



# Asset-Building Ideas for Volunteer Coordinators

As a person who works with volunteers, you know that there is a lot more volunteer coordination than just scheduling. Volunteers need training, encouragement, and feedback on the work they are doing. Volunteers who work with youth can be great asset builders, and you can help them by providing the support they need. Here are some things you can do:

- ~ **Recognize that some potential volunteers are uncomfortable around children and youth. Provide** training in different skills such as listening, leadership, and conflict resolution. Ask volunteers what other skills they would like to strengthen or develop to help them feel more confident about working with youth.
- ~ **Give each volunteer a list of the 40 assets that focuses on the age-group he or she works with.** There are four lists: infants and toddlers (ages 0 to 2), preschoolers (ages 3 to 5), elementary-age children (ages 6 to 11), and youth (ages 12 to 18).
- ~ **Create volunteer notebooks filled with practical information about youth.** Notebooks could include sample lessons, typical behavior of young people and how to respond, articles that address specific topics related to your work, quieting-down activities, and class rosters. Some places create one or two office notebooks, others provide them for each activity or each volunteer.
- ~ **Be creative with volunteer training.** Send one or two volunteers to a workshop and have them come back and train other volunteers (this is a way to empower and give leadership skills to volunteers). Assign a related book for volunteers to read and then have a book discussion. Or one person could read a book and write a review of it for others.
- ~ **Talk with people in the community to learn about barriers to volunteering with children.** You could survey them, hold focus groups, or do phone surveys. Based on what you hear, take steps to do things that encourage people to get involved and make the barriers seem smaller.
- ~ **Talk with volunteer coordinators in other programs about how they can and do incorporate asset building** into their program.
- ~> **Post your volunteer opportunities through VolunteerMatch on the Web ([www.volunteermatch.org](http://www.volunteermatch.org)), an organization** that lets nonprofit groups, schools, congregations, and other organizations post their information free of charge. Then publicize your involvement in that Web site.
- ~ **Create a job description for each volunteer position you have. Be specific** about details, including title of volunteer position, basic objectives and responsibilities, skills and experience needed, time commitment, training required, and to whom the volunteer reports.
- ~ **Create youth-oriented volunteer opportunities that are diverse in the amount of time, energy, and expertise needed.**  
Someone who has never volunteered before may be more comfortable making a short, onetime commitment than a time-intensive, ongoing one.