

TEEN VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

The ABCs of being a Teen Volunteer at Manhattan Public Library

A = About Volunteering: Teen Volunteers work mainly in the Children’s Department with additional work in the Young Adult Department. When you come in you will:

1. Check the bulletin board for any announcements
 2. Check your folder for any personal instructions, Kudos awards, or prizes.
 3. Put on your nametag
 4. Check the task list
 5. Begin helping at the Prize Desk or your assigned area
- Some of the things you will do include: helping children with their summer reading charts; giving out prizes; using a die cut machine; helping prepare storytime/club craft projects; keeping the Children’s room, Storytime room, and Young Adult/Teen area picked up, straightened and looking good. Other special tasks throughout the library may be assigned by staff; volunteers doing these things will usually require special training and/or supervision.
 - A “Task List for Volunteers” is kept in the Volunteer Area in the Storytime Room all the jobs and tasks that need to be done for the librarians are listed. You will check this list when you come in to work and also look in the projects bin for projects that need to be completed.

B = Be Flexible: You may be asked to do jobs that you would not necessarily choose to do. If you are assigned a task you do not know how to do or don’t understand, tell a staff member so they can assist you. If a project has a deadline that you will not be able to meet, let a librarian know so someone else can work on it.

C = Customer Service: Be courteous and polite to all patrons of the library. Be welcoming, positive and cheerful. Smile, use eye contact and good listening skills, even if you know you will have to refer them to a librarian. If someone you don’t like comes in, treat them as politely and respectfully as you would anyone else.

D = Dress Code: There are two general guidelines to follow in regard to appearance while volunteering: 1) Be well groomed (neat hair, clean body) and 2) Be dressed in clean clothes that are comfortable & neat. Teen volunteers have a more relaxed dress code than other library staff, but there are still certain rules that must be followed. If you have questions about what to wear, please ask.

WHAT TO WEAR

- ♦ Clothing promoting your school or the library *You are encouraged to wear your **free Summer Reading T-Shirt** as much as possible!*

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- ♦ Shirts or t-shirts with jeans, shorts, pants, slacks, or skirts .
- ♦ Shoes that are comfortable and safe (Flip-flops and other loose sandals are not suggested).

WHAT NOT TO WEAR

- ♦ Clothing that promotes a business, advertises a product, contains offensive language, and offensive or inappropriate images.
- ♦ Anything torn, patched, frayed, or faded
- ♦ Tank tops, halter-tops, midriff bearing, low-cut, or spaghetti strap shirts
- ♦ Flip-flops and loose-fitting shoes
- ♦ Sweat pants or sweat suits
- ♦ Army fatigues or camouflage clothing
- ♦ Hats or handkerchiefs
- ♦ Short shorts or skirts that show more than 3-4 inches between the clothing and your knee when sitting
- ♦ Visible body piercings other than ears

E = Employability: Teen Volunteers help the library while preparing to join the work force. Attitude and performance will affect the staff's ability to give a good reference when you start job hunting.

F = Forbidden Items: Items not allowed during volunteer time: magazines, headphones, I-pods and MP3 players, CD players, cell phones, handheld games, or anything else that could hinder your ability to perform volunteer tasks and the work environment. There is a cabinet where these items may be stored while you are working.

G = Good Manners: Teen Volunteers are asked to sit properly, speak clearly and look people in the eye. Volunteers should not speak rudely to any child or adult. If there is a problem, a library staff member should be notified.

H = Here's what to do: There is always something! When you come in, check the following areas for tasks to be done: 1) "Special Projects for Volunteers" list on the clipboard; 2) "Projects" bin on the counter; 3) "Routine Jobs" list in your folder.

I = Identification: Teen Volunteers should wear the name tags provided for them by the library.

J = Jennifer: Jennifer is the Children's Services Manager. She is usually in the Children's Room or upstairs in her office and you can go to her if Keri is not around. She will find Keri for you or she will get information to Keri. You can reach her at 776-4741, extension 156, 179, or 125.

K = Keri: Keri is the Young Adult Librarian and Teen Volunteer Coordinator. She will be your primary contact for any scheduling questions or other volunteer concerns that you may have. Her phone number is 776-4741, extension 170. You can also try extension 173, which is the Information Desk where she is sometimes scheduled. Her e-mail is: kmills@mhklibrary.org.

L = Liability: The library is liable for all injuries/accidents. If you are involved in an accident

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or an unusual incident while on duty, report it to a supervisor immediately. If someone else is injured, get help immediately from a staff person.

M = Make a Good Impression: As a volunteer, you are seen as a part of the library staff by library customers. You represent the library with all your actions and words. Act in a professional and mature manner at all times.

N = Noise: Teen Volunteers are asked to be respectful of staff and patrons by speaking in a reasonable tone of voice and volume.

O = Organization: Help everyone stay on task by performing all duties in a logical, organized fashion rather than jumping from one thing to another. Complete one task before beginning a new one. Make sure to write down the things that you have done so other volunteers and staff will know what tasks have been completed.

P = Privacy: Teen Volunteers are asked to keep any information from patrons confidential. Do not repeat information heard at the library. Be respectful of staff desks and materials as they are private property. Teen Volunteers are only allowed in areas meant for paid staff when accompanied by or given permission by a staff person.

Q = Questions: Never be afraid to ask questions. It is better to ask questions than to give wrong information or perform a task incorrectly. The Children's Librarians are extremely helpful and are the staff you will most often be working with. They are happy to answer your work-related questions.

R = Respect: Show respect to your fellow workers-library staff and other volunteers-by being polite, having a positive attitude, sharing equipment, working as a team, and discussing problems in a calm and respectful way.

S = Schedule

- Make sure your schedule is approved by your parents. If it does not work, please let Keri know ASAP.
- *We are expecting you!* Please show consideration to staff and other volunteers by showing up on time. If you will be late or unable to come in, let us know as far in advance as possible. Two unexcused absences are grounds for dismissal. Call **785-776-4741 ext. 170** or email **kmills@mhklibrary.org** (*if at least 24 hours before your shift*).
- **Time sheets** are kept electronically. Before leaving from your shift, you must log your volunteer hours in your online account. Volunteer hours are kept on record at the library so we can verify your work for any community service requirements or future employers. However, if you do not log your time, we will not have a record of your service hours.

T = Telephone: The library phone is for library business. Please make arrangements for transportation before your shift. In an emergency, or if a ride does not show up at the right time, please ask a librarian to help you use a library phone.

U = Uncomfortable Encounters: If anyone says or does anything to you that makes you

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uncomfortable, such as asking you lots of personal questions, remove yourself from the situation by going to the nearest desk or to the Children's office. Tell someone on the library staff what happened immediately. Encounters like this are not your fault, and library staff will deal with them.

V = Visitors

- Work time should be an enjoyable experience, however it is not the time to visit with friends or siblings. If people see you while you are volunteering, you may say 'Hi', but end the exchange quickly. Explain that while you are volunteering, you have to concentrate on your work and you can meet them after your shift is over. If someone is not cooperating, ask a librarian to handle the situation.
- Do not invite friends, siblings, or others to help you with volunteer tasks. Volunteers must be accepted into the library's Volunteer Program and receive training from library staff before helping.

W = What Paid Library Staff Do: Librarians and pages are trained and paid to do many things volunteers are not. In any of the following situations, let library staff do the task, or politely refer the customer to library staff.

- ♦ Answering the phone
- ♦ Questions about library materials or policies, getting a library card, checking out books, paying fines or finding materials
- ♦ Questions about storytimes or clubs, or how to be a volunteer
- ♦ Helping a lost child find his/her parent
- ♦ Helping use the computers in any way
- ♦ Upset library patrons or children misbehaving
- ♦ Any other situations where you aren't sure what to do or how to answer

XYZ = EXTRAS - Have fun and enjoy being a Teen Volunteer! Be enthusiastic! Cooperate! Making a GOOD impression! It's the little things that make for a happy work experience.