

Tidewater Youth Services Commission

Operating Instruction 1.7

Working with Volunteers

Issued By: Shawn Sawyer, Executive Director

Effective Date: 7-1-2005

Revised: 12-7-18

Issued to: All TYSC Directors and TYSC Administrative Staff

Expiration Date: When cancelled or superseded

The involvement of community volunteers with our programs is invaluable both for the benefits it affords the youth we serve and for the connection and support to TYSC that it develops with the general public. Volunteers can be an integral, ongoing part of program service delivery (such as with the Juvenile Conference Committees) or utilized one time or sporadically (such as speakers, leaders for enrichment activities). Remembering that volunteers are not usually child serving professionals, they need direction and support from us. The purpose of this instruction is to ensure that volunteerism results in a positive experience for both clients and the volunteer.

- 1. Program directors should meet with volunteers prior to any visit to discuss program policies and to clarify both staff and volunteer expectations, for example:
 - a. The nature and length of the activity**
 - b. How many clients will be participating**
 - c. What materials or supplies may be needed for the activity****

Nurturing Potential, *Promoting Change*, Preserving Families

- d. **How behavioral issues will be handled**
 - e. **What affect, if any, sporadic client attendance will have on the activity**
 - f. **The role of staff during the activity**
2. **Clients should be prepared for the activity prior to the volunteer's arrival, having received information on the nature of the activity and expectations for participation (such as, what clothing is appropriate for the activity/event)**
 3. **Programs should be prepared to begin on time.**
 4. **Staff should be present at all times *and actively engaged in the activity*, monitoring client behavior, setting limits, and encouraging client participation. At no time should a volunteer be put in a position to have to respond to client misbehavior.**
 5. **The Program Director should talk with the volunteer at the conclusion of the activity to get feedback and to discuss any problems that occurred and/or changes that are needed in order to optimize the volunteer experience.**
 6. **If the program staff has any concern about the quality of the volunteer activity or the conduct of the volunteer, they shall notify the program director who recruited the volunteer or the Executive Director of TYSF. The TYSC Executive Director should also be made aware of any concerns.**