



Volunteer Recruitment and People with Cognitive Disabilities

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For far too long, people with cognitive and developmental disabilities were not encouraged or expected to participate in many aspects of community life. The chance for involvement in volunteer opportunities tended to be as a recipient of volunteer “services” rather than as a participant.

Thankfully, times are changing and many people with developmental and cognitive disabilities have demonstrated their ability to function actively as valued members of organizations which utilize volunteers.

The following five documents were created to introduce the concept of volunteering to people with cognitive or developmental disabilities and to encourage the development of volunteer placements.

What Does It Mean To Be A Volunteer?

This document provides clear information about what volunteers do and why a person may want to become a volunteer.

Questions You May Have About Volunteering

This document includes basic questions and answers about being a volunteer. Topics such as whether volunteers are paid, and how to end or change a volunteer placement, are discussed.

My Talents and Gifts

These lists were created to encourage potential volunteers to think about what activities they enjoy doing and feel they do well.

** Suggested uses include having a friend or mentor fill out his or her own list of talents and gifts and using his or her knowledge of the potential volunteer to guide a discussion.*

Community Service Interest Inventory

This inventory provides categories of fairly traditional volunteer opportunities that potential volunteers would check if interested.

** Suggested uses include having a friend or mentor available to go through the checklist with the potential volunteer. The use of pictures of people doing the tasks may also be helpful.*

Possible Volunteer Sites in My Community

This simple template provides a place for a potential volunteer to list locations in his or her community where he or she might want to explore volunteering opportunities.