

Foster Grandparent Position Description

Purpose:

To connect the generations by providing meaningful volunteer assignments. To create meaningful relationships with special needs children by providing love, encouragement, tutoring, and companionship on a one-to-one basis. To provide extra care and attention to special needs children in order to improve their physical, mental, emotional, social and academic development so they may grow to reach their maximum potential. To serve children in school, day care, Head Start and institutional settings.

Qualifications:

Age 55 years or older. County resident. Annual income falls within federally established guidelines. Willing and able to volunteer with children for a minimum of 20 hours per week. Willing to be fingerprinted.

Expectations:

Sincere interest in helping children with needs. Provide supportive relationship and friendship that includes love and encouragement. Serve as a non-threatening adult. Offer guidance, a listening ear, stability, and sensitivity to children's feelings and needs on a one-to-one basis. Maintain confidentiality. Able to set limits with children and be non-judgmental with regard to income, race, special needs, disabilities, religion, family status, and background. Must be patient, kind, and understanding. Exhibit a warm and caring attitude. Possess emotional maturity and demonstrate good judgment. Be able to maintain written records and reports as needed. Follow directions and accept supervision by site and program staff. Must cooperate and communicate with site and program staff. Abide by site and program policies, procedures, and regulations. Attend required orientation and in-service training. Dress in neat and clean manner.

Roles and Sample Activities:

Listening. Reading. Talking. Singing. Walking. Tutoring. Modeling appropriate behaviors and skills. Encouraging socialization. Playing games. Telling stories. Holding/hugging a child. Assisting with self-help skills (washing hands, eating). Participating in group activities. Assisting with reading and another academic subjects. Teaching manners and

social skills. Reinforcing lessons taught by teachers. Helping child to follow directions and accomplish work. Act as a calming agent. Helping children to stay focused on task. Encouraging and praising children. Assisting in development of motor and learning skills. Providing stimulation and learning experiences. Providing intergenerational exposure. Working on Craft/art projects. ---Possibly pushing wheelchair or accompanying children on field trips.

Restrictions:

Do not serve as paid staff, custodian, babysitter, supervisor, substitute teacher or disciplinarian. Do not use corporeal punishment or physically/verbally abusing children. Refrain from giving gifts, food, or money to children. Not to be left in charge or without supervision by site staff. Do not bring guests to the volunteer site unless written permission is obtained from the site and provided to the FGP office in advance of the visit. Do not take children from the site unless accompanying them on field trips supervised by site staff. Refrain from correcting papers, making photocopies, preparing meals, and cleaning up unless children participate in these activities. Refrain from discussing personal religious beliefs, preaching, singing religious songs or praying out loud. Do not participate in religious education classes, prayer services, mass or religious retreats as part of your Foster Grandparent assignment.

Rewards:

Unconditional love. Socialization with others. Feelings of being needed and useful. Gaining a sense of accomplishment. Heightened self-esteem. Making an impact in a child's life. Participating in the solving of community problems.

Benefits:

Hourly stipend.* Free daily meal on site if possible. Travel reimbursement. Insurance while serving. Sick time and vacation time accrual. Socialization. Recognition. Training (pre-service and monthly in-service).

*The stipend is non-taxable, non-reportable income that does not affect eligibility for other programs and services. It will NOT affect your social security.