



Volunteer Training Manual

Volunteer Training Agenda

1. Icebreaker-(5 minutes)
 - Introduce yourself and say something you like beginning with the letter of your first name
2. Helping Hands Activity-(10 minutes)
 - Write down what community means to you on the colored hand
3. Volunteer Training Manual-(1 hour 15 minutes)
 - About St. Croix Family Resource Center
 - i. Discussion
 - ii. Questions
 - Facts About Being a Volunteer
 - i. Discussion
 - ii. Questions
 - Facts About Boundaries
 - i. Discussion
 - ii. Questions
 - iii. Examples
 - Benefits to being a volunteer
 - i. Discussion
 - ii. Examples
 - Mentor and Tutor Roles
 - Problem Solving
 - Budgeting Exercises
 - Tips for Teaching Children to Keep a Positive Attitude
 - The Butterfly
4. Volunteer Training Evaluation-(10 minutes)
 - Any additional comments, questions, or concerns
5. Volunteer Forms-(20 minutes)
 - Start of/Completion of forms
 - Any additional comments, questions, or concerns

Thank you for attending TCC Volunteer Training and Orientation!

About ***The Connect Center (TCC)***

History

The Connect Center (formally known as St. Croix Family Resource Center) is the new name for programs that have been serving our neighbors in need since 1997. By partnering with local agencies, we help clients make healthy community connections for a more secure life. As an agency, we support clients as they identify and work toward their short- and long-term goals for their finances, education, employment, transportation, housing, family and parenting skills and other areas of life.

Programs

TCC Family Advocates and Mentors help people establish and work toward goals that will lead to increased financial stability and healthy community connections.

TCC's unique programs foster, long-term, caring relationships with FRC Family Advocates who empower clients to reach their dreams.

Family Connections: Families receive support for basic needs and then work toward short and long-term goals for their finances, employment, housing, education, family life, and community connections. Services are individualized to meet families' goals.

Career Connections: After assessing strengths and skills, TCC Advocates help clients pursue a living wage career with a personalized plan that supports getting promotions, going to college, or starting their own business.

Kids Connections After-School Program: Kids gather after school and during the summer for fun learning activities that promote healthy minds, bodies, and spirits through building social-emotional skills, exploring the arts, and outdoor physical movement. Opportunities for reading, writing, and math enrichment.

Supportive Housing Program: Local churches and groups partner with The Connect Center to provide a structured one-year program for families in need of housing stability. Families work toward their goals with an expanded positive support network which includes a volunteer family mentor.

Host Home Program: Host Home Program provides youth ages 17-24 with culturally responsive housing within their community of choice. Youth live with hosts for up to a year, depending on their housing needs. Hosts provide food and housing while The Connect Center works with the youth on their goals.

Facts about being a ***Volunteer***

Confidentiality

As a The Connect Center (TCC) volunteer you will be exposed to information about TCC program participants that are personal. This information should be kept confidential. The clients' ability to trust you is dependent upon their belief that you respect them enough to keep what they tell you in confidence. Discussing the participant clients' situations with other friends or acquaintances is unethical and harms the trust in the relationship.

Expectations

- Attend training and orientation
- Inform TCC Staff if situations change, or crisis occur
- Model appropriate help-seeking behavior by asking staff or co-volunteers for assistance
- Practice confidentiality
- Say "no" when you need to
- Have fun
- Be yourself
- Do not provide money or shelter directly to client families (call FRC Staff for resources and/or assistance)

Guidelines

- Make a commitment; follow through and be dependable
- Knowing and stating your limits clearly
- Respect confidential information
- Contact FRC Staff when you have any questions or concerns about your role
- Accept participants and their families "where they are at"
- Be aware of your biases and how they may interfere with your volunteering
- Listen to what the person is really saying; show genuine respect and caring
- Provide no exchange of money

Mailing List Policy

To keep our constituents informed, all friends, volunteers, and donors of TCC are included in our mailing list. Out of respect for the privacy of our supporters, TCC does not trade, sell, rent, or give away any information from its databases. Names may be removed from the TCC mailing list by request.

Facts about ***Boundaries***

Boundaries:

- Are a combination of attitude, beliefs, behaviors, and expression about the distance and closeness between people.
- Are invisible lines we draw around ourselves to keep others at a safe and comfortable distance and we decide who can and cannot cross those lines.
- Express what we believe about ourselves in relation to others.

Individuality:

- Having individual opinions which are valued
- Asserting yourself
- Expressing your own opinion

Maintaining comfortable boundaries:

- Are you a person who needs to be with others no matter how they act toward you?
- Do you ever feel uncomfortable with people but don't feel strong enough to leave?
- Are there people who make you feel unsafe but you continue to be with them because they are co-workers or family members?

Provide safe boundaries for yourself:

- Decide who you will share your thoughts, feelings, and physical self with and who has to stay away.
- Establishing safe boundaries does not mean opening up and telling everyone everything nor does it mean closing down and not sharing anything.
- Learn to make choices about each situation and each person you come in contact with.

Ways to respond when feeling uncomfortable:

- "I can see this is of interest to you, but I would rather not respond from my personal experiences."
- "I'm not really sure how I feel about that."

Subjects that require you to explore additional information on:

- Determine if the ideas are based on accurate information. If so, correct them.
- Determine the proper assistance and help make the connection or get the necessary information.

Consult outside expertise to deal appropriately with the situation.

Benefits to Volunteer Families

- ❖ Expanding understanding of people with life experiences that differ from our own
 - ❖ Feeling fulfilled by helping others
 - ❖ Fun in sharing family activities with others
 - ❖ Opportunity to contribute in ways that influences systematic change
 - ❖ Dispelling myths and misunderstandings
- ❖ Opportunity to engage your other family members in your volunteer experience
- ❖ Learning from someone whose path you may not have otherwise crossed
- ❖ Joy and pride in supporting and celebrating change in another's life
- ❖ Change in beliefs about poverty and poverty perspectives

Problem Solving and Creative Thinking

Say "NO" when:

- Requests are inappropriate
- Conflict of values exists
- Someone can do it themselves
- Your priorities come first
- Making commitments for other people that they have not agreed to
- Requests don't make sense

How to say "NO":

- As soon as possible
- Be creative when refusing (refer resources)
- Without judgment
- Suggest another option, time, or solution
- Be respectful when you need to say NO

Say "YES" when:

- The request is appropriate
- The request is respectful
- It fits mutual goals
- It is part of your commitment
- It makes sense

A Mentor Is Someone Who:	Roles Mentor's Play:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cares • Knows how to listen • Can be trusted • Is supportive • Withholds judgment • Is encouraging • Identifies strengths • Shows confidence in partner family • Keeps his/her own personal family problems out of the relationship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guide • Cheerleader • Listener • Confidant • Role Model • Self-Esteem booster • Sounding Board • Partner • Trusted teacher • Coach • Visionary • Tutor • Link to other cultures and attitudes

A Tutor is Someone Who:	Roles Tutor's Play:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cares • Is confident • Knows how to listen • Can be trusted • Is encouraging • Identifies strengths • Shows confidence in student 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher • Guide • Coach • Cheerleader • Listener • Role model • Self-Esteem booster

I think I will be a great mentor because:

Things I hope to teach my mentee:

Things I hope to learn from my mentee:

Problem Solving:

- 1) LaDonna and you have been matched for several months. You have become good friends and have a lot of respect for each other. Although your relationship has been pretty good, there are some choices LaDonna makes that you think she could do differently. Lately, LaDonna has been short of money. Her kids have been sick, so she missed a couple of days of work. She doesn't work at a job that provides sick leave. LaDonna asks you to lend her a couple of hundred dollars to meet her rent that is due. She tells you she can give it back to you in two weeks when she gets paid again. The \$200 is not a big deal to you, but should you give LaDonna the money?

- 2) Mary has been employed for three weeks. She likes her job. Mary feels singled out by her supervisor. She has missed 6 days of work because her kids are sick a lot. Mary has had problems with daycare and car problems. Mary is Native American and thinks people don't like her because of her race. Mary tells you she is going to quit her job. Mary needs her job. How could you help Mary do some problem solving?

- 3) Your partner family has been in the habit of asking for you to do favors for her, such as babysitting. You have agreed in the past to help out. However, lately you are beginning to feel taken advantage of-you have a very busy schedule as well. How can you explain to your partner family that you are not willing to continue to baby sit in a way that is not negative or offensive? Keep in mind it has taken awhile to build trust with this family.

Budgeting Exercises

Example 1

Fatuma is 40 years old. She has a language barrier as she speaks French and very little English. She could have been a very successful secretary if English was her first language. She works part time as a food preparer taking home \$600 a month. She takes the bus to work and purchases a monthly bus pass for \$76. Her three children are very good students and have a combined net income of \$900 a month working after school and on weekends. The family's total available income is \$1,500 a month. They occupy a 2-bedroom apartment and rent is \$775 a month. They are overcrowded and need at least a 3-bedroom apartment. The challenge is where can they cut expenses for a 3-bedroom apartment that is over \$1,100 a month.

Expenses Example 1:

Expenses Example 2:

Rent:	\$	Rent:	\$
Food:	\$	Food:	\$
Electricity:	\$	Electricity:	\$
Phone:	\$	Phone:	\$
Transportation:	\$	Transportation:	\$
Car Insurance	\$	Car Insurance	\$
Laundry	\$	Laundry	\$
Clothing	\$	Clothing	\$
Household items:	\$	Household items:	\$
Entertainment:	\$	Entertainment:	\$
Childcare:	\$	Childcare:	\$
Personal Toiletries:	\$	Personal Toiletries:	\$
TOTAL EXPENSES:	\$	TOTAL EXPENSES:	\$

Example 2

Tamara, age 38, works full time at Wells Fargo in the Home Mortgage department. She takes the bus to work (bus pass \$76 per month) and earns \$9.20 an hour. Tamara has 2 children, ages 11 and 6. She also has custody of her niece, age 8. Tamara receives \$437 a month for caring for her niece and her monthly take-home pay is \$1,100 for a total of \$1,537. All three children attend after school programming at the local YMCA at the cost of \$40 per child per week (total childcare cost per month = \$480). She lives in a 2-bedroom apartment that rents for \$780 a month. Is Tamara able to meet her monthly needs?

TIPS FOR TEACHING CHILDREN TO KEEP A POSITIVE ATTITUDE



“In order to have a ‘good life’, youth need to have a positive view of the future. A positive attitude is exceptionally important for children of all ages, and it can be taught as well as reinforced by teachers, parents, and other authority figures in the child’s life. Here are a few ways you can help to teach children to have a positive attitude.

- *Understand the value in your own actions.* Children will watch and copy what you do. Maintaining a positive attitude in your own life is vital if you are to teach others to have a positive attitude.
- *Use “teachable moments.”* These are the often small moments in your own life or in the lives of others when you can help the children see how to overcome adversity and remain positive.
- *Create opportunities.* Do not expect children to sit quietly and listen to a speech on why they should stay positive. Instead, get them involved and active. Allow them to act out situations or respond to situations so that they may learn from them.
- *Have children create an “attitude lesson.”*
 - Describe for them the difference between a person’s overall attitude, which affects how they tend to view people and life, and their current mood, which changes.
 - Ask them to write the name of one person with a positive attitude and one with a negative attitude.
 - Ask them to write down which of these two people they prefer to spend time with. If a student or two are comfortable sharing, have them describe the person and tell why they like spending time with them.
 - Ask them to write down what their own attitudes are usually like.
 - Finally, ask them to write one thing they could change about their attitude to become more positive. Take time over the next few days to speak briefly to each child about what he or she wrote, and let him or her know that you will support the effort to change that aspect of attitude.
- *It is a good idea to teach children how to reframe bad situations in a positive light.* Ask them to think of one thing that makes them feel bad. Then, ask them to reframe it and look for something positive.

Teaching students to keep a positive attitude is the foundation for other character lessons for children and will have a meaningful effect on their lives in the long run.

(1997). *Teaching a Positive Attitude*. Minneapolis: Search Institute. <http://www.wiseskills.com/>



The Butterfly

A man found a cocoon of a butterfly. One day, a small opening appeared. He sat and watched the butterfly for several hours as it struggled to force its body through the little hole. Then it seemed to stop making any progress. It appears it had gotten as far as it could, and it could not go any further. So, the man decided to help the butterfly. He took a pair of scissors and snipped off the remaining bit of cocoon. The butterfly then emerged easily, but it had a swollen body and small shriveled wings. The man continued to watch the butterfly because he expected that, at any moment, the wings would enlarge and expand to be able to support the body, which would contract in time. Neither happened! In fact, the butterfly spent the rest of its life crawling around with a swollen body and shriveled wings. It was never able to fly.

What the man, in kindness and haste, did not understand was that the restricting cocoon and the struggle required for the butterfly to get through the tiny opening were nature's way of forcing fluid from the body of the butterfly into its wings so that it would be ready for flight once it achieved its freedom from the cocoon.

Sometimes struggles are exactly what we need in our lives. If we were allowed to go through life without any obstacles, it would cripple us. We would not be as strong as what we could have been. We could never fly.

I asked for strength...

I was given difficulties to make me strong

I asked for wisdom...

I was given problems to solve

I asked for prosperity...

I was given a brain and brawn to work

I asked for courage...

I was given danger to overcome

I asked for love...

I was given troubled people to help

I asked for favors...

I was given opportunities

I received nothing I wanted...

I received everything I needed.

DATE: _____

Volunteer Training Evaluation

1. What areas of discussion (activities) were most helpful?

2. What was the least helpful?

3. Did you find this training location:

Inconvenient Workable Convenient

4. Did you find this training date and time:

Day: *Inconvenient Workable Convenient*

Time: *Inconvenient Workable Convenient*

5. Did you find this training:

Too long Too short About right

6. What change(s) would you make to this training?

7. Is there additional information you would like to learn from us? If so, what might that be?

Thank you for attending TCC Training and Orientation!