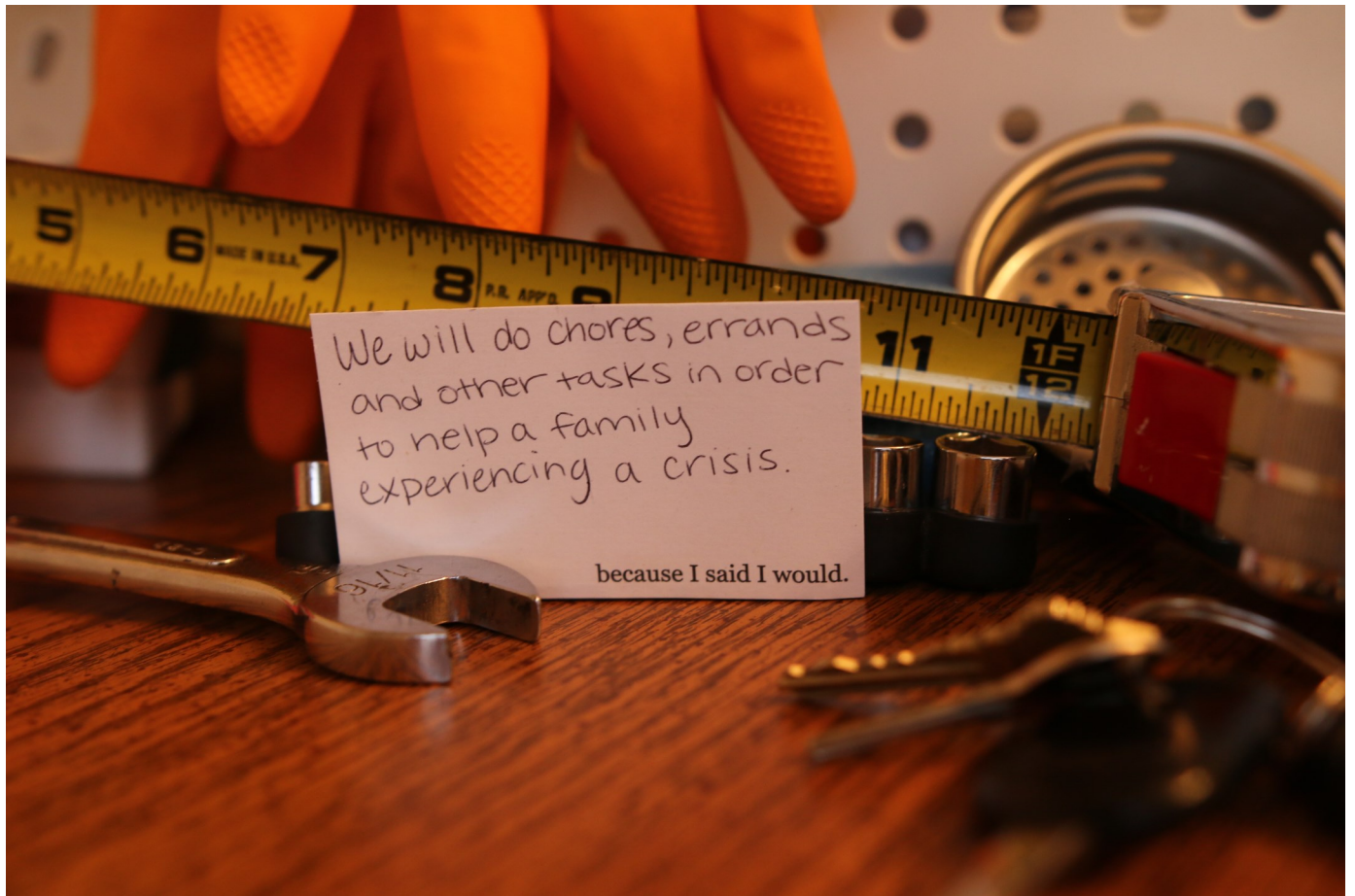


Freeing Up Time for Families in Crisis

A Volunteer Project Plan



A step-by-step guide to help you give back on your own terms!

because
I said
I would.

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Leadership Team Materials

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About Volunteer Project Plans

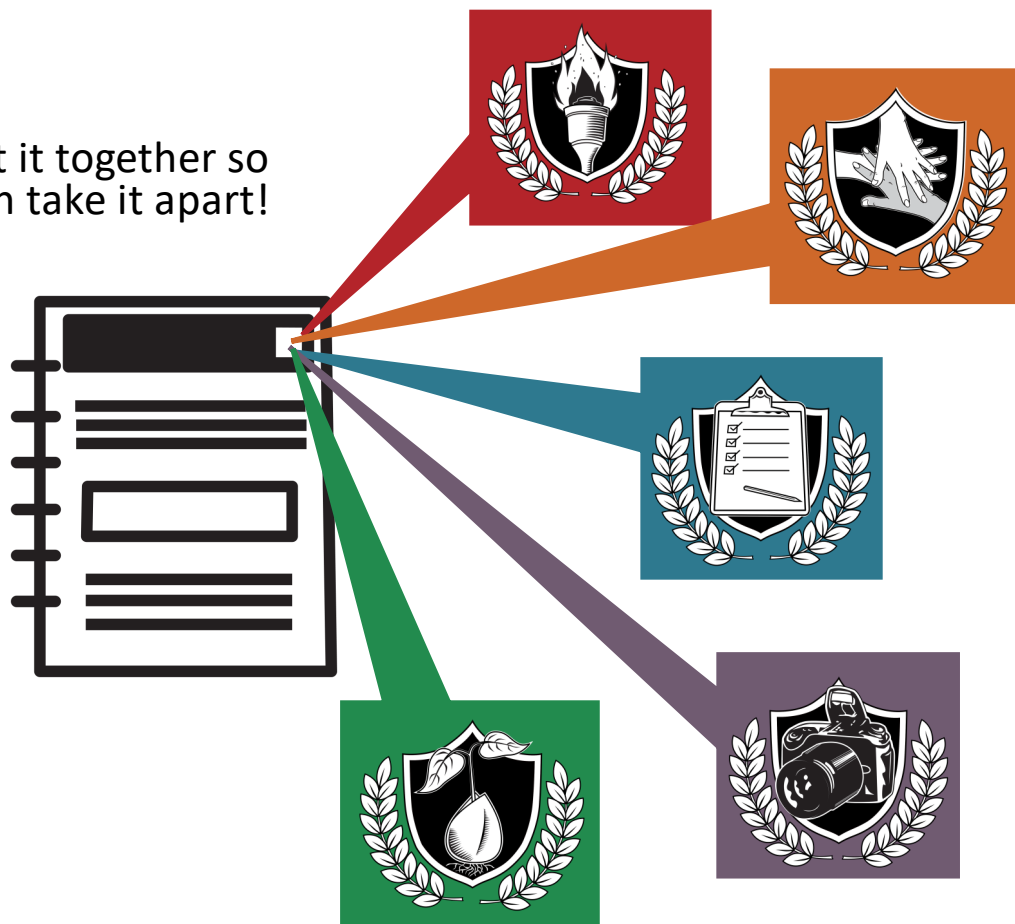
What is a Volunteer Project Plan?

A **Volunteer Project Plan** is a step-by-step guide to complete a service project in your community.

All around us, there are opportunities to help our neighbors and our communities. However, it can be overwhelming trying to figure out what to do and where to start. A Volunteer Project Plan is the answer to this dilemma. We provide the tools and information you will need, including easy-to-use checklists.

All you have to do is distribute the checklists and other resources amongst members of your team according to their designated roles. The pages needed for each of these roles are indicated using a unique icon in the upper left corner.

**We put it together so
you can take it apart!**



Please review the [commitment decision](#) page to help you decide if this project is right for you.

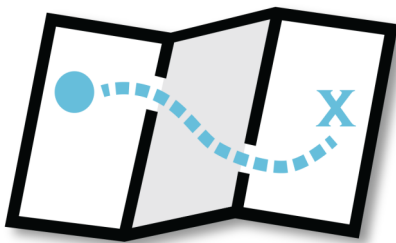
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The Issue:

Another car crash. Another cancer diagnosis. Another assault. Another family in crisis. We see it too often. On TV. On the radio. In the newspaper and on social media. Families experiencing a crisis, such as sudden illness, disability or death are often immobilized—typical patterns of living are changed and for most it takes an enormous amount of energy to do...well...anything at all. The laundry piles up. And up. The mail goes unopened. The grass grows wild. When we hear about these devastated families, it is a common and natural response to want to help. This helping impulse is often quickly followed by another thought, “But I don’t even know what to say!” Fear not. It is often what you do, not what you say, that can make the biggest difference. And get ready because there’s plenty to do!



The Plan:



This is a totally hands-on project. Gather a group of caring people who are ready to give their time and talents in order to help a family in crisis. You will need one person to be the Coordinator. Start by discussing with the family some burdensome tasks that volunteers could possibly do to help out. Make a list of these tasks with the family’s input. Then, simply match up small teams of volunteers according to their interest, abilities and time constraints. Dispatch your teams to complete their tasks, over a period time, if needed.

The Impact:

Providing practical support to the family, by doing things like chores or errands, frees up the family, as well as friends and loved ones to focus on healing and much-needed emotional support. Research shows that practical support increases vigor and energy for the recipient. The valued skills and abilities of volunteers who participate are also affirmed, and social networks are fostered. It is often said that time heals all wounds. Not everyone agrees with that. But it’s hard to refute the fact that giving a struggling family your time is one of the most precious, and rewarding things you can do.



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Commitment Decision Page



Please consider if you are able to do the following before making this commitment.



Prep Time: 5-8 hours
Service Time: 2-3 hours
Total time: 7-11 hours

BUDGET
\$\$\$
\$100-200

You will need:



A planning team of 4-10 people who will give 5-8 hours each



A family experiencing a crisis and in need of help



Photography equipment



A **Support Coordinator** to schedule completion of tasks by matching volunteer interests/abilities with the needs of the family. This is typically the Volunteer Project Leader.



Small team of volunteers who will give 2-3 hours each helping the family with chores, errands and other needs

This project may be done over time, such as 2 to 4 hours per week for a few weeks or months.

Steps:

1. Plan

The leadership team will:

1. Arrange a planning meeting
 - What family 'in crisis' will you try to help?
 - Do you need help connecting with the family?
2. Identify a 'Support Coordinator' who will
 - talk with the family or a family representative to make a list of burdensome tasks that could be completed by small teams of volunteers
 - make a Master List of tasks and help volunteers sign-up for these based on interest, ability, and time availability
 - Ultimately, dispatch small teams of volunteers to complete tasks
3. Spread the word & gather volunteers who are willing to help the family with chores, errands and other needs
4. Hold a meeting for volunteers to sign up for tasks

2. Serve

Volunteers will:

- Review the list of tasks that the Support Coordinator has created with input from the family in crisis
- Sign-up for specific tasks
- Work with the Support Coordinator to schedule completion of tasks in small teams based on time availability and logical grouping of tasks. For example, if there are several tasks that relate to gardening and landscaping it would be efficient to do these on the same day

Divide and conquer the tasks for the family as scheduled

3. Report

Return your completed Impact Report form



4. Celebrate

You and your team just did something uncommonly AWESOME!



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Leadership Team Roles

Project Leader



- Oversees the planning, organizing and execution of the project including reporting impact
- Ensures that planning tasks are completed by coordinating with the other roles below*

Project Co-Leader



- Helps ensure that nothing 'falls through the cracks'
- Serves as a backup for other roles as needed

Logistics Leader



- Works with Volunteer Project Leader to identify needed equipment & supplies
- Orders or procures any supplies, food, or other materials
- Brings above to the location and sets up before the event

Photojournalist Leader



- Promotes the event
- Captures the experience to share success and inspire volunteerism
- Ensures that policies and personal preferences regarding photography and posting to social media are strictly enforced

Fundraising Leader



- Works with the Volunteer Project Leader to determine if additional funds or supplies are needed
- Finds and collects donations if necessary

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Project Leader Section



- Oversees the planning, organizing and execution of the project including reporting impact
- Ensures that planning tasks are completed by coordinating with the other roles

Project Leader Checklist



BEFORE

Before

- ☐ Review the [adaptations page](#) for ideas to scale this project up or down if desired
- ☐ Have a planning meeting to divide roles
 - ☐ You will need to have a second status and update meeting at some point before the Day of Service: What tasks are completed on each person's "Before" checklist. Are we on track? Any unexpected roadblocks?
- ☐ Connect with the family you are trying to help and get permission to do this project.
 - ☐ This might be someone who is a friend of the family if you do not know the family well
 - ☐ Use social media, word-of-mouth, and other means to get the word out
- ☐ Ask the family for input into what tasks they would like volunteers to do.
 - ☐ Make sure to bring a list of some suggested tasks to help the family think about this with you. During time of high stress, people are often so overwhelmed that they do not know what they want or need. Prompts will help. (See Possible Activity Sheet)
 - ☐ Ask the family when it is convenient for them to have each task done. For example, when is a good time to have people rake the leaves or run specific errands
 - ☐ Try to guesstimate the amount of time each task would take
 - ☐ Make a Master list of tasks and set up a possible schedule with the family (see Sample schedule)
- ☐ Determine a date, time and location for the Leadership Team to hold an informational meeting to explain the project to volunteers willing to help the family
- ☐ Work with the fundraising leader to determine if additional funds or supplies are needed to help the family. Hold a fundraiser if necessary.
- ☐ Get ready to hold the informational meeting

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Project Leader Checklist



During

DURING

- ☐ Hold the informational meeting to help set the schedule:
 - ☐ Give the [Impact Presentation](#) at the beginning of the informational meeting
 - ☐ Ask each volunteer to complete a Promise Card expressing his or her commitment to *this* project...and then collect them
 - ☐ Explain the project concept to volunteers and go over the Master Task list
 - ☐ Group volunteers into small teams and coordinate sign-up for tasks
 - ☐ Circulate a contact sheet so you can reach volunteers if needed
- ☐ Then.....
 - ☐ Coordinate and oversee the completion of tasks by volunteer teams.
 - ☐ Some teams might go out the same day, or tasks may be done over time, such as a few hours per task over a few weeks or months depending on the needs and preferences of the family & availability of the volunteers



After

AFTER

- ☐ Return Promise Cards to volunteers after they complete their tasks
- ☐ Ensure the **Leadership Team** has completed their after service responsibilities
- ☐ Ask the **Fundraising Leader** for the collected information for the Impact Report
- ☐ Complete and send the [Impact Report](#)
- ☐ Return Surveys to *because I said I would**
- ☐ Thank any donors who may have had a part in making this project possible by working with the **Fundraising Leader**
- ☐ Thank your team and remind them of the impact of their hard work!
- ☐ Thank any other partners (if applicable)

Items can be sent using projects@becauseisaidiwould.com

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Use this list as a starting point or guide for a conversation with the family or family representative as you come up with your list of tasks that volunteers can do to be helpful to the family. These are only suggestions; the best approach will take into account the specific circumstances and gaps in social support that exist for any family.

Activities that volunteers can do to support a family in crisis:

- Gardening
- Laundry
- Shopping
- Walk a pet
- Buying a present
- Buying a meal/ food preparation
- Childcare/ babysitting
- Giving Rides
- Tutoring
- Mentoring
- Small household repairs
- Befriending
- Computer training
- Providing transportation
- Cleaning
- Other chores or errands

Other

- After the family and friends have gone through a deceased person's belongings, take the donations in
- Create a Memory Box for the family to put special pictures and mementos in
- Buy paper products. This helps ensure there is toilet paper when there are many visitors and also helps cut down temporarily on the amount of dishes that need washing
- Work with a friend to help set up a visitation calendar over time. It is a common phenomenon for support to be high near the time of a crisis, and then wane over time. This can give the family something to look forward to or comfort in the knowledge that they will not be completely alone
- Help fixing a specific problem
- Lending an item of need

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Impact Presentation



Use this presentation guide to share the importance of this project before you begin. It is important that everyone understands the impact that their efforts will make. A motivated team works harder!

Thank you for joining today's event, in an effort to help a family that has been touched by tragedy.

As you can imagine, crisis hits a family hard

The lives of people who are a family are so closely connected that the family unit is often viewed as a system of interconnected parts. Families experiencing a crisis, such as sudden illness, disability, or unexpected death are often paralyzed by the catastrophic and unplanned nature of the event. The family system may temporarily break down as people withdraw from life. Ability to make decisions and general initiative can sharply decline.

Grief and extreme stress are exhausting

Although the circumstances surrounding any given crisis may be unique there is one aspect that appears to be 'universal': the loss of strength and overwhelming exhaustion that is felt immediately after the event. As one researcher put it, "What is done is done with much effort and lack of zest."

- Up to a third of those directly affected by a major loss will have physical and mental after-effects
- Coexisting and overlapping psychiatric issues such as clinical depression, anxiety and panic states as well as post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) can happen
- Grief is sometimes so disruptive to a person's life that it is considered a distinct mental disorder

Social support is healthy for families in crisis

One thing that influences the effects of a crisis on a family is the level of social support they can draw on in times of need. While the exact impact of social support is still up for debate, researchers have 'consistently' found that stronger social support is linked to better physical and mental health because it can act as buffer against stress. For example, social support is associated with better adjustment to things like heart disease, diabetes, arthritis and cancer. Put simply, social support is good for you.

Practical support: just do it

Social support is usually thought of in two separate categories: emotional and practical, sometimes called tangible or instrumental.

- Emotional support is help coping with feelings and is usually provided by close friends and family.
- Practical support is typically provided by those less close to the person, like volunteers, and is defined as 'assistance with concrete tasks' such as chores or errands or the 'extent to which we feel relieved of a burdensome task.'
- Illness, disability, or loss of income are situations that are well-suited to practical support. receiving practical support typically results in a decrease in fatigue and a boost in 'vigor.'

Our pledge

So, we will be doing just that: helping the family to complete some much-needed tasks and hopefully freeing up some of their time and energy to focus on healing. Our approach to this undertaking is based upon a concept called a Time Bank. Unlike a regular bank that uses dollars as a unit of value, a Time Bank uses time as a form of currency.

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What is a Time Bank?

The Time Banking concept is adapted from the U.S Time Dollars model invented by a lawyer— Edgar Cahn—in the 1980s who was trying to make sure that the essential, but often unpaid functions of society were not pushed aside because of the money economy. He wanted to reward things like being a good parent and neighbor as well as informal mutual support and reciprocal volunteering. Time Banks are indeed a 'radical' social concept in the face of 'modern market economies and government bureaucracies.'

Do people really do this?

Yes. Time Bank participants can range from 20 people to tens of thousands. Since the 1980s, Time Banks have grown rapidly and now exist in at least twenty-two countries spanning six continents. By one count, there are about 276 Time Banks in North America with around 27,000 members. This is why some call it a social movement.

What is the benefit of a Time Bank?

Although they are quite popular, the research on Time banks is still lacking. However, we do know Time Banks are an affective tool to increase social interaction, create social networks, and generally build up the community. Relationships are built through giving and receiving. Time Banks also emphasize the talents and abilities of people rather than focusing solely on needs and deficits.

How does it work?

Here is how a typical time bank works. Pay close attention to this part because you can use this concept back at home in your own communities.

- Each hour of service a person gives to the Time Bank earns him or her one hour of credit to use for his or her own needs.
- For example, if someone helps another person with meal preparation for two hours, then the helper could request two hours of help with party planning (or something else.)
- Typically, a broker or coordinator keeps track of the exchanges and requests for help. Time Bank members can also coordinate an exchange on their own.
- Hours can also be saved (banked) or they can be donated. The latter is what we are doing.

What are some of the 'rules'?

Just like other forms of money, Time Banking only works if everyone believes in it. Time Banks follow the rule that an hour of time is equal to an hour of time—regardless of the service provided. It assumes a basic level of value for time, and operates on five core aspects that help increase individual and community wellbeing:

1. We are all assets
2. We can redefine the 'real' work of society,
3. Reciprocity
4. Social networks
5. Mutual respect

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We need to go over a few more things to think about for this project.

Regarding the sign-up for tasks on the Master list:

- This may sound obvious, but please only sign up for tasks that you know how to do. We will not be providing training on the use of any tools or equipment.
- Keep in mind the time you will need to complete the tasks you sign up for. We certainly do not want to go back on our word and add disappointment to an already difficult time for the family.
- Also, do not venture out to complete tasks on your own. For safety, please work in the teams of 2 or more people as indicated on the Master Task list.

Regarding your interaction with the family when you complete the tasks for which you signed up:

- It's okay to ask someone how they are doing, just be prepared for whatever answer they give you.
- Try not to say things that could be perceived as trite:
 - I know how you feel
 - Everything happens for a reason
 - Time heals all wounds
 - That a deceased person is in a better place
- Please refrain from talking about a time in your own life when you had a loss or tragedy. This kind of sharing is more emotional than practical support and will be left to friends, family & professionals if necessary.
- If you don't know what to say, remember, sometimes nothing needs to be said at all. You will be there to provide a helpful service and just being there is good enough

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1. Tally up the impact of your project
2. Share the results on social media to inspire others to volunteer
3. Send this form to: projects@becauseisaidiwould.com



**Promises
matter!**

Volunteer Hours

Estimated total number of hours of planning time

_____ Hours

Estimated total number of service hours including prep time,
time providing services and clean up

_____ Hours

Cost

Estimated savings from donated equipment and supplies

_____ Dollars

Total cost of purchased supplies and equipment

_____ Dollars

Comments

Please include any other comments or information that you think is important for understanding the impact (effect) of this project.



- You can adjust (or scale) the project “up” or “down” if desired.
 - Simply adapt the information and checklists provided to tailor this project to the interests of your volunteers and the specific needs of your community.
-



Scale It Up

Do the project for someone you do not know

This option will take more up-front work in order to get in touch with the family or a family representative. Use social media or other methods to express your interest in doing this project to help the family. Once you have been connected, ask for ideas about chores or errands that volunteers can do, discuss possible scheduling of the tasks identified and schedule small teams of volunteers to get the jobs done.



Scale It Down

Do the project for a friend’s family or a friend of a friend

This option is easier because the existing relationship you have with the family will help facilitate the necessary interaction in order to make it work. Ask for ideas about chores or errands that you and your team can do, and then get to it!

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Project Co-Leader Section



- Helps ensure that nothing 'falls through the cracks'
- Serves as a backup for other roles as needed

Chapter Leader Checklist



BEFORE

Before

- ☐ Work with the Project Leader to make sure everyone has completed their 'Before' service tasks
- ☐ Ensure that nothing falls through the cracks
- ☐ Provide backup for other roles as needed



DURING

During

- ☐ Work with the Project Leader and other Leadership Team roles to make sure things run smoothly
- ☐ Ensure that nothing falls through the cracks
- ☐ Provide backup for other roles as needed



AFTER

After

- ☐ Work with the Project Leader to make sure everyone has completed their 'After' service tasks
- ☐ Ensure that nothing falls through the cracks
- ☐ Provide backup for other roles as needed

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Logistics Leader Section



- Works with Project Leader to identify needed equipment & supplies
- Orders or procures any supplies, food, or other materials
- Brings above to the location and sets up before the event

Logistics Leader Checklist



Before

BEFORE

- ☐ Work with the **Project Leader** to determine equipment & supplies needed & quantities for each, as well as where you will store any items you gather
- ☐ Obtain information about preferences and other considerations that may influence how the project is done (including photography)
- ☐ Communicate above to **Project Leader** and the **Photojournalist Leader** and help make any necessary adjustments
- ☐ Collaborate with the **Photojournalist Leader** to inform volunteers of the above as well as important contact names and phone numbers for the Day of Service
- ☐ Make copies of the waivers, surveys, volunteer role sheets and Promise Cards (and cut them out)
- ☐ Just prior to the day of the Informational Meeting make sure all equipment and supplies (including copies and Promise Cards) are packed up and ready to go



During

DURING

- ☐ Bring equipment and supplies to the location of your event
- ☐ Set up the registration table (or clipboards) and set out volunteer role sheets
- ☐ Help volunteers sign-in and select a role to start with
- ☐ Oversee the equipment and find a volunteer to help hand out supplies if needed
- ☐ Work with the **Volunteer Project Leader** to coordinate other needs as they arise
- ☐ Continually ask volunteers if they need anything– bathroom breaks? Water?
- ☐ Make sure volunteers have something to do at all times; rotate people as needed
- ☐ Verify that all equipment and supplies are returned
- ☐ Oversee packing and cleaning up



After

AFTER

- ☐ Return any borrowed or unused supplies
- ☐ Let the **Project Leader** know of any donations so that a personalized thank you can be made

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Informational Meeting Equipment & Supplies



You will need the following equipment and supplies for the informational meeting.

Registration table

Pens/pencils

Promise Cards

Snacks and water

A blank Volunteer Contact Sheet

Master Task Schedule (see examples provided)

Waivers

Surveys

Make a list of equipment and supplies that volunteers will need to complete their tasks, and assist teams of volunteers to obtain what is needed for their tasks.



Instructions for using a Promise Card:

- Write your promise to complete this project on the card
- Give the card to the Volunteer Project Leader
- Fulfill your promise
- Get your card back. Keep it as a reminder that you are a person of your word!

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Contact Sheet for Volunteers

[illegible]

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Blank Sample Scheduling Form

[illegible]

EXAMPLE: Sample Scheduling Form

| Activity | Description & Notes | Estimated Time | Day/time preferred by family | Volunteers | Scheduled on |
|------------------------------|---|----------------|------------------------------|------------|--------------|
| Mow lawn | Front and back, gate will need to be unlocked. Has own mower. | | | | |
| Weeding | Front flower beds only | | | | |
| Laundry | Children's clothing will be separated into baskets | | | | |
| Grocery Shopping | Will go with volunteers. | | | | |
| Tutoring | Youngest son (1st grade)—help with math | | | | |
| Donation drop-off | Items will need to be boxed and bagged—in garage | | | | |
| Sorting bills and paper-work | Consider using accordion file holder? | | | | |
| Clean gutters | Does not have ladder | | | | |
| | | | | | |

Photojournalist Leader Section



- Promotes the event
- Captures the experience to share success and inspire volunteerism
- Ensures that policies and personal preferences regarding photography and posting to social media are strictly enforced

Photojournalist Leader Checklist



A picture is worth a thousand words. Capture the moment and share the impact volunteering can make!

Remember: depending on location and the person you are recognizing, the rules and regulations of photography may vary. Make sure to ask if the person is comfortable having his or her picture taken.



Before

BEFORE

- ☐ Take notes at the planning meeting so you know the correct date, time, and option selected for the project
- ☐ Recruit additional volunteers; advertise the project using flyers and on social media, including the roles needed on the day of service
- ☐ Charge batteries for your camera/s & ensure your phone is charged
- ☐ Check that you have extra batteries and/or chargers
- ☐ Pack up your photography/ recording equipment
- ☐ Check with the **Logistics Leader** to understand what can and cannot be captured. Depending on the preferences of the family, it may be necessary to focus only on volunteers and make sure you do not capture any images of the family, their home, their vehicles or other potentially identifying information.



During

DURING

- ☐ Bring and set up photography equipment
- ☐ Capture the project through photo or video (or both)
- ☐ Interview 5 or more people (see [Interview Guide](#))
- ☐ Make sure volunteers know how to use **#becauseisaidiwould**



After

AFTER

- ☐ Use the completed Photojournalist/Communications Interview Guide to write a short paragraph about an interesting part of the project
- ☐ Announce the outcome on social media platforms
- ☐ Send a recap including photos and write-up of interviews to projects@becauseisaidiwould.com

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TIPS FOR TAKING INTERESTING PHOTOS

Before and After—

- Show a striking difference between the start of the project and at the end.

Subject selection—

- Choose people/places/things to photograph that are unexpected, surprising, emotional, or action-oriented.

Frame and focus—

- Eliminate unnecessary background by getting 'up close' to the intended subject/s of the photo.
- Experiment with different angles and perspectives that draw the viewer in.

- Take a before and after shot
- Do a group photo
- Catch an action shot

Sample Interview Questions

1. What is the most unexpected thing to occur today?
2. Have you ever done something like this before?
3. What did you learn today?
4. Has this issue affected you directly or indirectly?
5. What did you discover while interacting with others? Does anything stand out? Any interesting discussions?



Write a short story that recounts interesting experiences people had during this event. Share your story with *because I said I would* headquarters and post it to social media to increase awareness and promote volunteerism!

Use the back of this sheet if desired

Email to projects@becauseisaidiwould.com

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Fundraising Leader Section



- Works with the Project Leader to determine if additional funds or supplies are needed
- Finds and collects donations if necessary

Fundraising Leader Checklist



BEFORE

Before

- ☐ Find out what equipment/supplies are needed (if any) by checking with the **Logistics Leader**
- ☐ Identify possible donors for needed supplies or equipment
- ☐ Plan and complete a fundraising event **prior to the day of service** if additional funds or supplies are needed (see [fundraising guide sheet](#))
- ☐ Use acquired funds to purchase needed equipment or supplies by working with the **Project Leader**
- ☐ Give any other donated equipment or supplies to the **Logistics Leader**



DURING

During

- ☐ Collect and compile information for the Impact Report by doing the following:
 - ☐ Recognize and record how many volunteers are there
 - ☐ Find out from **the Logistics Leader** the cost of purchased supplies and how many of each were needed
 - ☐ Distinguish between what was donated, borrowed, and purchased



AFTER

After

- ☐ Inform the **Project Leader** of information collected for the Impact Report
- ☐ Thank any donors who had a part in making this project possible by working with the **Project Leader**

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Fundraising Guide Sheet



Below are some important considerations for planning and completing a fundraising event. The more time you have in advance to plan, the more likely it is that you will have a successful event.

Ideas

- Flea market
- Bake sale
- Ice cream bar/potato bar/spaghetti dinner/pancake breakfast
- Bingo
- Silent Auction

- Make a thorough **supplies list**. Don't forget about the **place or specific services** you may need like landfill fees or food delivery.
- **Do the math** to find out your '**break even**' **point**: Subtract the cost of doing your fundraiser from the minimum amount of money that you could possibly raise. Make sure it is possible that you can raise enough funds to make your efforts worthwhile.
- **Research nearby similar fundraisers and schedule** accordingly to reduce duplication of similar projects in the same area at the same time
- **Promote/advertise** your event as far in advance as possible
- Make it clear what **methods of payment** will be accepted (cash, Paypal, credit, checks)
- **Inform donors** that their donation is NOT tax deductible (because you are not a non-profit organization)
- Ensure your **electronic payment methods** are fully functional
- Get sufficient bills and coins to **make change** if collecting cash
- **Donate the surplus**: Any amount in excess of what is needed should be gifted to *because I said I would* or invested in another project
- After your fundraiser, **make personal thank you notes/calls** using the donor's name

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