



DID YOU KNOW?

AN INFORMATION SHEET FOR ST. JOHN AMBULANCE MEMBERS

RECRUITING FAMILIES

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DID YOU KNOW that recruiting is getting the right person in the right job with the right skills at the right time?

Let's face it, not everyone enjoys asking someone to volunteer. Recruiting volunteers is a time-consuming process. However, the reality of it is that we need to recruit to help spread the work among members, keep the organization alive, for new ideas and to get the work done to reach a common goal. Consider volunteer recruitment as an ongoing process of identifying groups of people for service and then actually asking them to take on assignments. While recruiting, keep in mind that a volunteer program is a two-way street: it must meet the needs of the organization and the needs of the volunteer. Everyone wins.

What groups do we target?

In the past, we have focused on recruiting youth and adults. Why not families? The principals of recruiting are the same.

One third of Canadians feel they are not getting enough family time therefore the family recruiting method might very well be the answer to recruiting youth and adults. For parents seeking to introduce their children to the values of reciprocity, caring for others and being part of community, family volunteering provides a remarkable way to practice – together – what they preach.

The introduction of family volunteers will require us to examine the types of opportunities we are prepared to offer our volunteers. New and innovative positions and projects will need to be developed, as always, meeting the needs of the organization and community while at the same time appealing to the unique characteristics of family volunteers. As we already have policies and procedures in place for recruitment, oversight and recognition of volunteers, introducing a family volunteer program will probably be more a matter of adjusting than complete innovation.

How Can We Recruit?

Make recruitment a team effort by involving youth and adult divisions. Give everyone in your unit a role in recruiting members, from initial plans and handing out flyers to orientation.

Consider setting up a recruitment open house night. Advertise well in advance. Have youth leaders and members available to speak with the potential youth volunteers and provide plenty of visual information. Most importantly – keep the information simple and fun. Adult members should be on hand to introduce training programs. Make up a display of a variety of duties and training programs available. Ensure you have a clear outline of roles and duties and the expected time commitment.

Consider introducing a mentoring program for both the youth and adults ensuring support, guidance and feedback by personal experience of challenges and achievement. Mentors can serve as role models to assist other volunteers. Check with your local charitable organization for examples of mentoring programs, i.e. Family & Children Services, Big Brothers & Big Sisters, Scouts Canada, etc.

After Recruiting

A screening process should be in place (watch for our next DYK on Screening).

Have you been successful in establishing the concept of family volunteering? If so, please share your story with us. Send your success stories to Joanna Mulvihill at jmulvihill@nhq.sja.ca