



Intern/Volunteer Handbook

1515 E. 3300 S.

Millcreek, Utah 84106

(385) 420.4991

thesammycenter@gmail.com | thesammycenter.com

The Sammy Center is a 501(c)3 nonprofit
Fostering Preschool Age Children's Social Emotional Well-Being

WHY WE NEED INTERNS/VOLUNTEERS

The Sammy Center was created to foster preschool children's social and emotional well-being. Some children may experience stressful situations, grief, trauma, or loss, others may have an identified or unidentified diagnosis. In either situation their circumstances may affect their behavior. These behaviors may make it difficult, or even impossible, to be in a typical preschool program. The Sammy Center is a special place for children, to help build them up in order for them to move through hardships and be successful. This handbook will outline the things you need to know to be an effective intern/volunteer and build an understanding of the way our center operates.

We have a very low child to adult ratio, with no more than 4 to 5 children to one teacher, and our highly skilled and trained staff create and maintain a safe, responsive, caring and fun environment. However, there are times when the teachers need to focus on one child, or need an extra set of hands to do activity, and that is where our volunteers come in!

INTERN/VOLUNTEER POLICIES

Interns/Volunteers are vital to our success and are seen as valuable resources for our program. The Intern/Volunteer Policy Handbook outlines ways that interns/volunteers can support the wonderful children and fabulous teachers at The Sammy Center. The purpose of these policies is to provide overall guidance and direction to engage involvement and summarize expectations. The following are important aspects of our volunteer program:

1. All interns/volunteers must work with our Executive Director who oversees all things inter/volunteer. All interns/volunteers that work directly with children on a regular basis must also complete Background Criminal Investigation as required from Child Care Licensing.

2. All interns/volunteers can expect to be treated with respect and have meaningful experiences during their inter/volunteer hours. Examples of these activities are found in the *What to Expect When You are Interning/Volunteering* section of this document. In return, interns/volunteers are expected to perform activities requested by teachers or administration. If there are concerns regarding duties, these concerns should be addressed in private, away from children and parents.
3. The program accepts the service of interns/volunteers with the understanding that such service is at the sole discretion of the program. Interns/Volunteers agree that the program at any time, or for whatever reason, can decide to terminate the intern/volunteer relationship. The intern/volunteer may also, at any time or for any reason, sever their relationship with the program. Notice of such a decision by either party must be communicated in a timely way in order to ensure continuation of program support.

INTERN/VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES

Interns/Volunteers are a direct reflection on The Sammy Center. The following are the volunteer responsibilities:

1. It is your responsibility to maintain confidentiality. Do not share names of children or parents with those outside of the program or on social media.
2. It is your responsibility to present a good image. Appropriate dress includes shirts that cover the mid-section and have appropriate logos/messages, and shorts or skirts that allow for active play with the children and are not too revealing. Appropriate language around the children and parents includes not using vulgar/suggestive language or swearing.
3. It is your responsibility to act in a professional manner. Be on time for your volunteer shift. If you are going to be late, or are unable to attend a scheduled shift, let the director know as soon as possible. Do not use your cell phone during volunteer hours.

WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU ARE INTERNING/VOLUNTEERING - BEHAVIORS

The children at The Sammy Center all have specific challenges that are being addressed at all times. You will see these behaviors, and there are certain things that volunteers may and may not in regards to interactions with the children. The following are five vital rules to remember:

1. The teachers and administrators are the experts on the children at The Sammy Center, and their direction regarding the children should be followed at all times.
2. If a child has minor difficulty you may use positive guidance techniques such as redirection or choices to help the child regain composure. If the child begins to exhibit more challenging behavior, get a teacher or administrator to deal with the child. It is never your role or responsibility to discipline a child physically or verbally.
3. It is the responsibility of the staff to talk to parents about the children. Do not talk to the parents beyond friendly greetings.
4. If children approach you and want a hug or to sit on your lap that is okay as long as other adults are in the space.
5. Your interactions with the children are helping them to develop social and emotional skills. When children are showing challenging behaviors, it is sometimes difficult to remain positive. If you need a break during your volunteer shift please let one of the staff know. Being positive and nurturing is the most important thing you can do to be an effective volunteer!

WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU ARE INTERNING/VOLUNTEERING - ACTIVITIES

There are many aspects of running an effective program, and here are some of the things you may be asked to do when volunteering:

- Read a story
- Play with the children in learning centers
- Help with a small group activity

- Help with snack or lunch
- Minor cleaning duties
- Assist with school projects directed and guided by admin
- Specific projects that meet goals (interns)

Volunteers often have great ideas we haven't thought of! If you have ideas you would like to try with the children, coordinate with the teachers.

Thank you for your willingness to share your time and talents with the staff and families at The Sammy Center! Please read and sign the statement below so you can begin your volunteer adventure with us!

I understand and will abide by the policies outlined in The Sammy Center Volunteer Policy Handbook

PUNCTUALITY AND ATTENDANCE

Interns/volunteers are vital to our program. When a schedule is determined it is very important to adhere to that schedule as you will be counted in ratio. If you are unable to keep your shift you will be required to let the Executive Director know immediately. If persistent absences occur you may be asked to terminate your internship.

Signature _____

Date _____