

Volunteering Information Pack

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Welcome!

This information pack is for anyone who wants to know more about volunteering and may be considering getting involved in the work of the Parenting Project. We are always looking for committed people to support us in our work by giving a few hours a week to help with a group, in the office or with families one-to-one.

Sometimes people are unsure about what volunteering might involve or whether it is suited to them, so we hope that this pack will help answer some of your questions.

If after reading this you have decided you would like to become a volunteer, or if you have more questions to ask, call the number on the back and speak to, the Volunteer Co-ordinator, who will be happy to have a chat with you.



**You can make a difference...
to the issues you care
about - just by giving
a bit of your time.**

Why Volunteer?

We asked some of our volunteers to tell us why they decided to become volunteers - here are some of their reasons:

"Needing a focus-giving some of my experience"

"To meet new people and to help the community"

"To learn new skills and help other people"

"Helping people with problems-especially families with young kids"

"Giving something back"

"Opportunity to get out the house and open doors to new opportunities"

"Gain more experience and improve my self-confidence"

Whatever your reasons, volunteering is a great way of meeting new people, building your confidence, improving your CV with new skills and really making a difference.

There is also plenty of evidence to suggest that volunteering helps to improve your health, boost your career options and makes you happier!

How Important Volunteering is!

The Parenting Project works with families in the Stratford District who have children from 0 to 19. We offer families support through parenting courses, one-to-one support in the home and information on all aspects of parenting. For families with children under five, we offer early learning, family health and Job centre plus services at our Children's Centres.

This is where you can get involved!

Volunteers are incredibly valuable to many organisations who rely on their support in carrying out roles and tasks that cannot be covered fully by paid staff. Many organisations have no paid staff and rely solely on volunteers to carry out their work. Volunteering is not only valuable to individual organisations, but also makes a difference on a larger scale to the UK's economy: 17.9 million formal volunteers contributed approximately 1.9 billion hours equivalent to one million full-time workers, a contribution worth £22.5 billion (Home Office Citizenship Survey: People, Families and Communities).

Story of two volunteers:

This is Jen's story who volunteered with us before joining the staff team as Outreach Play Worker this year:

"When my son started school it coincided with the setting up of the Children's Centre Stay and Play groups and I was asked if I would be interested in helping out. I was very keen but unsure that it was something I could do, but someone was needed to welcome families and I decided I would give it a go. I loved it! I spent one year working with the Stay and Play group, then the next with Chatter Matters, and the Play House. As the time has gone I was encouraged to do more and try new things, surprising even myself at times in my ability to give it a go! Volunteering has literally changed my life.

Through my voluntary work I was keen to help make a difference in others lives, I had no idea it would actually make such a difference to mine! I have never had the opportunity to explore where my interests may lie where work is concerned. I had been to college in the evenings which I suppose was starting me off down this road, however volunteering has given me invaluable experience and the opportunity to learn at my own pace. Learning on the job I suppose, with nothing to lose. The staff at the Parenting Project have been so supportive, keen to hear my opinion, very encouraging, and have always believed in me. They have given me so many opportunities to learn and better myself, to pursue what interests me. I thank them all so much for this."

This is Lynn's story who supports Studley & District Children's Centre:

"Having brought up my own children and been involved with young children for a number of years I am never happier than when I am up to my eyes in playdoh, sand, glue etc. The Children's Centre gave me the perfect opportunity to do what I enjoy the most. Children are our future, so by being a part of the centre allows me to also to help the future outcomes of these families. I enjoy the company of young children and their parents and one of the things I hope I do is reassure parents that they are doing a great job. As a volunteer I have the opportunity to increase my skills level through various training courses offered, however feel no pressure if you are unable to participate. I fit my volunteering in around my other commitments and can do as much or as little as my free time allows. I enjoy the feeling that by engaging in my community I am making a positive contribution. Everyone at the Children's Centre makes me feel a valued team member".

Who would make a good Volunteer?

Anyone could be a good volunteer as we all have different experiences and skills to share, and we all have something we are good at! Volunteering is something that everyone can do.

We are looking for people who:

- Are any age over 18, male or female
- Are able to be committed to a role, be available at the agreed times and meet requirements of their role
- Have experience of being a parent and/or would enjoy working with parents, carers and children
- Are able to follow guidelines on confidentiality and child protection
- Would be willing to do a Criminal Records Bureau Check (CRB) and provide two names for a reference
- Have a non-judgemental attitude and do not discriminate against others
- Are open, friendly and honest

All volunteers receive:

- Full support from your allocated supervisor and the Volunteer Co-ordinator
- An ID badge & Volunteer T-Shirt
- Invitations to team meetings
- Free training courses relevant to your role
- Induction training covering the essential elements of child protection, health & safety, confidentiality, and the background to Children's Centres
- All out-of-pocket expenses paid (including travel)
- Invitations to social events e.g. Christmas party, coffee and cake mornings
- A copy of the volunteer newsletter every term and the opportunity to make a contribution by sharing your experiences

Before starting with us...

All volunteers are asked to complete a number of forms, regardless of their role or previous experience.

These include:

- Application Form
- Criminal Records Bureau Check (CBR)
- A confidential Health Questionnaire
- Common Cord Induction Pack

Just some of the roles...

All our Volunteering roles have a role description outlining the specific tasks, responsibilities and hours needed.

- Befriending
- Meet & Play assistant
- Breast feeding café helper
- Parenting workshop assistant
- Reception & office assistant

Contact the office on:

www.parentingproject.org.uk

The Parenting Project
Tel: 01789 266 624
Charity Registered No. 1125291

Our Funders:



SureStart

Quality Marks:



Warwickshire Award for Involvement 

Check our website for Centre timetables and information:

www.parentingproject.org.uk