

Volunteer Handbook



2550 Roslyn Street
Denver, CO 80238
303-377-9732
[www. anchorcenter.org](http://www.anchorcenter.org)

ANCHOR CENTER FOR BLIND CHILDREN

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Anchor Center for Blind Children is to teach visually impaired infants, young children and their families, providing hope and a nurturing environment where children reach their highest potential.

VISION STATEMENT

Anchor Center for Blind Children sets the standard as a nationally recognized leader in early developmental, educational and support services for young visually impaired children, their families and the professionals who serve them.

[Take a virtual tour of our building!](#)

[Orientation Power Point Document](#)





Dear Anchor Center Volunteer,

Welcome to Anchor Center for Blind Children! As a volunteer you are part of a team of staff, board members, and volunteers working together to provide developmental education services to children with visual impairments and their families. Volunteers play an important role in assuring that our organizational goals are being met.

This Anchor Center for Blind Children Volunteer Handbook will introduce you to our organization, volunteer opportunities, and our expectations of you as a volunteer. You are encouraged to familiarize yourself with the contents, as it will assist you in your volunteer duties. It is a helpful guide, but please never hesitate to ask for additional information, clarification or support.

We appreciate the commitment you make by joining our team. Anchor Center relies on the support and dedication of people like you to continue to provide quality services to children with visual impairments. Thank you, and we hope your volunteer experience will be enjoyable and rewarding.

Sincerely,

Meghan

Meghan Klassen
Executive Director



HISTORY & PROGRAMS

Founded in 1982 by a librarian for the blind and alumnae from the Delta Gamma Fraternity, Anchor Center for Blind Children has helped hundreds of children and their families learn how to live with a vision impairment, meet critical early developmental goals and lead full, productive lives.

Anchor Center is the only privately funded organization in Colorado (and one of only a few nationwide) that provides developmental education services to children from birth to age 5 who are blind, visually impaired and deafblind. Our new teaching facility at Stapleton, constructed in 2007, is a national model for teaching very young blind children.

Anchor Center offers Infant, Toddler, Preschool, Home Visits, Family Support, Eye Clinic, and Rural Outreach Programs. The staff includes teachers of students with visual impaired and Early Childhood Special Education Teachers; speech, occupational, physical, music, and horticultural therapists; a family services director; developmental psychology specialist; and teaching assistants.

[Organizational Chart Document Link](#)

[School and Volunteer Calendar Document Link](#)

Volunteer Policies & Procedures

As part of a team that provides a safe and happy environment for children with limited vision, there are requirements and expectations of all staff and volunteers. We want your volunteer experience to be rewarding for you and our families, so please review this section carefully. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Volunteer Program Manager. **Our Volunteer Authorization, Waiver and Release Form, Confidentiality and COVID agreements are apart of your initial Volgistics application.**

BACKGROUND CHECKS

Safety of the children is a vital and primary concern. For the protection of our students and their families, we require all weekly and monthly volunteers working in the building or with the children to be fingerprinted and consent to a criminal background check (this is also required of all Anchor Center staff). The cost of processing this paperwork is not insignificant, given the number of volunteers supporting Anchor Center. Thus, we request that volunteers make a tax-deductible donation to help defray these expenses; the suggested donation is \$42.50, or any amount the volunteer is able to contribute. *Inability to make a donation will not affect the processing of a volunteer's application.* . Contact the Volunteer Manager if cost is a concern.

CONFIDENTIALITY REQUIREMENTS

Confidentiality is a critical part of our program. If you are a weekly or monthly volunteers you are required to sign a confidentiality form. No information is ever shared without parents' permission. This includes discussion of medical diagnoses and family issues. Anything you see, hear, or read, or anything you already know about a child or their family, must be kept confidential. Volunteers under age 18 will also need a signature of understanding from their parent or guardian.

VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION AND TRAINING

You will be asked to attend a 1-hour orientation which will include a tour, an overview Anchor Center's mission and programs as well as a summary of policies and procedures of the volunteer program. Orientations are scheduled as needed either in groups or individually.

If you will be working with Anchor students we will provide training before your first day on how to work with children with visual impairment. This will be done either through video or in a group setting. If volunteering with students then the training will be individually scheduled with you and most likely occur on the job.

WORKING WITH CHILDREN

If you are a volunteer who will be working with children we have some additional policies that we require.

Safety

No child (including siblings of students) should ever be left un-supervised by a volunteer or staff member. If a child is injured please notify a staff member as quickly as possible.

Bathroom Policies for Students

If you are working with a child or baby that requires a diaper change please notify a staff member.

Bathroom Policies for Siblings

If a sibling needs to go to the bathroom, or have a diaper change please notify your supervisor or office manager on duty

Termination and notification of ending volunteer duties

If circumstances change and you can no longer complete your committed volunteering duties, please provide 2 weeks notice

[COVID Waiver and Release Document \(this is stated in Volgistics Application\)](#)

Volunteer Policies & Procedures...continued

Sign-in and Time Records

Recording volunteer hours is important for the success of our grant application and reporting process. A volunteer sign-in station located in the workroom. Please be sure that you sign in whenever you come to Anchor Center to volunteer and that you sign out when you leave. We rely on your assistance in keeping these records up-to-date and accurate.

Name Badges

You will be asked to wear a name tag identifying your role as a volunteer, as a helpful guide for our families. Your name tag can be found in the volunteer nametag box located in the volunteer manager's office/ Your nametag will be found BEHIND the tab with the first letter of your last name. Always remember to return your name tag when done.

Dress Code

Volunteers, like staff, are representatives of Anchor Center and are expected to adhere to the dress code that reflects our professionalism. We request that all staff and volunteers dress in clothing that is appropriate for the work being done. Classroom clothing should be comfortable and washable.

The following are inappropriate: short shorts; tee-shirts with writing; spaghetti straps, low cut tops or low rise jeans. Smocks and aprons are available to help preserve your clothing.

No Perfumes, Strong Scents or Gum

We request that you not wear perfume or strong scents, as the children are sensitive to them. Gum is also a distraction to our children and staff.

No Gum

Chewing gum can be a distraction to both our children and staff.

Cell Phones

If you are working with children please turn your cell phone off (not on vibrate). If you are not working with children please have your cell phones either off or on vibrate.

Parking

We ask that staff and volunteers park on Roslyn St. rather than our parking lot since we like to keep this lot open for our parents and other Anchor Center guests. However if you have a condition that requires you park closer to the building then you are welcome to use the parking lot.

ATTENDANCE AND SCHEDULING

Canceling/Rescheduling a Shift

If you cannot make your regular shift please notify your supervisor as soon as you know you are unable to come. At least 24 hours' notice is preferred. Please refer to your job description to see specifics on who and how (email, phone or both) you should contact relating attendance.

After 3 no-shows (and not canceling either via phone or email) we will have a private meeting to discuss your commitment. You can manage your schedule via [VOLGISTICS](#) and your newly create [VICNET ACCOUNT](#).

Sick or injured?

If there is any possibility of you being sick or injured please cancel your volunteer shift...we rather you take care of yourself than put a strain on yourself and possibly infect others at Anchor Center.

Anchor Center Off Days

You have been given a school calendar which notify's you of school breaks, holidays and closures. If you are scheduled for a day that Anchor Center is marked closed please confirm with our Volunteer Manager. If school is closed due to weather it will be posted and you should check our Website, Facebook Page, 9 news and/or call our mainline for Voicemail updates.

Volunteer Rights

As a volunteer at Anchor Center for Blind Children, I have the right:

- ✓ To be offered the opportunity to be a volunteer.
- ✓ To be placed in worthwhile and meaningful volunteer jobs which utilize my skills, experience, capabilities, and interests.
- ✓ To receive appropriate orientation, training, and supervision to do my job.
- ✓ To receive a clear job description and have a good understanding of my role and responsibilities.
- ✓ To have my time used effectively and efficiently.
- ✓ To be given information, guidance, and support in a work environment that encourages creativity and productivity.
- ✓ To be heard and receive responses to questions, suggestions, and concerns.
- ✓ To be given constructive and regular feedback.
- ✓ To receive respect and appreciation for my efforts and contributions.



Volunteer Responsibilities

As a volunteer at Anchor Center for Blind Children, I have the responsibility:

- ✓ To consider my volunteer work a serious, professional commitment and view my position as valid and important.
- ✓ To understand and fulfill commitments of time and tasks.
- ✓ To honor the mission, vision, and goals of Anchor Center for Blind Children.
- ✓ To hold as confidential all personal information about the children and families served by Anchor Center.
- ✓ To bring an attitude of open-mindedness and flexibility to my work.
- ✓ To do the best job I can by bringing my interests, skills, and attention to my work and by taking advantage of the tools, training, and information available to assist with the job.
- ✓ To provide Anchor Center with adequate notice before leaving my position or beginning a leave of absence.
- ✓ To stay in good communication with my supervisor and the volunteer manager.
- ✓ To act as a member of the team when working with other volunteers and staff.

IMPORTANT POLICIES FOR VOLUNTEERS

Conflict of Interest Policy

All volunteers are required to maintain the highest level of integrity and objectivity in the performance of their assignments. They are required to avoid any conflict of interest between their own individual interests/ personal gain and the interests of Anchor Center, and to disclose any situations where they have an interest in or any relationship to a transaction involving Anchor Center.

If you have questions about the applicability of this policy to any situation, please ask the Executive Director or Volunteer Coordinator.

Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Policy

All volunteers of Anchor Center are required to follow specified procedures if they see evidence of or suspect abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, or emotional abuse of a child served by Anchor Center. As a volunteer, if a child receiving services discloses to you or you suspect abuse or neglect by a family member, third party, or Anchor Center employee or volunteer, you should report that information to a staff member immediately. The staff member will then follow the specified procedures for reporting the information. If you feel that action has not been taken, please contact the Executive Director or Volunteer Coordinator.

Updated 01282020

Safely and Security

Anchor Center desires to provide a safe volunteer environment. Volunteers are responsible for using the following common-sense suggestions to help ensure a safe environment:

1. Be aware of any unknown person who comes into your area and is not accompanied by a staff member.
2. Never leave your purse, wallet, or other valuable items out. Keep these items out of sight and secure in the “volunteer storage” area. Anchor Center is not responsible for lost or stolen personal property. Anchor Center will not reimburse a volunteer for any personal property which disappears from a volunteer site.
3. Keep your car locked and items of value hidden.
4. Participate in Emergency Drills, and be aware of our Emergency Procedures.
5. Know your exits.
6. Upon arrival use your volunteer door code and make sure to sign in the lobby guest book as well as your Volgistics volunteer account.

[Emergency & Drill Procedures Document Link](#)

Non-Discrimination Policy

Anchor Center deeply values its community of volunteers and network of partnering organizations, including the charities, schools, associations, businesses, and faith-based organizations that participate in our volunteer programs. We are committed to creating a friendly environment where each individual is welcomed and respected.

We believe that no person should be excluded from agency services, employment, or volunteer participation on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or military status, or for any other discriminatory reason. Accordingly, we will not knowingly refer volunteers to organizations that engage in unlawful discriminatory practices.

Anchor Center is expressly nonpolitical and is not aligned with any political party, creed, organization, or movement. Anchor Center will not knowingly refer volunteers, or otherwise provide resources to, any organization whose purpose is primarily or substantially political in nature.

Anchor Center is not aligned with any religious belief. We invite faith-based organizations to participate in our volunteer programs so long as they meet our nonprofit partner eligibility criteria and fulfill a strictly charitable purpose. Anchor Center will not knowingly refer volunteers, or otherwise provide resources to, any organization whose purpose is to use that support for the purpose of religious proselytizing.

Anchor Center does not and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or military status, in any of its activities or operations. These activities include, but are not limited to, the appointment to and termination from its Board of Directors, hiring and firing of staff or contractors, selection of volunteers (both for Anchor Center and through referrals to partnering organizations), selection of vendors, and providing of services.

Anchor Center is an equal opportunity employer. We shall not discriminate and will not discriminate in employment, recruitment, Board membership, advertisements for employment, compensation, termination, upgrading, promotions, and other conditions of employment against any employee or job applicant on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or military status, or for any other discriminatory reason.

We are committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all volunteers, partners, staff, contractors, and Board members. We endeavor to create a diverse Board of Directors. We aim to build relationships with a wide spectrum of partner organizations and charitable causes as we work to promote and activate volunteers to do good in our community.

Tips for Volunteers

As a **volunteer** you are an important member of the team. Your involvement will range from working one on one with a child, assisting with group activities, or implementing behavior management programs. If for some reason there are too many adults in the classroom, we may ask you to help in other areas of Anchor Center.

Two of our **most important goals** for the children are:

1. **To encourage independence**
2. **To foster peer relationships**

It is important to constantly keep these goals at the forefront of our interactions with the children. The daily schedule is designed to provide opportunities for the children to make decisions and to interact with their classmates. Please adhere to the plan and allow the children to do as much for themselves as possible. They will require time to do their best.

There will be **a staff member present at all times in the classroom**, so you will never be left alone with a child. If you are concerned about a child's health or behavior, please alert the staff immediately.

QUIET is key! Children with visual impairments need to hear only one adult speak at a time. This is the most difficult thing we all have to learn and do - and requires constant reinforcement. For those of us with voices that seem to carry, it's even harder. Remember, it is not personal if someone reminds you to talk softly.

Tips for Volunteers...continued

Greet a child by name and tell him or her who you are. Talk to the children at their level—squat down and meet them eye to eye. Use a child's name rather than “you” so that he/she can respond. “You” may be confusing to a child, as he/she cannot distinguish which “you” you are talking to. You can help a child “see” by describing everything, including colors.

Let the child **follow your lead**, preferably by voice. Do not push from behind. Patience is important. Children with vision impairments may take longer to put on their coats, wash their hands, and do other tasks.

Please **ask permission** before taking a child's hand or touching him or her. Please respect that a child may not want to have you take his/her hand. It is important for a child to have a verbal cue before you take a hand. Let him/her know you are there.

Please establish **appropriate boundaries** with the children and their families. Over involvement with any child or family may not be in their best interests. If you are uncertain, please ask.

Patience is essential. Give the child extra time to respond to your question or direction. Remember: “Children are children.”

It's a myth that children with visual impairments require us to use louder, more exaggerated language and be harsher than with other children when disciplining. **Treating a child with respect has been our most successful tool.**

Tips for Volunteers...continued

If you **have questions about** why something is being done in a certain way, please ask—but only after the children have gone. The therapists and teachers need to maintain focus and attention on the children and activities. Interruptions from others must be kept to a minimum during classroom time.

Keeping Anchor Center children and families, staff, and volunteers healthy is a key aspect of creating a safe environment for children. Anchor Center is a **smoke free facility**. Please **do not come to volunteer if you are ill**. You need to take care of yourself and we need to protect the children, many of whom are very susceptible to illnesses. **Wash your hands as often as necessary**. This is the single most important thing each of us can do to prevent the spread of germs and illness. If you wipe a child's nose, change diapers, or touch something that may be “dirty,” please take a minute to wash your hands.

Anchor Center was founded because **children with blindness learn in different ways than sighted children**, and both their learning environment and activities need to be adapted to their unique needs. Without the specialized services from Anchor Center, blind children will fall behind in all areas of development. All of the programs offered at Anchor Center teach independence and provide the educational foundation needed for children with vision impairments to be successful in life.



Top 10 things to remember when working with children who are visually impaired

Melinda Doyle-McCall, PT

1. Slow down! It takes much more time to process all information without vision. Repetition is key; don't feel like you need to have novel things to do or novel toys to present. Doing the same thing with the same materials over and over is much more effective.
2. Always tell the child what is going to happen next- using simple language and a tactile prompt (i.e. : say "up" as you touch them under their arms and cue them they are about to be picked up)
3. Provide boundaries-start small and gradually make the space larger and larger
4. Use materials that are easy to process: high contrast, simple, shiny/reflective; have a movement component; one or two senses at a time versus a multisensory toy. (examples: Slinkys, Mylar paper, mardigras beads, bells, chimes, light up balls (no sound; simple rattles, musical instruments like a keyboard or tambourine). *Also-try to find toys or everyday objects with a variety of tactile and proprioceptive properties: wood, metal, things with weight, things with a vibration component.
5. Whenever possible, set up the environment and allow the child to explore and move with minimal facilitation (i.e. sitting in the laundry basket, rolling down an incline, propping up hips to encourage hand to foot play).
6. Present materials at the feet first or on the child's body until they become more familiar.
7. When helping a child feel something be sure to start with a hand under hand (or hand under foot) approach: you can say- "let's do it together" or "hop on my hands"
8. Children with vision impairment tend to need more movement input than sighted children. Make vestibular play a part of every therapy session.
9. It is OK and probably necessary to work on motor skills out of sequence: may do walking in a walker before working on mobility via belly scooting or creeping in order to help the child understand distance and space in a less challenging position.
10. Using music and singing can help children with vision impairment stay more organized and be less anxious about moving. Make up songs and/or talk about what they are doing to reinforce language concepts. Children with vision impairment learn through doing so labeling actions, prepositions and adverbs... as you work with them is very important.

10 Basic Principles of Active Learning

These are not the only “10 Basic Principles” but they give a good idea of what Active Learning is about. The role of the adult is a facilitator, providing the environment, making sure toys are accessible to the learner’s hands and feet, and not involved in the act of playing until the end or invited.

1. Every One Can Learn

Lilli has met a very few learners that could not learn – they were dying. Unless impacted by survival, every child and older learner can learn. It is up to the parent, therapist or educator to keep finding the right situation/environment with enough support, responsiveness and interest to engage the learner.

2. Active Learning is Hands Off

Challenged learners often act passive and are treated as passive (everything is done for them). Active Learning involves creating supportive and responsive environments that are tuned to entice a learner to become active. When Lilli realized that blind and disabled learners often resisted any “guided hands” approach, she set about to create environments and situations that would increase a learner’s inclination to explore on their own. This means the “teacher” must disengage and not talk nor prompt until the activity is concluded. Kids learn through repetition (see #8)- don’t interrupt them.

3. Auditory and Tactile Primacy

Learners with vision impairments and neurological deficits rely upon hearing as a primary sense. Vision tends to be secondary, owing to control and processing difficulties. Tactile sense is also a prominent sense.

4. Responsive Environment, Short Sessions

The environment should provide excellent auditory and tactile feedback (not just stimulation). Use of the Resonance Board provides key vibratory input. The Esfef Board provides optimal reaction to leg movements. The Little Room provides a warm inviting echo and exploration chamber. As Lilli says, “if the child cannot go to the room, the room must come to the child.” Many short sessions are better than one long one, especially when first using an environment.

5. Mix Variety and Constancy, Provide Comparisons

As anyone does, a learner benefits from moderated variety. That is, don’t change everything every time, but provide enough variation so that the environment has interest. Also, provide “alike but different” objects to invite comparison. Cycling through a large inventory of objects/toys allows for a rich, constantly interesting environment. Change some of the objects whenever the learner shows habituation to the objects available.

6. Work up to Weight Bearing

Given the discomfort of bearing weight, provide support until the learner has some control, and slowly increase the weight load. The Support Bench and HOPSA Dress are used to control weight on the legs. Start with no weight, toes barely touching.

7. Emotional Development Involves Mastery

It’s that smile of accomplishing something, doing something to their environment, rather than the environment doing it to them that fosters a critical step in emotional development. Related to the Active vs. Passive learning, that “see what I can do” smile is a crucial goal.

8. Learning is by Repetition – Allow to fail

Kids learn by repetition. They must do something over and over to invoke memory and get the variations to make sense. Therefore, allowing them to have negative results without intervention (e.g. without moving an object into their hand as they miss on a reach) is as important as not interrupting with any cheerleading.

9. Talk and Reward at the End of Play

At the end of play is the time for the adult input, the language and commentary to describe what the learner was doing, and to positively reinforce their activity. Point at and jiggle the objects and talk about what they did. Ask questions and use short sentences. When a learner is ready and can engage in turn-taking games, then a new level has been achieved.

10. Limit Input, Wait for Response

As a general principle, remember that neurologically impacted learners usually need more time to take in, process and assemble a response. If you ask a question, remain quiet as long as possible before asking something again, and try not to supply their answer without some sign. This is always subject to judgment, as after a while the question may be forgotten. Repeat using the exact same words, so additional processing to understand new input is not needed.

What is the difference between sanitizing and disinfecting?

Sanitizer: Reduces bacterial counts, including pathogens, to a safe level. Use on food contact surfaces, tables, toys, etc.

Disinfectant: Eliminates most or all pathogenic microorganisms. Use on diaper tables, toilet seats, surfaces contaminated with High Hazard Body Fluids (HHBFs: urine, feces, blood, vomit, sputum, mucus)

SANITIZE	DISINFECT
Toys weekly*	Diaper tables after each use
Bedding, Mattresses, etc. weekly*, or between use of another child	Toilet seats in childrens' restrooms
Water tables daily, and between groups of children	Surfaces contaminated with HHBF immediately!
Food contact surfaces: per Retail Food Establishment regulations	

* When items are placed in mouth or contaminated, they shall be sanitized prior to use by another child. If contaminated with a HHBF, item shall be disinfected.

The products

Sanitizer = Oxivir Tb (hydrogen peroxide is active ingredient)

Disinfectant = J512 (quaternary ammonium is active ingredient)

The process

Disinfectant will be ready-to-use and available in childrens' restrooms. Apply and allow for 1-minute contact time before wiping dry.

Sanitizing product will be tested daily by CaZee & (insert name of staff member for M/W here). Bottles will be filled on demand by program staff (advisably before program - no need for a full bottle) from the dispenser. Apply to surfaces and allow for 3-minute contact time before wiping dry.

Toys: Staff will be responsible for sanitizing toys weekly. Toys placed in mouth or contaminated during programs need to be placed in designated bins for sanitizing after program hours. Toys needing disinfecting need to be disinfected immediately.

Bedding, blankets: A bin will be designated specifically for blankets that need washing after use. They will be washed on M/W when machines are not in use.

Changing pads: Disinfectant must be applied between uses with a 1-minute contact time with drying to follow.

Toilet seats: Disinfectant must be applied and wiped over the entire surface area between uses with a 1-minute contact time (air drying time) to follow.

Oxivir TB -- used only in the bathrooms between each use of toilet seat/ changing pad, and is used to disinfect against HHBFs (High Hazard Body Fluids including blood, urine, vomit). Spray it. Apply friction by spreading. Allow to air dry for 1 minute. Keep bottle out of reach of children.

J-512 -- used to sanitize all toys, tables, wagons, chairs after use. Spray it. Apply friction by spreading. Allow to air dry for 3 minutes. Keep out of reach of children. **NOTE: If a toy being cleaned lives in a container with other toys, allow it to air dry for the entire 3 minutes before returning to the container. If it's a stand alone toy, it can air dry in its home.

Protecting Your Back While Working With Children

DO's and Don'ts of Lifting

DO...

- Bend with your knees and hips
- Keep the object close to your body
- Tighten stomach muscles and look forward
- Lift with your thigh Muscles
- Stand with feet shoulder width apart
- Avoid lifting too heavy of an object

DON'T...

- Round your back and Shoulders
- Lock your elbows or knees
- Twist and Pivot from your back
- Stand with your feet close together
- Lift heavy objects alone

How to Properly Lift a Child



- When lifting a child you should avoid bending over to lift them. It is better to kneel down to the child's level.
- When preparing to pick the child up you should tighten your stomach muscles and hold the child close to your body.
- After you are holding the child you should use your thigh and buttock muscles to stand up.
- Avoid twisting from your back while holding the child. It is better to move with your feet to get to where you want to go.

How to Properly Play on the Floor with the Children

- Sit in a comfortable position that avoids putting stress on your knees, hips, or low back.
- Avoid slouching or having rounded shoulders while sitting.
- Maintain a good upright posture.
- Avoid excessive twisting from your back while sitting.
- Take breaks from sitting on the floor and due activities in standing.



How to Properly Work With Children at Low Tables/Desks



- Find a chair or stool that you can sit on while working with the children at a low table for long periods of time.
- Kneel down to the child's level and avoid bending over from the waist when needing to work with the child for a short period of time.
- Avoid reaching over the child or across the table. It is better to move to the location of the child.

Important Information at Anchor Center

If you have any questions or concerns about your role at Anchor Center please contact:

Sarah Rice Volunteer Program & Administrative Services Manager

303-377-9732 ext 118

srice@anchorcenter.org

OR

Meghan Klassen, Executive Director

303-377-9732 ext. 113

mklassen@anchorcenter.org

If you need **to cancel or reschedule volunteer time** at the Center please be sure to call Anchor Center's main line as soon as possible (303-377-9732) and you will be connected with the appropriate staff person. If there is no answer when you call, please leave a message and the information will be passed on as necessary.

If Anchor Center is **closed due to inclement weather closer notifications will be posted** and you should check either our Website, Facebook Page, Channel 9 News and/or call our attendance line as this will give you an updated message.

Anchor Center has a wonderful website with lots of information about our organization. Please view it at **www.anchorcenter.org**

Anchor Center has **a large selection of printed materials about vision loss and child development**. We would be happy to loan or copy certain materials.

AnchorLine, Anchor Center's newsletter, is published twice yearly. Volunteers are on the mailing list. If you have email, you will also receive the online newsletter, ***AnchorLine Online***.

Programing Lead onboarding checklist: What to review on the first day and on a daily basis

First day/week of onboarding:

- Review programs
- Program goals and why support is needed.
- Daily tasks and duties expectations
 - diaper changes/toileting
 - lifting
 - Sanitizing
 - Handwashing
 - hand underhand
- Best ways to utilize time and skills
 - Checklists of duties needed?
 - Asking for help
 - In classroom Binder
 - Planning documents/goals for children-interested?
- How programing is structured/ daily schedule
- Who will they be interacting with and how should this be done appropriately
 - Mindful communication with caregivers (ex-ruff night=compassion/listening)
- How classrooms are structured/expectations
 - Classroom etiquette and rules
 - Encouraging independence
 - Daily schedules/centers
 - Set up/clean up/ next program prep
- Child profiles and individual tips
 - Allergies
 - Seizures
 - Medications
 - Feeding needs and support
- Working with typical children tips for Sibling Program
- Students who have medications at Anchor Center
- Staff who is delegated

Morning check in's:

- Remember to check in with volunteers and bring them up to speed on any necessary information.
- How many kids are we to expect.
- Any family updates.
- Medical updates
- What is planned for the day?
- Field trips?
- Holiday fun?
- Snack prep?

Anchor Center for Blind Children Volunteer Program Outline

Building blocks for volunteer engagement

1. Lay a strong foundation through mission and vision
2. Combine leadership with management
3. Build understanding and collaboration
4. Learn, grow, and change

Volunteer Program Process

1. Planning for Volunteer Engagement

Work with the team during work week to assess needs.

Volunteer Involvement Staff Assessment (print out)

Review and update job descriptions to reflect current needs.

Identify volunteer roles that align with strategic plan.

Evaluate risk management.

2. Recruiting and placing volunteers

Recruitment strategy

Help the organization/Programs achieve goals

Help find the most appropriate people to fill positions

Maximize organizational resources

Organize recruitment team/staff collaboration

Use Targeted Recruitment Plan document if needed (print out)

Conduct interviews. Invite staff who will be working with volunteer(s)

Place volunteers, making sure skills knowledge and attitude is a good match.

Clean background check

Agency/volunteer agreement

3. Orienting and training (volunteers receive handbook)

Orientation is the process of making volunteers feel comfortable with and understand the workings of the organization...and to let them understand how they can contribute to the purpose of the organization.

Determine what volunteers need to be successful in their position.

Determine the needs of the organization related to the volunteer's position.

Training is...

Train staff who will be working with volunteers

Tips for training busy staff to work with volunteers (print out)

1st week of placement is for shadowing/silent observing.

2nd week is hands on learning and on the job training Orientation

Orientation is...

Cause

Mission and values

Population served

History

Key programs and services

Organizational partners

Organizations strategic plan

Org structure and programs

Systems

- Org structure and programs
- Policies and procedures
- Facilities and equipment (restrooms, fridge...ect)
- Volunteer benefits and position requirements
- Record keeping and reporting

Social

- Org leadership
- Org culture and etiquette
- Social events
- Org activities and events

4. Supervising and recognizing volunteers

- Hands on job training

- Intermediate check ins with staff and volunteers. Assist staff in understanding the techniques to work effectively with volunteers.

- Support Volunteers by

 - Volunteer Work Plan (print out)

 - Instructions

 - Direction

 - Feedback

 - Correction

 - Information

 - Freedom

 - Resources

- Recognition plan.

5. Evaluation

- Evaluate all aspects of program: 15 reasons to evaluate volunteer involvement and types of evaluation (Print it)

 - Program, admin and development.

 - Volunteer experience satisfaction survey (print it)

 - Staff experience with volunteer feedback survey. (print it)

 - Use results for preparation of next year

- Implement changes and strengthen elements that worked well

 - Adjust for the new year

 - Learn, grow, change.

- Report: advice in improving your reporting of impact (print it)

- Update Volunteer Program Budget