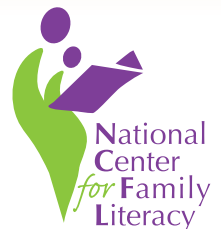


Planning for Volunteers in Literacy

CHAPTER 3: INVOLVING AND DEVELOPING STAFF



Funded by UPS



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CHAPTER 3:

Involving and Developing Staff

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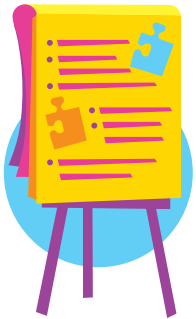
Introduction

Involving staff is key to developing and maintaining a successful volunteer effort. Staff can identify program needs and how volunteers can support program goals and student achievement. By including staff in the decision making process of how and when to utilize volunteer expertise, staff will work more closely and cooperatively with volunteers.

It is essential to provide staff with training in how to work effectively with volunteers. After programs have identified ways that volunteers can support the program, procedures must be designed to successfully incorporate volunteers into the organization. Additionally, those who are responsible for managing volunteers may need training in management skills to build a cohesive team.

Volunteers may include workers from local businesses, retirees, college students, and parents in your program. You can ensure that they contribute effectively through program planning, training, and evaluation. As you communicate with the volunteers and emphasize their value to your program, your community support for family literacy will increase and multiply.

Now, let's read about a family literacy program that learned early on about the need to include program staff in the decision to utilize volunteer services.



Program Description

The Southwest Family Literacy Program in an urban area of Texas was meeting the challenge of serving 50 families at a learning center. The program had been successfully serving families for several years when their advisory council suggested the use of volunteers to enhance services. The program coordinator immediately developed a volunteer recruitment process. She scheduled several presentations at local agencies to begin recruiting volunteers. The presentations were well received and she soon had a list of potential volunteers. Later, during a staff meeting, she informed the staff that volunteers would soon be joining their team.

A few weeks later, several of the volunteers approached the program coordinator to inform her that they would no longer be volunteering. When she asked the volunteers why they were leaving, their responses were simply that they did not feel welcome or that their services were needed.

The coordinator promptly convened the staff to investigate this situation. When she questioned them about the volunteers, one staff member stated, "I don't need a volunteer in my classroom; I can handle my class." Another said, "You never

asked us if we needed volunteers in our classrooms; I spend most of my time just answering questions about our program rather than teaching.” The coordinator immediately realized her mistake. She had not included her staff in the decision making process or trained the staff to accept and utilize volunteers in their classrooms.

Fortunately, the coordinator was able to resolve the situation by reviewing and redesigning the program’s volunteer recruitment and management plan with her staff. Together they:

- Set goals for volunteers (which were later rewritten with the help of volunteers)
- Created guidelines for volunteers (which later became a policy handbook)
- Developed a list of tasks and roles volunteers could choose
- Developed volunteer orientation meetings
- Developed a process for volunteer recognition

Once the staff clearly understood the goals for this endeavor they were able to effectively include volunteers in their classrooms. The volunteer program grew and improved each year and is now a vital part of this family literacy program’s success.

The Importance of Involving Staff in Identifying Program Needs

As you plan your volunteer efforts, it’s helpful to recognize that staff bring diverse experiences, skills and attitudes to their work with volunteers. Some staff members readily acknowledge the benefits of including volunteers, but others may need to be convinced. They may need to examine models and examples of family literacy programs that successfully utilize volunteers. One way programs can gather information is by networking with other programs.

Considering possible roles for volunteers

Volunteers work in roles that generally fall into two categories: Instructional Support and Administrative Support. They may fulfill one or more of these functions:

- | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| ■ Tutor | ■ Board member | ■ Office assistant |
| ■ Mentor | ■ Classroom assistant | ■ Field trip liaison |
| ■ Family recruiter | ■ Activity leader | ■ Homework helper |
| ■ Guest speaker | ■ Fundraiser | |

Reviewing these options may help your staff think creatively about ways to involve volunteers. Roles and responsibilities of volunteers will be discussed more in depth in the following chapter.

Getting staff input

Some programs formally survey and/or interview staff members to identify program needs. The needs assessment process described in the first chapter can help. Surveys may include questions about successful program implementation, what has been effective, and what changes need to be made.

Gathering specific information about how and why needs are or aren't being met can determine an effective course of action. Then, based on the program's needs, you can ask the question, "Could a volunteer support our program in this area?" If the answer is "yes," then determine when volunteers are most needed, what tasks they will do, and how many volunteers are needed in which locations. This information is important as your program begins to recruit volunteers.

Developing staff "ownership" strengthens the organization and, of course, the volunteer component as well.

Including staff in the needs assessment process allows "ownership thinking." When staff provide input and feedback, trust is built, they feel included, and begin to feel "responsible." Developing staff "ownership" strengthens the organization and, of

course, the volunteer component as well. Decision making conducted in this manner often leads to more effective implementation of changes.

Staff members need to thoughtfully explore both the benefits and responsibilities of including volunteers in the delivery of the program's services. Approaching this exploration as a collaborative team effort allows program directors and managers to gain additional information from personnel about the program's needs and capacities. Then the organization can develop and implement plans that are understood and supported by program staff. When planning with your staff, be sure to discuss the benefits as well as the challenges of volunteer involvement. Before the meeting you might prepare by considering the issues that follow.

Discussing benefits of involving volunteers

One important benefit of involving volunteers may be to allow you to fully develop program components that otherwise have limited support.

For example, one family literacy program saw the need to include an afternoon homework club for children. Because they had limited staff and fiscal support, the program asked for help from the community. A local electric company "adopted" the family literacy program. The company sends employees to the program to tutor the children and support the homework club. This collaboration helps both

the company and the family literacy program achieve their goals. Volunteers from the company enjoy social interaction with their colleagues while they give back to the community by sharing their time and expertise. Volunteers support families, staff, and the development of the program.

There are many possible benefits for families, staff, and the program as a whole.

Benefits for families. Families may benefit from the expertise and program support brought by the volunteers who (potentially) provide additional instruction and experience. Volunteers also may bring creative ideas and resources to the program. Additional skills and experiences may be as diverse as the volunteers, perhaps in art, music, business, health, first aid, automobile repair, science, and nature. Many volunteers are retirees who are participating in foster grandparent programs, and children benefit from this additional attention and multi-generational contact.



Enrolled parents also may volunteer, benefiting their own families and others in the program as well. When participating parents volunteer in a program, they have an opportunity to develop additional skills. For example, some family literacy programs train parents to volunteer in the early childhood or elementary school classroom. The parents demonstrate skills in working with their children's teachers and increase their involvement in their children's education. Some participants have learned office skills, organizational skills, and decision making skills through volunteer opportunities in their programs.

Parents also may want to explore volunteer opportunities outside the literacy program. Many parents have work-related goals, and volunteering in a specialized setting such as healthcare can enhance their work readiness. Volunteering is an effective form of work experience, developing skills and building résumés.

Benefits for staff. Staff benefit in many ways through the support of volunteers. Volunteers often bring enthusiasm, a positive attitude and vitality, raising the program's energy level. Staff also may be able to meet program goals and objectives more readily with volunteer support. Some programs need trained volunteers in their early childhood programs to maintain appropriate adult-to-child ratios. If programs have understaffed satellite locations, staff may be able to use volunteers to augment teaching and activity teams. Staff members can examine their roles, work sites, and responsibilities to determine how volunteer support may be effectively implemented. In one program, a staff member

determined that having a volunteer read during story time would give her time to prepare more thoroughly for the next planned activity.

Benefits for programs. A carefully prepared volunteer effort can support programs in several ways. First of all, programs facing increasing costs and decreasing funds may find that trained volunteers allow them to maintain existing services to a maximum number of families. With specialized volunteer expertise, programs may even be able to develop more comprehensive services. In one instance, a volunteer assists a literacy program by obtaining, repairing and upgrading computers so that families can access information and learn technology skills.

Additionally, volunteers may advocate for political support, help with resource development, and make connections with other organizations. People often volunteer for more than one organization, and they can help organizations develop new collaborations. One person who also volunteered for the American Association of University Women helped a program obtain a grant for additional health literacy materials. And of course, volunteers' hours may contribute to matching funds required by some funding sources.

Outlining the many benefits volunteers provide to families, staff and programs can help staff accept and plan for the integration of volunteers into the operation of a program. It also may help staff think of other ways volunteers can provide support.

Addressing staff concerns

Although volunteer contributions may be significant, you should be prepared to address concerns staff may have about involving volunteers.

Some of the following concerns may sound familiar:

- Reliability of volunteers
- Additional training and supervision responsibilities
- Becoming too reliant on volunteers
- Volunteers as a possible threat to job security
- How volunteers fit in the hierarchy of the organization

To deal respectfully and honestly with staff members who have concerns, consider these two simple strategies:

1. Take time with staff to reflect and prepare
2. Plan short-term volunteer assignments

Begin with a discussion on volunteerism. As a first step, explore your own team's experiences as volunteers. Many staff members may have volunteer experiences, and discussing as a group both their positive and negative experiences may help to develop sensitivity to volunteers. Beginning with your staff's frame of reference and adding new information, including how literacy programs work with volunteers, is an excellent strategy to develop a collaborative team approach.

Another approach is to consider offering specific, short-term volunteer assignments. Volunteers may want finite assignments with time limits. Of course, if they have positive experiences they may sign on for additional assignments, but you have given your staff an opportunity to get used to the idea and learn how to work with volunteers without making a long-term commitment.

These early steps are important, but it's not enough to get off to a good start. You also need to provide your staff with specific training in volunteer development and management.

Preparing Staff to Work with Volunteers

Working effectively with volunteers requires the use of key communication skills, as well as task analysis and preparation. You may need to provide specific training in these areas.

Communication and interaction skills

Staff who work with volunteers should be aware of the importance of open, warm, and respectful communication. Remember, just like the families your program serves, volunteers are diverse and bring many strengths with them. Opportunities to interact with volunteers arise at various times and places, and individual and cultural differences may present challenges to good communication. Think about these factors as you plan staff development.

Early contacts. Thorough and successful programs provide volunteers with an orientation and training. When staff are involved in volunteers' orientation and training, the transition to working in the program is often more comfortable. Staff members should be encouraged to make a conscious effort to build rapport with a new volunteer. This starts with creating a welcoming environment. Demonstrating openness and appreciation for volunteers builds their connection with you and the program. Staff members should smile and address the volunteers by name as they greet them, shaking hands when appropriate.

Daily interactions. Staff members communicate with volunteers in lots of "little" ways, and they may need to be reminded of the importance of these interactions. For instance, they should make an effort to let volunteers know they are ready and willing to answer questions. They should remember to introduce volunteers to

other staff, volunteers and program participants. When a volunteer enters a classroom to assist a teacher, the teacher should take a moment to talk and get acquainted. You might suggest that teachers schedule a new volunteer to arrive shortly ahead of the class for a mini-orientation. It's also a good idea to give the teacher background information about the volunteer in advance, including information about the volunteer's interests and work experience. Greeting volunteers each day when they arrive is essential to maintaining a good relationship. Acknowledging volunteers when they leave and thanking them provides closure and enhances positive feelings.

Here's how one volunteer described her experience:

“Every time I left the center, Elizabeth was there to say thank you. She never missed the opportunity. It was a small thing, but it always meant a lot to me. She always noticed and never failed to say ‘Thanks!’”

Getting to know your volunteers may be rewarding in unexpected ways, too. Recognizing that the volunteer is a unique individual builds the relationship, and some have special gifts to contribute. Some volunteers have specialized interests in common with staff and program participants. These special interests can help connect a volunteer to the classroom, and vice versa.

Your staff must understand that daily interactions, although often brief and informal, are important. Promoting good communication habits will support good relationships that may lead to more significant volunteer contributions. And communication helps to bridge and value personality differences.

There are many different personality types, and it's tempting to group these types and label them. But when working with others, it's helpful to recognize that their personalities may have different but equal strengths from your own.

Personality differences. There are many different personality types, and it's tempting to group these types and label them. But when working with others, it's helpful to recognize that their personalities may have different but equal strengths from your own. Individuals differ in multiple ways. They may be primarily task-oriented or more people-oriented, big picture-oriented (visionaries) or detail-oriented, extraverted or introverted, etc. Staff development should address these differences

to encourage teamwork. You may find it useful to include volunteers and parents in team building exercises.

Taking advantage of strengths is a key to effective use of volunteers. Encourage staff to consider individuals' personalities and strengths when they make task assignments. Everyone likes to work at tasks where they can excel.

And remind staff that personality differences can have a profound effect on communication, too. Some people want everything spelled out. Others are comfortable with a more casual or flexible approach. Staff should consider the program's needs as well as volunteers' needs in all their communications. What information needs to be provided in written form? What information needs to be provided in advance? What are the volunteers' expectations and what are your expectations? Are there any cultural differences that you or the volunteer need to be aware of?



Cultural differences. Cultural differences may involve several aspects of interaction:

- The distance maintained between people (do they stand close when talking or keep a greater distance?)
- Whether it's appropriate for a male and female to have physical contact (including shaking hands)
- Gift-giving customs
- How elders are addressed
- How children are addressed
- Touching (in some cultures it is offensive to pat anyone on the head)
- Appropriate gestures
- How children are disciplined
- Eye contact

You may need to provide your staff with training to build awareness of these differences in the volunteer population. In addition, provide volunteers with a thorough orientation on culturally appropriate actions based on your program's needs and the families you serve.

Other differences. Other factors that influence people’s values and perceptions include age (generation), life experience, and educational experience. Volunteers come from a variety of educational backgrounds. Be sure your staff are clear and explicit in their communications. Some communication strategies might include:

- Clearly explaining the purpose of an activity, the steps, and expected outcomes
- Using language that makes sense to the volunteer (avoiding specialized language or jargon, acronyms, and other educational terms)
- Providing an orientation to family literacy (that is, do not assume volunteers already understand the concepts of family literacy)
- Providing volunteers with program-specific information, like job descriptions and mission statements
- Providing specific training and materials for the work volunteers do

Program staff will probably be involved in training volunteers and may need guidance about what to include. Volunteers providing instruction may require training about learning styles, direct instruction, learning differences, English language learning, academic content, and lesson-extension activities. Staff must make sure volunteers have all of the materials they need to complete their assigned tasks. While this may seem obvious, it takes thought and planning to make it happen.

Encouraging volunteers to ask questions helps them to learn more quickly. One simple technique is to ask, “What questions do you have?” The word “what” stimulates the participants to think of and ask their questions. Many people ask, “Do you have any questions?” Often the reply is “no.”

You also might provide volunteers with index cards and instruct them to write down their questions. Following training, as volunteers work in their various roles, staff and supervisors can set aside a few moments at the beginning, middle, and end of a session to answer questions. When there are breaks in the schedule, staff can ask the volunteers what questions they have. The ability to seek out a person’s questions and answer them is a powerful skill, and it’s a skill you may have to develop in your staff. Some programs keep track of the questions asked frequently by volunteers and use this information to update their training.

Several other factors will enhance the delivery of a volunteer training program. Staff need to demonstrate “expertness,” “trustworthiness,” and “genuine caring.” These qualities help volunteers (trainees) to be receptive to the information and skills being presented.

Tips for staff to enhance training and communication

Thinking of volunteers as learners and being attentive to their learning needs will strengthen your program's capacity to integrate volunteers. Here are some tips to help volunteers learn:

- Use large print to make training materials more accessible
- Segment volunteer training into several smaller units
- Model visual, auditory and kinesthetic learning
- Demonstrate tasks and strategies
- Provide opportunities for practice and feedback
- Provide mentors for new volunteers
- Maintain regular communication
- Pair volunteers to work together
- Encourage questions

Although many volunteers enter programs with highly developed skills, others will need the periodic training support of staff and supervisors. People also learn at different rates and require varying amounts of repetition and practice.

Tips for giving feedback

Keeping volunteers motivated and encouraging improvement requires feedback. Your staff also may need training in giving feedback to volunteers. The purpose of feedback is to help people stay on track because seeing and experiencing success motivates people to continue putting forth effort.

Tips for giving feedback include:

- Use 25 words or less
- Be specific and offer a solution
- Be empathetic
- Do it face-to-face and in private
- Use a two-to-one ratio (two positive comments for each constructive comment)
- Be aware that your tone of voice and facial expression often have more impact than your words
- Be aware of your thinking (if it's critical and hostile, change your internal dialogue)
- Check to be sure the person has heard and understood

Have your staff practice giving feedback in short effective statements. Recipients are more likely to understand and remember what was said this way. How staff give feedback to volunteers also models how volunteers are expected to provide feedback to staff and program participants. You also might provide communication training to volunteers so they learn how to give feedback in a manner that helps the person receiving it.

Showing appreciation

Showing appreciation is still another vital part of staff-volunteer communication. You and your staff should work together to find ways to demonstrate to volunteers that they are valued and important to the program.

Some ways to show appreciation are:

- Say thank you
- Provide certificates for hours of service
- Communicate the program's successes and announce the volunteers' contributions through public recognition
- Include volunteers in special program events such as graduations and dinners
- Send thank you notes from program participants
- Provide additional education and training

Encourage staff to do a job-task analysis

What's paramount to successfully integrating volunteers is to plan and continue to prepare for their participation in your program. Because your staff are central to the volunteers' success, a short professional development training to improve staff's abilities to break tasks into small steps will help them to provide on-the-job training for volunteers.

For example, in one program an office assistant trained a volunteer to use office equipment. The staff member recognized and analyzed what the volunteer needed to know to operate the fax machine. She demonstrated the task explaining each step. She had the volunteer practice sending a fax and provided the necessary feedback. The volunteer successfully operated the equipment independently. Step by step instructions were written down to support the volunteer and to help her remember when she returned the next week. This effective training required about five focused minutes of the staff member's time. Eventually, the volunteer will be able to train others to operate the equipment because the training she received was thoughtful and broke the task down into manageable steps.

When programs are prepared and organized, it helps to reduce a volunteer's anxiety, which is often associated with a new environment and tasks. Clearly defined roles and tasks help employees, families and volunteers feel more comfortable.

The three components of a job-task analysis are: task lists, job breakdowns and performance standards. Task lists describe what the volunteer must do. They also should include what materials and equipment volunteers need to work with. Each task on the list is specific, and includes a job breakdown, or explicit directions for performing the task. Step-by-step instructions improve performance. Consider how each task can be evaluated—or, what performance standard the accomplishment of the task will be held to. Job-task analysis will help you determine the content of your training program and the quantity of training required.

Involving Staff in Developing Program Structures and Procedures

Program structures and procedures are developed to protect your program, maintain program services, and retain volunteers. Both supervisory staff and other personnel may be responsible for the structures and procedures described below.

Staffing

Roles and responsibilities regarding staff interaction with volunteers should be clear to demonstrate respect for staff members and ensure efficient operations.

- Programs must identify and support the personnel who are responsible for working with volunteers. Each volunteer must know the chain of command and which staff he can approach for help. For instance, if the volunteer has an emergency and can't come to the program at the scheduled time, whom should he contact?
- When personnel supervise volunteers they must know their program's policies and procedures, have sufficient time allocated to coordinating or supervising volunteers, and have adequate resources.
- When the supervisor is on vacation, programs must designate another staff person to supervise volunteers.
- Although some volunteers work daily in programs, most have specialized tasks on particular days. A supervisor needs to carefully maintain the volunteers' schedules and stay in communication with them.

- Program closing dates and information must be readily available for volunteers. Snow days and program cancellation policies need to be clearly defined for volunteers.
- Volunteers also should receive training in emergency procedures. In one tornado-prone area, volunteers receive information on the program's safety procedures, including what to do and where to go to maintain safety during a serious weather event.

This kind of communication is a primary responsibility of the volunteer supervisor. Planning and coordinating are additional roles of the supervisory staff. For example, often when a volunteer who is integral to an effective classroom plans a vacation, supervisory staff will prepare another volunteer to substitute. It's important to remember that volunteers need to receive training on any reporting or documentation required by your program. Maintaining continuity is essential.

Systems and policies

As supervisory staff gain experience, they often develop a system for recruiting, training, and placing volunteers. The system may include the following elements:

- Specific intake procedures, such as requiring references, mandated criminal clearances, applications and interviews
- Orientation, pre-service training and in-service training
- Observation
- Volunteer recognition
- Evaluation of the volunteer program

The supervisory personnel and staff also need procedures to address concerns. Program documents must clearly state policies and procedures for volunteers. For example, what performance measures and requirements do you have in place for volunteers? How are these measures and requirements made clear to volunteers during orientation and training? Although most concerns and issues can be managed well through the use of good interpersonal skills, you'll need policies and procedures in place for disengaging a volunteer whose actions are detrimental to the program.



Management Skills for Program Employees

In addition to supporting staff in the development of policies, procedures and documents, you also may need to address day-to-day management issues.

It may be helpful to anticipate issues that could arise and plan ways to develop awareness, skills and sensitivity in your staff that will enable them to respond appropriately. As a foundation, of course, basic communication skills are always important. Within the busy work environment of many programs, employees need to listen and recognize volunteers' needs and viewpoints. Using reflective listening skills promotes understanding.

Additionally, staff should be able to communicate your program's mission, philosophy and goals to volunteers, so volunteers are better equipped to support the mission. Working with volunteers is like having a guest in your home. It's important to present your program in a positive manner. Staff should be careful to speak well of program participants, speak well of collaborators, and speak well of other staff.

All organizations have challenges, but staff members need to be strongly cautioned to leave volunteers out of any current conflicts or personnel issues, and to shield volunteers from any negative program history. Volunteers may leave a program if they sense animosity. If a volunteer brings up a past negative event, then the staff should explain how the organization has overcome the obstacle or is working to resolve it.

Another difficulty may arise when things are going well! Once relationships are established, staff may begin to feel relaxed around volunteers and view them as confidants. Maintaining professionalism is key. Setting appropriate interpersonal boundaries is essential to maintaining a productive workplace.

Other issues related to boundaries include:

- *Establishing boundaries.* Volunteers need to be clearly informed of your program's confidentiality policies and procedures.
- *Roles.* As volunteers develop working relationships in the program, staff may ask for feedback about their experiences in order to improve services. Although volunteer input is important, roles should be clear.
- *Tasks and responsibilities.* Before increasing a volunteer's responsibilities, it's important to discuss the additional tasks and give the volunteer choices. Highly competent volunteers often are asked to take on more and more work. It's important to assess where the volunteers' boundaries are, and how much responsibility they are willing to take on.

Some guidelines for developing boundaries are:

- Discuss changes with volunteers in advance
- Clearly define roles and expectations
- Avoid over-reliance on volunteers
- Respect volunteers' time

Staff sometimes find subtle ways to get volunteers to increase their time commitment, such as requesting that they stay and help with a task after their scheduled hours. This seemingly innocent request can ultimately alienate some volunteers, especially if they feel their time isn't valued. Part of initiating effective boundaries is communicating with volunteers the priorities of the program and activity. Staff should help volunteers to focus on the most important tasks. Doing important work also adds to the volunteers' sense of being an essential part of the organization.

Retaining Volunteers

Positive experiences are your best retention strategy. It's natural for volunteers to increase their knowledge and skills as they participate with your organization, and retention is increased as volunteers experience successful learning opportunities and skill development. If paid staff are aware of this need to learn and grow, they will be sure to provide regular development activities for volunteers.

Training and development may be formal or on-the-job. When planning formal training, staff should carefully analyze volunteers' needs, consider their availability, and develop the training accordingly. Some volunteers will utilize additional resources and written materials that the program provides, so staff should be sure to make such things available. Volunteer handbooks, resource guides, and library materials help volunteers develop their knowledge and skills.

Demonstrating respect for volunteers and developing strategies to include them consistently in your program structure supports retention. Providing a suggestion box for parents, employees and volunteers is an effective tool. It sends the message that their input and ideas are valued. Set a regular time to review and discuss suggestions with your staff and, when appropriate, implement the suggestion quickly. Programs have made excellent improvements this way.

All this work is a good investment. Recruiting, placing, and training volunteers requires program time and resources, so retaining them is an important program goal. To focus on retention, continually work with your staff to examine your program's key processes using the following steps:

- Redefine why you need volunteers
- Redesign valuable volunteer opportunities
- Recruit thoughtfully
- Screen, interview, and place volunteers carefully
- Provide effective training
- Recognize volunteers' contributions
- Follow up quickly

Of course, even with effective procedures and strong staff support, a volunteer may determine that he or she is not interested in continuing in a particular volunteer position. In one program, a volunteer (an effective tutor) decided he no longer wished to tutor; however, he ran successful fundraising events for the program. Maintaining positive relationships with volunteers helps them make their best contributions. (For more on volunteer management, see the chapter on "Supervision and Management of Volunteers.")

Putting It All Together

Involving staff is one key to operating a successful volunteer component. Staff members can identify your program's changing needs and strategies for involving volunteers to support your program's goals. You can encourage a positive climate for volunteers by including staff in program decisions and providing staff development and training in the areas of effectively working with and managing volunteers.

As you set the stage for volunteer participation and staff involvement, a particularly useful tool is the free Internet-based site, Verizon Literacy Campus (www.literacycampus.org). The project offers a variety of free online courses for program directors and staff to help orient them to the volunteer environment. More information about Verizon Literacy Campus is provided in the "Resources" section of this guidebook.



Involving and developing staff to make good use of volunteers' time and talents requires analysis, planning and management. The following steps outline the process:

- Define your need for volunteers.
- Identify the tasks best suited to volunteers and what training you need to provide.
- Determine which employees will supervise volunteers and how much of their time will be allocated to volunteer communication and management.
- Develop policies and procedures to support an organized and effective volunteer component in your program.
- Design and implement a process for volunteer training and development.
- Design and implement a process for evaluating the effectiveness of your volunteers.
- At staff meetings include volunteer issues and needs on the agenda as a standing item.
- Be flexible in making changes to improve your volunteer program, as communities and trends in volunteerism change.