



Volunteer Overview

VVF's Youth Foundation's mission is to *elevate education, arts and athletics for the youth of the Vail Valley.*

Thank you for giving your time to the Youth Foundation, VVF's Education Arm. We have more than 3,200 children in our programs annually. More than 100 individuals have donated 1500 hours of their time, talent and passion in the 2013-2014 school year alone. Without volunteers' generosity, we would not be able to impact Eagle County children in such a positive manner.

The Youth Foundation impacts children with positive mentorship, community interaction and recreation applications that inspire self-confidence, friendship, and integrity in the hearts of all participants, as well as volunteers and supporters. Everyone involved is charged with helping young people discover their individual gifts and develop qualities that will help them become happy and contributing members of society. The Youth Foundation makes learning about life's challenges a fun and fulfilling experience.

We have nine core values we continually express to the kids: please embody these values when working with them. The core values are **honesty, integrity, sportsmanship, respect, confidence, responsibility, perseverance, courtesy** and **good judgment**.

History

The Youth Foundation was founded in 1997. Unlike any other youth service organization in Eagle County, we provide and support programs that serve youth from birth through college. In January 2012 the Youth Foundation merged with the Vail Valley Foundation. Together we have a significantly better chance of realizing both the fundraising and operations to enable us to accomplish our objectives. Our vision is a continuum of programming services to help children and families in the valley, from birth through college or vocational preparation. The single organization will eliminate any overlap or competition in services, and we can strategize, plan and execute more efficiently. Our donor money will be better spent, and we feel we can raise more private and public money by working together as one organization.

The common theme in all of the Youth Foundation's efforts is jumping in to not only keep kids from "falling through the cracks," but lift them up through education, sports and opportunities that promote character development. We provide socially imperative "life skills" programs including Learn through Play, Girl PowHER, The Magic Bus, PowerHours Afterschool, KidSTRONG, Sowing Seeds, Celebrate the Beat, First Notes, Great Start, Success at Six, Academic Summer Camps, Copa Soccer, Community Coach Mentors and Scholarship America to enrich the lives of youth in the Vail Valley.

Why volunteer?

We have found that increased community involvement through volunteer participation and mentorship has a direct positive impact on both the children and volunteers who participate. Volunteers make our community a better place to live. The Youth Foundation volunteer opportunities connect individuals and organizations with people and programs that will utilize their specific talents

and benefit others. We are proud of the contributions our volunteers are making to enhance the quality of life here in Eagle County.

Studies show the long-term benefits afterschool programs offer children. Children and youth who regularly attend high-quality afterschool programs have better grades and conduct in school; more academic and enrichment opportunities; better peer relations and emotional adjustment and lower incidences of drug-use, violence and pregnancy. (*U.S. Department of Education. 21st Century Community Learning Centers: Providing Quality Afterschool Learning Opportunities for America's Families, September 2000*). By volunteering with the Youth Foundation you are helping us to achieve our goals and help children make their dreams a reality.

Volunteer Requirements

We will do our best to work with you to find a program that suits you and the children in our programs. We have programs in 13 schools throughout the valley, in addition to 2 Magic Buses and the COPA soccer program. There are a variety of volunteer opportunities available to adults and students. Please note that due to the specific requirements of the programs we offer, we will do our best to work with our volunteers to find a suitable placement.

- Commitment to students: depending on the program. PwrHrs: 1 session per week for seven weeks. Magic Bus: 1 day per week for 7 weeks. In-office: varies.
- Prospective volunteers must complete a background check and attend an orientation.
- Volunteers will also tour the desired program(s) where they will volunteer.

We welcome your feedback about our programs.

Through the Youth Foundation Volunteer Program we hope to accomplish the following:

- Engage new people in the work of the Youth Foundation and expose them to the needs of our community.
- Gain new talent and expertise in how we operate our programs and expand the enrichment opportunities by utilizing new talent and skills.
- Improve program evaluation strategies by soliciting feedback and observations from volunteers.
- Educate volunteers to become ambassadors of the Youth Foundation.
- Continue reaching our annual goals and expanding our programs to reach additional children.

Volunteer Recognition & Benefits

We truly try to make volunteers feel connected to the organization and recognized for your individual efforts. The Youth Foundation values and appreciates the enormous contributions of volunteers to the organization, our clients and the Vail Valley community as a whole. The Youth Foundation staff hosts recognition events to thank our volunteers and provide a fun, social environment to engage with people who share a passion for making our community a better place to live.

Volunteer benefits include:

- Networking opportunities with other volunteers, board members, staff and constituents
- A better understanding of the education community and its needs
- Connections with children who are need of mentorship, friendship and emotional support
- Annual recognition events and social engagements
- Opportunities to be involved with staff
- Ability to help expand our program offerings

As we aim to provide quality programming and offer useful volunteer opportunities we will ask volunteers to evaluate their experience.

Here are a few guidelines we ask you to follow.

In the classroom:

- Engage the children in a group setting. We ask you do not meet with them one-on-one. Even in a school, please meet in a library, classroom, office where there are other people.
- Do not take them on field trips without the Youth Foundation. Permission slips are required.
- Remember children's situations and lives should remain confidential. Please do not share specific details (names, ages, where they go to school). We love to have you be enthusiastic about the kids and programs, but use discretion.
- If you feel the child is in any way abused, please report it to the school coordinator or Youth Foundation staff member immediately.
- Ask the teacher or school coordinator if you have academic-based questions.

In the office:

- Use appropriate language and volume.
- Please do not blare music.
- Feel free to ask questions—especially if you have a good idea for a new procedure!

For students/community service:

- Be on time.
- We cannot pre-sign any time sheets. Your hours will be counted as they accrue.
- The Youth Foundation is a youth-serving organization. We enjoy working with students, and like having them come in to help with projects, knowing it is mutually beneficial: the students get to have hands' on experience and do community service, and we get to work with students. We count on them to do a good job, be reliable and act in a professional manner. We understand that we will have to provide supervision, so ask as many questions as necessary.

Tips:

Be respectful of employees, students, teachers and/or parents.

Use courteous language and speak in 'indoor' voices.

Ask as many questions as needed, if in doubt ask again.

You're an ambassador and your actions represent the student body overall.

Have fun.

General Volunteer Responsibilities:

- To have a genuine commitment to the Youth Foundation's mission, and become knowledgeable about our unique functions, our strengths and our needs.
- To be an ambassador, both in heightening awareness of the Youth Foundation among business and community—and in bringing to the organization information from various constituencies that is vital for planning.
- Provide feedback to the Youth Foundation staff regarding volunteer observations related to programming and client experience, volunteer experience, organizational structure and suggestions for organizational capacity building.

Desired Skills Among Volunteers:

- Interest in the well-being of children and a desire to enhance learning opportunities for children

- Creativity
- Positive attitude, flexible
- Team player
- Effective communications skills: verbal, written, diplomatic
- Self-directed, can work independently
- Patience
- Discrete
- Ability to prioritize and manage multiple projects
- Computer proficient: MS Word and Excel, e-mail and other software

Child Abuse Management

Child Protection Policies: How to Document Suspected Abuse

- Tell Youth Foundation staff and/or teacher immediately who will work with you to:
 - ✓ Document every injury noticed: date, time, description, comments by child, etc. and insert in the Civicore database notes or in the suspected child abuse incident report
 - ✓ Document injuries that occur when in your presence in the Student Report of Injury Form; send a copy home to parents

Declaration of Abuse:

When a child gives you a declarative statement about abuse

- Document the words exactly as you heard them.
- Get other witnesses to document what was said.
- Record date, time, location, etc.
- Give a copy of the abuse report to the school and Youth Foundation.

How to react if a child tells you about abuse:

- Listen, do not infer, assume or interrogate.
- Reassure the child that he/she has done the right thing by telling you and that you are glad they told you.
- Make sure they understand it was not their fault.
- Remain calm and accepting, don't over react.
- **Do not promise not to tell.**
- Be honest and tell the child what to expect.
- Reassure them you will do what needs to be done to make sure it doesn't happen again.
- Determine the child's needs for safety.

How to record an injury during PwrHrs:

- Student Report of Injury form – fill in as many details as possible.
- Make copies to file with the school, Youth Foundation and parents.
- Make a phone call home – better safe than sorry!
- Notify the school coordinator as soon as the injury occurs.