

Lend a Hand

New Horizons Preschool

Guidelines for Parent Volunteers

Volunteers are an integral part of the New Horizons Preschool program. Each family should plan to provide an adult volunteer to assist our classroom teachers approximately once each month (more often for families who have twins in the program). Parents, grandparents, aunts or uncles, as well as caregivers are all welcome as classroom helpers. Of course, parents and other adult family members are always welcome to join us at New Horizons on days other than assigned helping days, as well.

Parents will need to make other arrangements for siblings on helping days. (Our get-acquainted coffees in September will provide an opportunity to meet other parents who would like to arrange childcare exchanges.)

Following is some information you may find useful as a classroom volunteer:

- 1) Please try to be prompt in arriving on your helping days. After you assist your child in settling in for the day (and initial the sign-in sheet), check with your child's teacher to find out what your "assignments" for the day will be.
- 2) During the first meeting (group time) of the day, be present to comfort or quiet individual children as necessary.
- 3) When the children go to their classrooms for "circle groups", go with your child's class. During circle time, you can help by modeling polite circle time behavior for the children and assisting individual children in sitting quietly as appropriate. The teacher may ask for your assistance in the circle activity for the day. We appreciate it when parents follow the teacher's lead in providing help to individual children. Our goal is for the children to feel successful about completing their tasks and that they have work that is truly their own.
- 4) During "free time", help in one of the individual rooms as requested by teachers. You may be asked to help in the art room, gathering room, or big room. Please note that your child will be visiting each of the activity rooms during free time, but we really appreciate our parent helpers being available to help where needed most. If you have a spare moment, there will often be artwork or other items to put in the childrens' tubs (in big room) for sending home at the end of the day.
- 5) Preschoolers thrive on physical activity and we provide ample outlets for gross motor play; however, at times children's behavior may be too exuberant for our preschool setting. We appreciate our classroom volunteers' willingness to intervene by redirecting children as well as modeling appropriate behavior.
- 6) In preparation to go outside, help children into outdoor clothing. Make sure boots, hats, and mittens are on and that coats are zipped (if weather necessitates). Each child should put street shoes in his or her school bag and return the bag to the proper hook before going outside. Many children will need help with zippers or the "2nd mitten", but it is important to encourage them to dress themselves as much as possible. Often a gentle reminder (for example, "What should you put on next?") is all that is necessary to help them move along in the process.
- 7) Volunteers should be prepared to go outside and help supervise outdoor play (be sure to bring boots, hat, and gloves, if needed) unless a teacher asks you to assist with indoor cleanup.
- 8) **If you are unable to assist on your assigned day, please call another parent and arrange a substitute.** A class phone list will be provided early in the year. We suggest that you keep this with other important phone lists. Please do not call the school until you have exhausted all other possibilities.
- 9) **Enjoy Yourself!!!** This is a wonderful time for parents and children, and it is a great spot for finding extra hugs! Remember, we are never too old for play.