Nuts and Bolts of Building a Volunteer and a Peer Support Program

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Using Volunteers in Independent Living

- There are a number of uses for volunteers at Independent Living Centers
  - Peer Support
  - Internships/Work Experience
  - Events/Activities sponsored by the IL Center
  - Advocacy Activities
  - Volunteer Drivers
5 Things to Think About When Using Volunteers

• 1. Training
• 2. Staff Time
• 3. Goal(s)
• 4. Recruitment Plan
• 5. Connecting People
Training of Volunteers

• The purpose for using volunteers should dictate the training needs
  • Peer Support – Training persons with disabilities to be mentors
  • Work Experience – Training on IL history and philosophy
  • Events/Activities – Training on planning, marketing, coordination, and working with persons with disabilities (disability etiquette)
  • Advocacy – Contacting legislators, meeting with legislators or policy makers
  • Volunteer Driver (CILWWs New Freedom Program – Training on transporting persons with disabilities
Staff Time Needed

• Consider how much staff time is needed!
  • Coordination of programs/activities
  • Outreach activities
  • Recruitment
  • Training
  • Conducting background checks! Could be a requirement if volunteers are working with or around vulnerable persons.
Goal(s) for Volunteers

• What do you need volunteers for? Have specific goals!
  • If it’s peer support, what are you going to use volunteers for?
    • One on One matches, Group Activities
  • If it’s a work experience/internships, what are they going to be doing?
    • Specific job duties and learning objectives
  • If it’s an event or activity, what are the volunteers going to be doing?
    • Have specific tasks that need to be done, such as planning, coordination, registration
  • If it’s advocacy, what do volunteers need to know and act on?
    • Educate persons on the legislation or issues they advocating for and what to do with that information
  • If it’s volunteer drivers, who will they be transporting and why?
    • What need or gap in services are you trying to fill?
Recruitment Plan

• How are you going to recruit volunteers? This will take time and effort!!!
  • Social Media
  • Newsletter
  • Newspapers
  • Hanging up flyers in the community
  • Radio or Television
Connecting People

• Now that you’ve identified the need for volunteers, and recruited and trained them, it’s time to connect people.

• When it comes to peer support, volunteers want to be needed!
  • Don’t train them then not use them!

• Volunteers play a vital role in connecting people to one another and the community.
Resources

Examples of volunteer program applications

• CILWW Driver Application
  • Included with workshop materials

• Stepping Stones of Dunn County
  • Stepping Stones volunteer application

• United Way
  • United Way volunteer applicatoin
Questions

• What more do you want to know and learn about using volunteers in Independent Living?