

TOGETHER WE CAN

A GUIDE TO FAMILY SUPPORT VOLUNTEERING

CHECKLIST OF THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN ENGAGING FAMILIES OR PEOPLE USING SERVICES

Together We Can is a collection of resources for organisations developing a service where volunteers support families of a child with a life-limiting or life-threatening condition. The resources were developed and tested specifically for this purpose with volunteers working in the homes of a child with a life-limiting condition, but might be useful for any organisation developing volunteer services.

CHECKLIST OF THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN ENGAGING FAMILIES OR PEOPLE USING SERVICES

This checklist will help you identify your organisation's strengths and weaknesses when inviting your service users to receive support from volunteers. Simply tick whether your organisation currently does each thing so you can see any areas to work on. You can use the comments / evidence column to insert notes about what documents, resources and evidence you have available. Links to Together We Can resources are included so you can go straight to sections most relevant to you.

Families and other people using services can get huge benefits from some extra help from a Family Support Volunteer. However, some people might feel uncomfortable being offered help and others might find it stressful to have a volunteer visiting their home and possibly supporting them with personal tasks such as ironing, cleaning and hanging out washing. Promoting the service needs to be done sensitively so people don't take offence. Sometimes it takes a while for interest to build up. Word of mouth from families who've been helped can get others interested.

It might be important to consider whether you will set a time limit for receiving support from a volunteer so people don't get too reliant on help.

Things to think about	Yes	Partly	No	Comments / evidence available	For more help click on the links below
Promoting the service					
Have you got simple and colourful materials for advertising volunteer support to families or service users?					Example poster for families Example leaflet for families
Are your promotional materials clear about what the Family Support Volunteer service is and how families could benefit?					
Are your promotional materials written in a way that is sensitive so that people offered help don't take offence?					
Are you using social media to good effect?					
Do you have a simple form so staff can refer people to the service?					Example family referral form
Have you engaged with staff teams so they promote and refer people to the service?					Top tips for engaging staff and families in planning your Family Support Volunteering service
Are you using word of mouth from families to increase interest in the service?					
Have you written up some case studies from families who have benefited so people understand what the service involves?					

Things to think about	Yes	Partly	No	Comments / evidence available	For more help click on the links below
Matching families and volunteers					
Do you have a simple form for families registering for volunteer support? Having families fill in a quick registration form that is not too complex helps you learn what type of help they want. This could be done as part of a face to face or telephone conversation or simply as an online or paper form.					Example family registration form
Do you have a process in place to match families with suitable and available volunteers?					Top tips for matching Family Support Volunteers and families
Do you have processes or policies for what would happen if a volunteer and family did not get on?					
Does your volunteer training and supervision / support sessions cover setting boundaries and not getting too attached to families?					
Do you have information for families so they don't get too attached to volunteers?					
Have you thought through whether to recruit families first, volunteers first or both simultaneously?					
Have you set a time limit for how long families can receive support from a volunteer? Some services have set a six week limit and others have found six months works well.					