

UNITED WAY DAY OF CARING

CREATING GREAT GROUP PROJECTS - TIPS FOR HOST ORGANIZATIONS

Start with the assumption that volunteers want to do meaningful work, and that they will work hard for a good cause.

The opportunity to engage volunteers at a deeper level increase when those volunteers are challenged to do more. When they do more, and truly connect with your agency, you improve the chances of earning a life-long giver/volunteer. That's a WIN-WIN situation.

1. Walk your facilities twice, and take a buddy.

- On the first walk, focus on what you see at eye level. Have your partner look as well, and jot down all the potential things that might be done at/to your facility. Keep the ideas flowing, and don't stop to evaluate whether or not the ideas are good/bad; you can always decide that out later.

What can be renewed, refreshed, organized, brightened, changed, or enhanced?

- On the second walk, focus on the highest and lowest points in each room and area. What do you see?

When you look at the lowest points, you sometimes pick up on things our youngest clients may see. When you look up, you catch the everyday items you might have missed.

2. Keep an on-going "wish list". Don't be afraid to include items that require special skills such as assembling furniture, electrical or plumbing jobs, computer setup, gardening, medical outreach services, photography, cooking, interior design, graphic design, etc. Many volunteers come with special skills and interests – you might be surprised!

Some ideas:

Construction

- Assemble a playground
- Assemble furniture
- Plumbing/electrical
- Build/install shelves
- Build porch/deck/etc.
- Build a wheelchair ramp
- Build or repair a fence
- Build benches
- Install/Remove old carpet

Administrative

- Data entry
- Research via Internet

3. What activities might volunteers assist with that provide direct client contact? How might the clients benefit from interacting with volunteers? Some ideas:

- Friendly visiting
- Playing games
- Reading with children
- Prepare/Deliver lunches to clients
- Install carbon dioxide or smoke detectors

4. Imagine you could volunteer at your agency for the day. If you had the time, what project would you do? Some ideas:

Painting

- Walls
- Trim and doors
- Deck and porch
- Outdoor concrete floors
- Murals
- Window sills
- Blacktop maps and games
- Props
- Repaint parking lot lines

Cleaning/Organizing

- Inventory and organize food pantry/storage closet

Administrative

- Bulk mailing
- Shred old files
- Stuff envelopes or newsletters

Landscaping

- Mulch
- Weed flower beds
- Create new flower beds
- Plant grass seed
- Prune bushes/trees
- Plant flowers
- River/stream clean up
- Trail building/cleaning
- Rake leaves
- Mow grass
- Trim trees and bushes

Indoor Projects

- Make lap blankets
- Wrap Packages
- Read to clients
- Spring Cleaning

Don't be afraid to ask for too much - it's easier to pare down a project than to add to it!
If you need some help to IMAGINEER a project, please reach out to us!