of the students and agencies involved, in order to guarantee that everyone understands his responsibilities. The purpose of this meeting would be to decide exactly what tasks the volunteers will be expected to perform; who will be responsible for training, supervision, and evaluation; and who will provide equipment, transportation, and insurance. It is far better to work out such questions ahead of time than after a problem arises.

Planning for Action

A student volunteer program can't just spring into being the day after school opens in September. It takes time to contact community agencies, assess the need for volunteers, enlist the support of students and teachers, obtain the approval of the school board and the PTA, bring together the relevant groups and individuals for organizational meetings, set up an advisory board and a central office, outline responsibilities, and work out detailed provisions for the administration of course credit, funding, insurance, and transportation. It is up to each school to come up with its own timetable for accomplishing these objectives, but every school should be aware that a properly grounded program may be several months in the making.

The same goes for individual projects. The chances for making a meaningful contribution are much greater when the scope of a project is adequately defined through a student/school/community dialogue, and when the mechanics are carefully provided for in advance. Anyone attempting to initiate a project should be encouraged to make up a written plan of action containing realistic estimates of how long it will take to orient students and the community; recruit, train, and place volunteers; raise funds; and locate and secure facilities. Past experience indicates that a fully functioning project is usually preceded by at least four to six weeks of preparation.

VI
Keeping It Going

Once your program has gained momentum, its focus shifts from organizing functions to operating functions—the day-to-day activities that must be kept up in order to sustain that momentum. Enthusiasm alone won't do it; each function must remain strong for the program to realize its full potential.

Recruitment

A good rule to follow when mounting a recruiting effort is to start slowly. Some schools stage massive assemblies where students are given the chance to sign up on the spot after several community agencies have made their pitch. While such assemblies sometimes produce large numbers of willing participants, too often the volunteers sign up only to discover that very few positions are really available, or (the next day) that they themselves aren't as enthusiastic as they first thought they were. *Before* any recruitment campaign begins, be sure to find out just how many volunteers will actually be needed, and gear the size of your campaign to this number. This precaution is equally necessary for the teacher who advertises the opportunity for field work in his course. Specific job descriptions are good for letting potential volunteers know exactly what will be expected of them.

Some good recruiting techniques include:

1. **The school newspaper.** Run a regular column on new volunteer opportunities, or request a news story on a noteworthy project—one that can develop into a series of articles as the project takes shape.

2. **Teachers.** They can be good salesmen as long as they are kept aware of new projects.

3. **A bulletin board.** Try to set it up in a high traffic area of the school, such as a main corridor, outside the gym or auditorium, or in the cafeteria. Keep an updated list of volunteer opportunities posted, and make the board as attractive and attention-getting as you can.

4. **The P.A. system.** Make periodic announcements of new projects and volunteer openings.

5. **Pins or badges** worn by volunteers. The pins can bear such messages as, "Make it happen . . . Volunteer!" Every volunteer thus becomes a recruiter.

It will make a big difference to your recruiting effort if your program has a central office as described in Chapter Five—a place where students can find out what volunteer opportunities are currently available. Staffed by the coordinator and students, such an office will provide a single source of information and *answers* about volunteering. Since students often are unsure about what they want to do as volunteers, talking to someone in the office will help them find a job suited to their interests, abilities, and background. The office will also be welcomed by community agencies, who will then have one place to go to request volunteers and find out more about the program.

Once a volunteer program is under way, its observed success will be its best advertisement. Students who have a solid feeling of accomplishment in their projects will get the word around. Their enthusiasm will be catching, and recruitment may well become little more than a sustaining operation to maintain the program's visibility.

Processing

Once a student has been stimulated to apply, he should be placed as quickly as possible. Delay can be very frustrating to the student and can seriously undermine his or her impulse to volunteer.

Some students will want to apply for a specific project; others will simply register as volunteers, allowing the coordinator to assign them to appropriate projects. To speed up the process, use one basic application form for all volunteers (such as the sample form provided in Chapter Ten). This application form should ask for basic information on such matters as the student's interests and experience, the time he has available, and whether or not he has his own transportation. Students who want to apply for one project in particular should fill out a second application that asks more detailed questions related to the special needs of that project.

Depending upon the complexity of the project and the amount of responsibility volunteers are to assume, the coordinator or agency may want to interview the student. In itself a good learning experience, an interview will help both the volunteer and the coordinator or agency representative determine whether or not the volunteer can handle the job. Interviews take time and personnel, however, especially since most are conducted at the start of a term when students normally submit applications. Because the jam-up can discourage some students, try to locate some experienced volunteers or community people who can help on a temporary basis. They should have some knowledge of the recruiting agencies and should be shown how to evaluate the candidates.

It is important for the school and agency together to work out coordinated procedures for processing applicants, so that students will not have to endure unnecessary red tape. For instance, the school might handle the written application and send it directly to the agency, which would then arrange the interview.

Orientation and Training

Orientation begins with the recruitment drive, during which the coordinator can explain the philosophy and aims of volunteerism to all students in a general assembly. This should be followed by a detailed orientation meeting where interested students can learn more about a project, share their concerns with each other, and talk with community representatives. The community leaders should explain how

the project began, what its goals are, what problems it has attempted to solve, and what the community expects from student volunteers. Previous volunteers might discuss their experiences in the community.

Once a volunteer is placed, a second meeting should be held, this time by the agency or community organization, to let the volunteer see at first hand where he will be working. For example, students who volunteer to serve in a home for mentally retarded children might spend a day at the home. Here they would meet the children, tour the facilities, and participate in the daily routine. This is the time to clear up any misunderstandings. In some cases, a student may decide that he is not interested in that particular project. If so, he should drop out immediately, not later when the agency is counting on him.

Training is usually the agency's reponsibility. Once it is determined what skills are required, time may be set aside for agency staff members to conduct training sessions for volunteers. For example, any project that involves meeting or talking with people —a tutoring project, companionship for the elderly—would benefit from some instruction in communication and listening skills. The material could be presented first through lectures, later through practice sessions with role playing and simulation techniques.

Some projects call for more leadership skills than others. Where individual volunteers work directly with agency personnel, student leaders may not be necessary. On the other hand, where large groups of volunteers work together in a single agency, or especially where students set up and run a project of their own, student leadership can be the key to the project's success. One city school system holds a monthly Leadership Skills Training Program, to which twenty-three participating high schools send representatives. The properly qualified, student volunteer leaders can act as co-trainers with agency staff members.

If the project is part of a high school course, much of the training can be done in class. A teacher might supplement class discussions with resource people from the community. The coordinator might work with interested teachers in planning course content that will relate to what the students will actually be experiencing.

Supervision

The purpose of supervision is not to constrain the volunteer, but to provide him with guidance, encouragement, support, and sometimes additional on-the-job training. Without such guidance, a volunteer may feel at sea, especially if his duties and responsibilities are not clear. A volunteer operates most effectively in an atmosphere of "unstructured structure," where the limits of his role are defined, but a degree of flexibility is allowed him.

The responsibility for supervising student volunteers must be clearly established; otherwise, a volunteer working in several different areas of an agency could suffer from over-supervision. During his training period, the volunteer can work under the personal supervision of one staff member, who would continue to be available to the volunteer in an advisory capacity even after this apprenticeship ends. If a student is volunteering as part of a course, supervision should be the shared responsibility of the teacher and the agency.

If a student is working independently in the community, follow-up support can be given by agency personnel visiting him on the job. Further support might be derived from "rap sessions" where staff members and volunteers working in similar situations share ex-

periences and insights. Such informal meetings are an excellent way to make the volunteers feel wanted and needed.

One of the most successful approaches to supervision is to use experienced volunteers to supervise the inexperienced. This approach offers students a larger role in governing their activities within the agency while lessening any danger that the agency will seem authoritarian. However, the use of students in supervisory roles should not exempt the agency from overall responsibility.

Whatever approach or approaches you decide upon, always give volunteers some form of support. And be sure to have someone on the spot to whom they can turn for help.

Evaluation

Every project calls for two dimensions of evaluation: that of the individual volunteer and that of the project itself. In order to keep track of both, an ongoing system of evaluation is essential.

The evaluation of individual volunteers is necessary to guarantee the continuing effectiveness of a project. If a volunteer is not helping a child learn to read better or to develop himself personally, that volunteer should be given help or shifted to another project. To be of real use, the evaluation should be shared with the volunteer. It can show him how he can improve his service to the community.

The community, school, and students should all be involved in formulating the criteria to be used in evaluating a volunteer's success. If such criteria are clearly established at the outset (preferably in writing), it is easier to answer the basic questions on any standard evaluation form: "Did the volunteer perform the work required of him? How well did he do it?" The volunteer's preparation, attitude, and ability to establish rapport are all important elements in his performance rating.

Students who are involved in the same project should all be evaluated on an equal basis. Having several parties do the evaluating helps to insure fairness and balance. The volunteer's immediate supervisor, for example, might submit his assessment along with those of the volunteer himself and a teacher familiar with the project. Some schools ask a student's fellow volunteers to contribute to the evaluation as well.

Soliciting evaluations from a number of sources is often necessary to counteract the tendency of community agencies to overrate the performance of volunteers. Agency personnel who enjoy having students around and are grateful for their help sometimes neglect to report that these students are not doing all they have been assigned to do. In briefing these supervisors, it should be stressed that a student who is receiving course credit for his work does not deserve it if he fails to fulfill his complete job description.

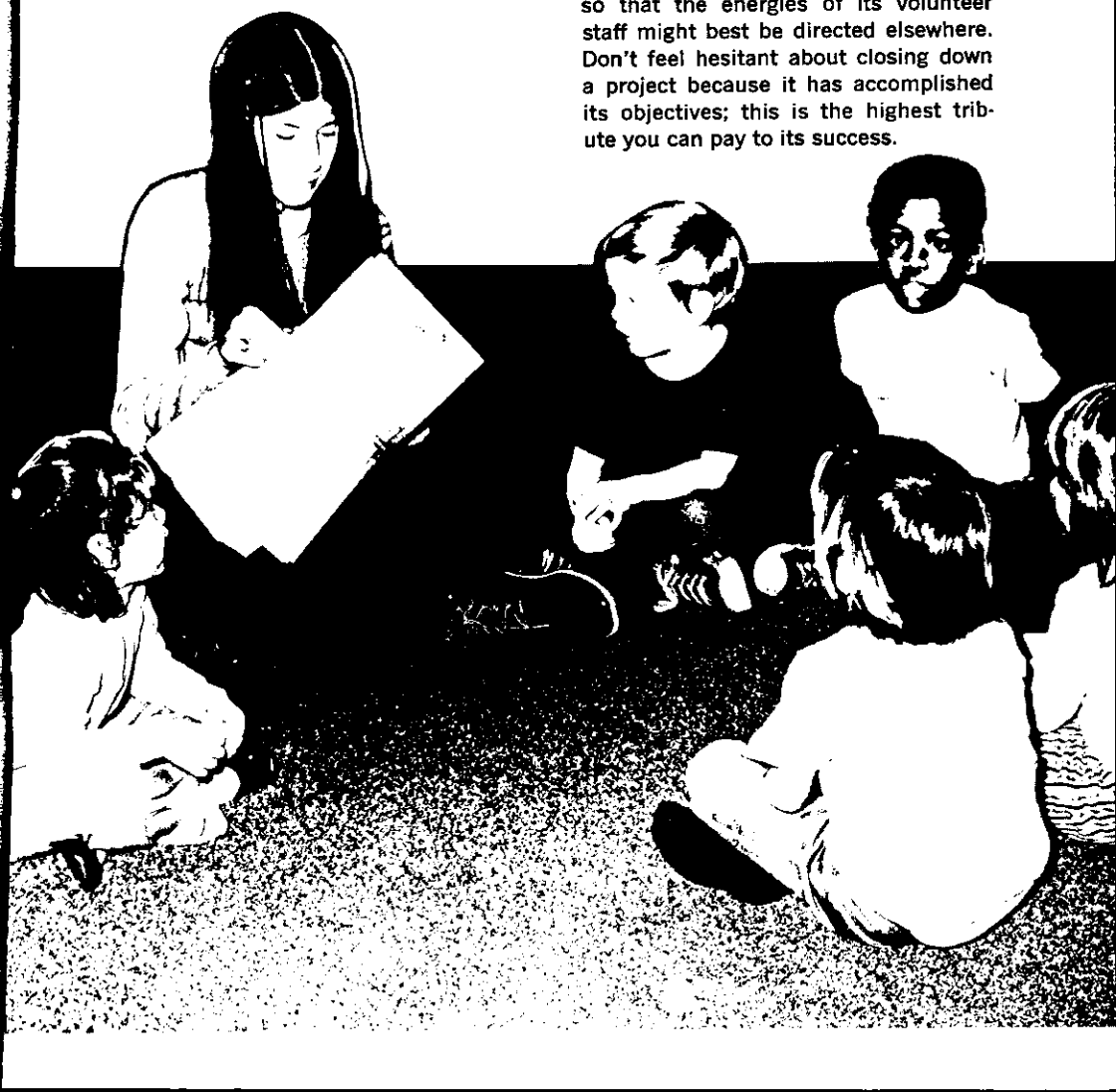
On the other hand, a student should not be denied a role in his own evaluation. He may be able to make a case for his having undergone a meaningful educational experience even in a personally unsuccessful effort. Volunteer work is an area where a student learns through action—by making decisions and observing their consequences. Such learning experiences will be undercut if a community action project is made to be merely an extension of classroom monitoring and grading.

With project evaluation, however, the aim is to be as objective as possible. Even a useless project may be a valuable experience for students, but the school and the community have too much at stake to allow an ineffective project to continue without modification.

Although one indication of the success of a project is whether or not the community keeps asking for volunteers, more objective means of evaluation can be instituted. The best approach is to build measurable criteria into a project's objectives by carefully specifying the goals of the project from the start—in writing. It is one thing to say that the aim of a housing repair project is to "repair run-down houses," and quite another to set the goal of bringing five houses up to code standards. In the latter case, it becomes possible to measure achievement against intention in concrete terms.

Precise project evaluation techniques serve two practical purposes. First, by isolating the strong and weak points of the project, you should be able to work more effectively toward your goal. Second, some demonstrated tangible success may be necessary to insure continued cooperation and financial support from the school and the community.

While some projects address themselves to needs that will be with us forever, like sickness and old age, others (certain poverty projects, for example) are aimed at eliminating the needs they attack. The evaluation process can alert you to situations where there is no longer so pressing a need for a project as there once was, so that the energies of its volunteer staff might best be directed elsewhere. Don't feel hesitant about closing down a project because it has accomplished its objectives; this is the highest tribute you can pay to its success.



VII
Special Concerns

In any high school volunteer program, certain issues arise that require "special handling." Every school evolves its own answers to the kinds of questions raised in this chapter; we discuss a few of them briefly here in order to alert you to some of the key problem areas that may demand your attention, and to help you arrive at your own ways of resolving them.

Why academic credit?

The major argument for offering academic credit is the same argument given in Chapter One for bringing the volunteer program into the high school in the first place—that it opens the way to participation for those students who are under too much pressure, academic or personal, to take time out to volunteer.

Those who oppose giving credit argue that it undermines the voluntary basis of involvement, confuses the self-giving motivation which is essential to the volunteer spirit, and detracts from the internal rewards that come from helping others and serving the community.

With this basic disagreement, any decision will depend on a variety of factors. The first is the extent to which school officials, students, teachers, and parents consider community involvement an integral part of the educational process. Educators who recommend the awarding of credit do so in the belief that it is the learning that is important, not the means of acquiring it, and that the basic objectives of learning can be met through community service. They argue, if fact, that learning through experience is often more valuable than classroom learning, and that credit should be granted as long as adequate means are arrived at for evaluating the student's work.

This belief is not held by high school teachers and administrators alone. Increasingly, volunteer service is being recognized as a desirable form of background for college entrance and for certain vocations. This will be another key factor in your decision. Students and their parents will want to know whether volunteer work will be accepted as a legitimate form of course credit by college admissions officers and employers. As a rule, the answer is yes, as long as traditional course requirements are also met.

Chapter Two suggested various designs for relating volunteer work to the standard curriculum. Some of

these approaches provide for the granting of course credit, some do not. A school's decision to implement one approach or another may therefore help to determine whether credit will be involved. (This is especially true for some of the more ambitious course integration proposals, which would hardly make sense without giving credit for time spent in course-related volunteer work.) On the other hand, school officials who have strong feelings about credit, either pro or con, will be able to choose an approach that is consistent with their views.

Should community service be required of all students?

The whole concept of requirement is antithetical to the spirit of volunteerism. Any community involvement program is sustained in large part by the enthusiasm of volunteers who want to give of themselves regardless of academic credit or recognition. It would be indefensible on any grounds to let a mandatory and rigidly structured program dampen this enthusiasm. Community service can be set up as an *option* for a course, or as a required activity in some sections of a course, but not as a required activity which students need for graduation. It would be a mistake to make unwilling volunteers out of unmotivated students. It might turn out that they'd do more harm than good in the community.

What kinds of volunteer service can high school students perform?

There is a tendency to assume that most social problems are too delicate or complex for high school students to be able to help in finding solutions for them. The illustrations of student volunteer activities found throughout this manual provide eloquent testimony to the contrary. Today's high school students include many who are increasingly impatient to make a responsible contribution of their own. Undoubtedly, some problems are beyond the reach of even these students. But to expect too little of them is to risk frustrating them and thereby stifling the program.

The key here, as in so many areas of the program, is flexibility. Some students are content to perform routine, slot-filling tasks, while others require more latitude for innovation; your program should be broad enough to include both ends of the spectrum and all variations in between. Does an agency need another hand for some mundane but essential job like filing records, or does it need the drive and initiative of the kind of student who can make his contribution felt in a voter registration campaign? Your coordinator must know his students well enough to be able to match them with the agencies that will give them the right amount of structure, supervision, and task definition.

What can be done to insure respect for the student's commitment?

Since high school students live under adult authority, they can't always act on their desire to serve in just the way they might want to. Sometimes they come up against obstacles posed by agencies which misuse volunteers (intentionally or not) by restricting them to menial jobs, or by parents who disrupt plans for scheduled community work because they don't think of this as "school work."

Some suggestions for preventing such conflicts before they occur are contained in Chapter Five, which recommends that you involve parents and community agencies in program planning so as to familiarize them in advance with the meaning and aims of volunteerism. But even when you are

careful to lay this groundwork, problems occasionally arise. A student will understandably resent being channeled into a menial chore, especially when he has been led to expect something different; there is no surer way to turn eagerness into apathy. Fortunately, the school has some say over the way agencies use volunteers, since it is the school which authorized their participation in the first place. At last resort, the coordinator or the principal may withdraw volunteers who are not being given a chance to perform a useful service.

With parents who fail to respect a volunteer's commitment, the school is limited to an educational and informational role. Here, though, is where the students themselves can be a big help. As the chief emissaries of the program to their parents, they should be encouraged to talk about the program at home, making sure their parents understand that it is a serious responsibility as well as a worthwhile activity. When someone signs up to volunteer, people are going to be counting on him.

What precautions should be kept in mind when scheduling students?

Students are subjected to many pressures (school activities, jobs, bus schedules) which can affect their allocation of time. Try to come up with a realistic idea of what it means to release a student from school for a specified period of time. A half-day release program may mean different things to different students, in terms of the actual time made available for volunteer work. If a student is released to work in the morning, he may work from 8:30 to 11:30—a full three hours. But if he works in the afternoon, it may only be for two hours (say, 12:30 to 2:30) if he wants to return to school for extracurricular activities. Also, be sure to take into account the time that must be deducted for transportation to and from the community project; this will prevent a student's being assigned to a project so far away that he would have to turn around and come back as soon as he got there.

Seasonal extracurricular activities can also cause disruptions in scheduling. Without the proper planning, a basketball player may commit himself to a project in September which he will have to abandon when after-school practice begins in November. And then there are such spring semester events as class trips. Holidays, too, can keep a volunteer off the job for a period of days or even weeks. This is why it is a good move at the outset for the coordinator, the student, and the agency to come to an exact understanding of when the student will or will not be available for service.

What about transportation?

There's no getting around it; transportation is crucial. If a volunteer cannot get to his project in the community, there is no program. The only schools that do not have this problem are those which are located in cities with good public transportation systems, and those which happen to be so close to the communities they serve that the volunteers can walk. All others have to face reality: transportation costs money.

Transportation can be provided for in a number of ways:

1. Student Cars. Some schools leave it up to the student to arrange for his own transportation. This can be a workable solution if most of the students have access to personal cars, but is an incomplete solution in any case. (About half of all high school students are too young to drive.)

2. Parent Car Pools. Some parents are willing to drive students to their job sites, and PTA or other parent groups

sometimes organize a definite schedule of car pools for this purpose.

3. School Cars. Some programs arrange for their volunteers to use the school-owned driver education cars for transportation to their jobs.

4. School Buses. Access to a school bus can be a satisfactory solution to the transportation problem, although professional drivers or students with special licenses may be required.

5. Cabs. Prohibitively expensive as a rule, even if special arrangements are worked out with the company, and every cab is piled high with students.

6. Borrowed Cars. Some schools are able to persuade local businessmen (for example, automobile dealers) to contribute vehicles to the program. To ease the strain on any one businessman, try getting a number of them to put up one vehicle each.

7. Leased Cars. Rental agencies generally want a yearly contract, but if you have no summer program, you might be able to work out a nine-month contract. Usually the cost of insurance is included in the leasing price, but don't forget to include gas, oil, and maintenance in your budget estimate.

8. Agency Vehicles. In many instances, community agencies have access to cars or buses and may be able to provide transportation.

Transporting volunteers is often the biggest problem facing a volunteer program. There are ways of making it less burdensome, though; e.g., encouraging agencies to share transportation costs when they can afford to do so. In working out a solution, be sure to consider the allied problems of adequate insurance coverage and scheduling. If enough vehicles are involved, it may be advisable to hire or appoint a coordinator of transportation to see that they are used with maximum efficiency.

What about liability?

Student volunteer programs do not often encounter liability actions. Still, it is best to prepare for any eventuality by seeking expert advice in advance. Two good sources of such advice are the school's legal counsel and insurance agent. The local government and private agencies in which volunteers serve also retain attorneys who can be of assistance to the program. What follows here is a general discussion of liability law as it affects volunteers; *you should always check with a lawyer concerning your particular situation and problems, and the laws that apply in your state.*

Basically, a volunteer may be liable in two areas of law—torts and contracts. In a tort action the volunteer might be held responsible, say, for an accident suffered by a child under his supervision. Depending upon the particulars of the situation, the agency and school involved might also share responsibility. In such cases, liability is usually incurred only if the volunteer is shown to be grossly negligent, but his defense can prove costly.

One type of tort action which might be applicable to volunteer programs is known as "vicarious liability." A volunteer becomes liable not for what he alone does but for the actions of other volunteers in the same group, or in what the law calls a "joint enterprise." If, for example, a child is injured at a baseball game because of one volunteer's carelessness, there is a possibility that all the volunteers might be sued jointly.

To protect the volunteer program, both the school and the agencies involved would be well advised to work out the most comprehensive liability and injury coverage available. It might be possible to supplement the existing

insurance policies of the school or agency, or even the policies normally available to students through the school, to cover the additional needs of volunteer service.

The community agencies should always be involved in working out the policy, since volunteers generally come under their responsibility while on duty. The agency should also be covered for damage or loss of materials or equipment incurred as a result of volunteer service, since it is unrealistic to assume that the students or the school can make good on this.

Once the insurance policy is written, the volunteers should be made aware of its provisions. In the related field of automobile insurance, for example, the volunteers should know if the policy limits its coverage to a certain passenger load. Some policies do not cover cars that are driven as "public or livery conveyances." An insurance company might argue that a car is being used as a public conveyance if a volunteer carrying a group of children is reimbursed for his expenses.

The second general type of liability —contract violation—can come into play if anyone contracts for goods or services without determining in advance that the agency, high school, or other sponsor of a project is going to pay for them. In a high school program it is usually the coordinator or agency personnel, rather than the students themselves, who enter into contracts. Therefore the coordinator should be aware of his potential legal responsibilities and should see that the program does not overextend itself financially, either on its own or through one of the community agencies with which it is involved.

What are the legal limitations for employing minors?

Because a vast majority of the participants in a high school student volunteer program are considered minors under the law, both the school and the agencies should hold themselves responsible for knowing the state and local laws concerning the employment of minors, and for making the hours and conditions of student volunteer participation consistent with those laws. In many states the labor laws for minors do not apply to non-remunerated work, but where they do apply, the employing agency (rather than the school) is usually held responsible.

Legal problems in this area, too, are extremely rare. Just in case, though, you can avail yourself of at least a partial deterrent to legal action by having on file permission slips signed by the parents or guardians of all the minors involved. However, permission slips are generally not considered legally binding by the courts. You can protect yourself more fully by observing these two rules:

1. Anticipate potential legal problems before they occur.
2. Obtain qualified legal advice instead of playing it by ear or listening to the suggestions of an amateur.

As long as these rules are followed, you should have no serious legal problems.

VIII
Variations

Some schools may want to establish a student volunteer program during the summer vacation period, either as an extension of an existing program or as a first step in building toward a year-round effort. Other schools like the idea of "May Projects" as a way of getting their feet wet. A school may also find it advantageous to join with other high schools in creating a unified program for an entire school district. This chapter discusses these variations on the theme of school-coordinated student volunteer programs.

Summer Programs

Operating a volunteer program on a year-round basis accommodates the many students who, after volunteering part-time during the school year, are eager to volunteer full-time during the summer months. Such a program promotes the concept of learning as a full-day, year-round process. Moreover, communities often have a greater need for high school students during the summer months when they lose the services of mothers who are free only while their youngsters are in school. With student help available, community agencies can avoid discontinuing worthwhile projects during the summer months, including those projects staffed by students during the regular school year. Indeed, a summer program eliminates one of the chief criticisms of student volunteer programs: that they stop just when they are needed most.

Some schools expand to a summer volunteer program only after they have a nine-month program in operation. Other schools, hesitant to commit themselves all at once to a full-scale effort, find that a summer program is a good place to get started. It enables school officials to familiarize themselves with the ins and outs of volunteer coordination without at first having to contend with the scheduling conflicts that can cause problems during the school year. In this respect, it is considerably easier to implement a volunteer program during the summer than at any other time.

On the other hand, while scheduling presents no difficulty during the summer, coordination can become tricky, since the students are scattered all over the community instead of being based at school. More agency supervision may be required as well, since

students often work longer hours and get more deeply involved in what they are doing.

Whether a school sponsors a summer program in order to supplement and enrich academic work undertaken during the school year, or just to give its students something constructive to do with their time, a volunteer program offers a desirable alternative for those who cannot find employment and do not want to attend standard summer school sessions.

May Projects

A school that wants to get into volunteering on a small scale might want to start with a *May Project*, a volunteer program restricted to graduating seniors during their last month of school when their final grades are already recorded. Like a summer program, the May Project recruits volunteers only from among students who are free from competing academic pressures, and, being limited to one class at a time, is even more easily manageable. Having begun with graduating seniors, the school may then want to expand the May Project to include juniors, who can then continue their volunteer activity under school supervision during the summer. This gives these students a background of experience to help them plan their academic program for their senior year and beyond, and it gives the school a base on which to build a continuing program, as the incoming senior class can assist in training new volunteers. In this way, a school may find the transition from a May or summer program to a full-time program surprisingly smooth.

District-Wide Programs

When a number of high schools—public, private, and parochial—operate volunteer programs in a single community, they may be able to expand and improve their services by organizing a district-wide umbrella program. An advisory committee with representatives from all of the schools and community agencies involved is essential to such an undertaking, as is a central coordinating office. All requests for student volunteers would funnel into the central office, thereby avoiding the unnecessary confusion, duplication, and frustration that can result from many agencies recruiting volunteers from many sources. Each participating school would designate one of its staff to coordinate the school's volunteer program with the central office. A student interested in volunteering would be placed by his school's coordinator, who would be kept up-to-date on available positions by the central office.

A central office for volunteer placement has the same advantages here as in the individual school program. It greatly expands the number and variety of volunteer opportunities available, thus giving the students more choices. Equally important, the central office, with its large supply of potential volunteers, is better able to provide the particular talents needed to fill the specialized requests of agencies. In other words, the matching of volunteers to jobs and vice versa improves significantly. In time, a central office should be able to find a spot for every student who wants to volunteer, and a volunteer for every spot that needs filling.

There are at least three possible ways to set up a central volunteer office:

1. The school district can operate the office as part of its central administrative offices.

2. In many school systems, programs already exist to recruit and place community volunteers within the schools.

If a central office exists for this purpose, it can assume the guidance of a district-wide high school student volunteer program with only a small increase in staff. This alternative is especially attractive in that it involves people who already have experience in volunteer administration.

3. An existing community volunteer bureau can operate the central office with financial help from the school district. A staff person in the district's central school administration could provide liaison with the volunteer bureau and handle the educational and curricular aspects of the program on a system-wide basis.

In a program currently being run in one school district, a student from any of ten participating high schools can choose from a wide range of available volunteer openings. A District Advisory Committee, with representatives from each of the high schools, the Volunteer Bureau, City Hall, Chamber of Commerce, and several agencies, facilitates communication among all of the groups concerned. The agencies needing volunteers submit job descriptions to the central office, which in turn distributes the requests to the ten participating high schools. Each high school has autonomy in such matters as scheduling, course credit, and grading. This is only one example of the way district-wide organization can enhance student volunteering.

IX
Project Ideas

This chapter describes briefly a number of possible and actual student volunteer projects. While no attempt has been made to be exhaustive—students and communities are coming up with original projects every day—the list should give you some idea of the range of opportunities available for student volunteers. It may also help in generating ideas for your program.

Some of the educational projects involve students working in elementary and junior high schools. Schools which have never sponsored volunteers in the community may want to begin their programs with these school-oriented projects, in which volunteers will be working close at hand and under the direct supervision of professional educators.

Education

Sesame Street

Using Sesame Street as a nucleus, the students improvise plays, puppet shows and other devices to enhance the effectiveness of the televised presentation.

Teacher Aides

High school students volunteering as teacher aides in an elementary school serve as small group discussion leaders and researchers.

Language Lab

As the "laboratory" portion of a language course, students teach English to Italian and Mexican-American employees in local businesses. In turn, students benefit from the opportunity to converse in Italian and Spanish.

Health

Project Turn-Off

A student-organized drug education program informs parents how young people feel about drugs and teaches teenagers the dangers of drug abuse.

Drug Drag

Students design and present a drug education program for elementary school children, including a play, a puppet show, comic books, and mini-lectures.

Hospital Aides

Visiting patients, helping run the gift shop, and assisting in children's wards are among the duties performed by student hospital aides.

Hospital Interns

Working as interns in the various departments of a hospital—the kitchen, the laboratory, the physical therapy room—students assist hospital workers while learning health-related occupations.

High School Red Cross

Under the auspices of the local Red Cross chapter, students volunteer in hospitals, disaster relief efforts, and blood drive registrations.

4-H Volunteer Corps

Organized through the high school's 4-H Club, this project develops and presents a nutritional education program for children from poor families, using puppets and other creative techniques.

Aging

Benefits for the Aged

As part of a study of the Social Security program, a social science class works in conjunction with the local Social Security office to bring information about benefits to the elderly and shut-ins through neighborhood canvassing.

Senior Summer Festival

An arts and crafts fair displaying the work of the elderly is organized by student volunteers.

Adopt A Grandparent

Each volunteer adopts an elderly person. Telephone calls, letters, visits, and social activities all give the "grandparents" a sense of being wanted.

Children

Library Aides

Assisting in the local public libraries, students hold story hours and help children select books.

Neighborhood Paint-In

Students enrolled in art courses organize children to decorate interior and exterior walls of a community center building.

Day Care Corps

Student volunteers act as recreation leaders and teacher aides at a day care center, allowing it to operate at substantial savings.

Music Instruction

Music students and choir and orchestra members give free music lessons to underprivileged children.

Nature Study Center

High school biology classes furnish guides, helpers, and animal handlers at a non-profit nature study center which provides free education programs and tours for inner-city children.

Inner-City Football League

Coaches and team members from city high schools organize an inner-city football league for boys from 9 to 12 years of age, with a championship game to be played on the same day as the high school championship game.

Housing

Project Reclaim

Student volunteers in the field section of an industrial arts course repair rundown dwellings in the community, using materials donated by local merchants and under the supervision of members of the local building trades unions.

New Housing Aides

The city housing authority uses home economics students as aides to instruct new residents of housing developments in the use and care of household facilities.

Environment

Environmental Action

In conjunction with local and national ecology groups, students campaign for neighborhood clean-up and trash collection; run pick-up centers for bottles, cans, and paper; and support environmental legislation.

National Parks and Forests

Students volunteer to work on recreation projects, build camps and shelters, and create play areas in nearby parks.

Consumer Services

Project Price Watch

Students survey food and drug stores in and around the community to establish the relative prices and quality of essential items. They issue a monthly listing of this information, which helps prevent inner-city stores from raising their prices above those found in surrounding suburban areas.

Neighborhood Co-op

Students in an accounting class assist in running and staffing a cooperative food store and credit union.

Quantity Buying Club

In conjunction with community residents, home economics classes organize a quantity buying club in a ghetto area. Students take orders for food and clothing so as to enable residents to buy in large quantities at reduced prices.

Community Organization

Vest-Pocket Parks

Working with a citizens' group and the city parks department, student volunteers help raise funds to turn vacant lots into miniature playgrounds. The students also assist in clearing the land, constructing play equipment, and supervising recreational activities once the parks are completed.

Cross-Cultural Arts Fair

Organized by a language club, this project closes off a side street on Saturday for the exhibition and sale of arts and crafts, ethnic foods, and other homemade items. Dancing and costumes are also featured.

Social Action News

Students from English and journalism classes assist a community group in running its own newspaper.

Community Libraries

Students organize a book drive to set up community libraries in inner-city community centers. They also staff the libraries.

Volunteer Patrol

Students work in the office and patrol the streets with policemen in a project aimed at improving student understanding of the Police Department and increasing community support and participation in combating crime.

Community Services

Meals on Wheels

A volunteer group delivers hospital-prepared meals to people confined to their homes.

Free Breakfasts

In a project sponsored by the school district, students use home economics facilities to prepare free breakfasts for elementary school children.

Car Pool Corps

Working afternoon and early evening shifts, students supply transportation for the elderly, handicapped, and any others who need assistance in getting around.

Cool-Line Committee

A clearinghouse for short-term volunteer requests from agencies and in-

dividuals (such as clean-up campaigns, shopping for shut-ins), the Cool-Line Committee keeps a roster of students willing to serve on an "on call" basis.

Senior-Student Service Corps

Students team up with senior citizens to volunteer at a local orphanage. The project gives the elderly a feeling of being needed, while introducing orphans to such activities as homemaking and arts and crafts.

Sick Car Clinic

Students in the auto mechanics class at a vocational high school staff a sick car clinic where poor families can have their automobiles repaired in the school's automotive shop for the cost of materials only.

Office Manpower

Advanced typing becomes a field course as students get on-the-job experience in agencies short on manpower and long on need.

X

Sample Records and Forms

Getting a volunteer program together also means keeping it together, and this requires some paperwork. Make your records and forms as simple and as clear as possible, and keep them to a minimum. This appendix contains samples that are now in use in some high schools. They appear in the following order:

1. Student Volunteer Application: This is a basic form filled out by a student when he applies as a volunteer. It asks for general information that will be helpful to the school in assigning the student to a specific project. The reverse side of the form is used by the student to indicate his class schedule.

2. Volunteer Job Description: Specific job descriptions have proved the most efficient way for an agency to register its need for student volunteers, and to spell out exactly what it wants the volunteers to do. This specific description of the volunteer assignment later provides a basis for mutual evaluation. Often times, just writing the job description helps the agency to clarify its own thinking on what it wants done.

3. Parental Approval Form: This basic form can be used by a high school to secure parental permission for student volunteer activity. Note, however, that in terms of liability these forms are often not considered to be binding by the courts.

4. Program Evaluation: A useful form to assess to what extent the program is meeting the expectations of all parties and to record suggestions for improvements.

5. Evaluation of Student Volunteer: This form is filled out by the volunteer's supervisor in the community. It notes information about the volunteer's activities and summarizes information that is helpful in evaluating both the volunteer and the program. It can be used for grading purposes and is helpful when recommendations or references are requested for the student.

6. Evaluation of Agency: This form is helpful in determining whether the volunteer experience is as rewarding as possible, with the greatest relevancy to the student's educational goals in the light of his own personal needs and objectives.

FORM 1

STUDENT VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

1. Name: _____ (Last) _____ (First) _____ (Middle)
2. Address: _____
3. City: _____ State & Zip Code: _____
4. Telephone: _____ Grade Level: _____
5. Age: _____
6. Name of Parent or Guardian: _____
7. List any particular interests or hobbies: _____

   _____
8. Do you have any special skills? (Music, art, sports, secretarial skills, etc.)_____

   _____
9. Are you interested in a special type of activity? Why?_____

   _____

   _____
10. How much time can you contribute each week? _____ Each month?_____

    Is there a preferred time? _____ When? _____
11. Is there any time of year when you will not be available for service activity?

    _____
12. Have you ever been a volunteer before? _____ What did you do? _____

    _____
13. Can you provide your own transportation? _____

FORM 2

VOLUNTEER JOB DESCRIPTION

1. Agency: _____
2. Address: _____
3. City: _____ State & Zip Code: _____
4. Job Location (if other than agency): _____

_____

5. Number of students needed for this job: _____
6. Days wanted: _____ Hours needed: from _____ to _____
7. Tasks _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

8. Special qualifications: _____

_____

_____

_____

9. General skills needed: _____

_____

_____

_____

10. Special skills desirable: _____

_____

_____

_____

11. Is agency providing transportation? _____

Application for this position should be made to:

Name: _____ Telephone: _____

Address: _____

_____

FORM 3

PARENTAL PERMISSION

1. Student's Name: _____
   Last First Middle
2. Address: _____
3. City: _____ State & Zip Code: _____
4. Nature of duties: _____

   _____
5. Participating with what agency: _____
6. Days and hours: _____
7. Method of transportation: _____

My son/daughter has my permission to participate in the volunteer program at _____ High School as described above.

Date: _____

Signature of Parent or Guardian: _____

FORM 4

PROGRAM EVALUATION
(To be filled out by students, agencies, and faculty)

1. In general, how would you rate the program? (Circle one)

   Excellent Very Good Good Fair Poor

2. Do you see value in the program: (Circle one)

   a. For yourself? YES NO

   b. For others? YES NO

3. Were you aware of any change in your own attitudes? YES NO

4. Would you wish to participate in this or a similar program again? YES NO

5. Was the training program:

   a. Adequate? YES NO

   b. Useful? YES NO

   c. Necessary? YES NO

   What improvements would you suggest? _____

   _____

   _____

6. Can you suggest any specific ways in which the school, agency, or student volunteers can function more effectively? _____

   _____

7. What changes would you like to see in the program? _____

   _____

   _____

8. Additional comments or suggestions: _____

   _____

   _____

Date: _____ Signature _____

FORM 5

EVALUATION OF STUDENT VOLUNTEER
(To be filled out by agency supervisors)

Student Volunteer's Name _____

Agency _____

1. Please list assigned duties of the volunteer _____

2. Was the volunteer on time? _____

3. Did the volunteer abide by agency rules? _____

4. What age group did the volunteer work with? _____

5. If available, would you want the same volunteer again? YES____ NO ____

GENERAL APPRAISAL

1. What was the volunteer's attitude toward his or her assignment? _____

2. Did the volunteer establish good rapport with people? _____

3. Was the volunteer prepared for the assignment? _____

4. Please evaluate overall performance:

   Circle one: 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
   excellent very unsatisfactory

Additional comments on volunteer: _____

Comments, criticisms, and suggestions on the High School Volunteer Program in general: _____

Date of Evaluation: _____ Your name: _____

FORM 6

EVALUATION OF AGENCY
(To be filled out by students)

Agency _____ Name of Supervisor _____

Description of Service _____

_____

	(Circle one)	
Was your supervisor:		
Available?	YES	NO
Helpful?	YES	NO
Understanding?	YES	NO
Was the agency orientation:		
Satisfactory?	YES	NO
Sufficient?	YES	NO
Was your job:		
Meaningful?	YES	NO
Interesting?	YES	NO
Important?	YES	NO
Challenging?	YES	NO
Did you have sufficient adult contacts?	YES	NO
Did you get to know co-workers?	YES	NO
Were they:		
Helpful?	YES	NO
Understanding?	YES	NO
(If applicable) Was transportation:		
Dependable?	YES	NO
Prompt?	YES	NO
Would you like to see this position continued for students?	YES	NO
Would you like to see this agency continue in this program?	YES	NO

Please make any additional comments and suggestions on back of this sheet.

Your signature: _____ Date: _____

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