

# Stepping Stones Center

## Volunteer Handbook

Stepping Stones Center  
5650 Given Road  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45243  
(513) 831-4660, ext. 27

Camp Allyn  
1414 Lake Allyn Road  
Batavia, Ohio 45103  
(513) 732-0240

Email: [volunteers@steppingstonescenter.org](mailto:volunteers@steppingstonescenter.org)  
[www.steppingstonescenter.org](http://www.steppingstonescenter.org)

**Notes:**

Welcome  
to  
Stepping Stones Center!

Stepping Stones Center was founded by a group of parents interested in establishing a day camp program for their children with disabilities. In 1963, this group became incorporated as "Camping for the Handicapped". Day Camp opportunities were provided for children of all ages with physical, mental or emotional limitations.

Since that initial beginning, the agency was renamed, began providing year round social and recreational opportunities for children and adults, became a United Way Agency and merged with Camp Allyn. Expanded programming allowed educational, vocational training and opportunities for the community to be included in many services.

The agency has remained loyal to the mission of providing opportunities for children and adults with disabilities, which improve lives, increase independence and promote inclusion within the Greater Cincinnati community.

Stepping Stones Center operates two different locations: Stepping Stones, Given Road and Camp Allyn in Batavia. Both facilities offer year-round programming.

In 1921, the Rotary Club of Cincinnati started Camp Allyn as a residential camp for area children and adults with physical disabilities, primarily resulting from polio. Rotary continued to operate the camp until the 1960's when a partnership with Stepping Stones Center was developed. Stepping Stones took over the day to day operation of the Allyn facility and the Rotary Club continues its commitment through financial support.

Volunteers are needed throughout the year at both of our locations and serve in many different roles, from assisting directly in program areas, to office and clerical duties, to outdoor groundwork and maintenance. Both the day camps as well as the Weekend Respite Program (Fall/Winter/Spring) at Allyn as well as the day camp at Camp Stepping Stone utilize hundreds of volunteers throughout the summer. In all cases, volunteers provide support for our staff and continue to serve as the backbone of this organization.

The information in this handbook is designed to assist and acquaint volunteers with Stepping Stones Center. Whether you are a teenager with a community service requirement or an adult volunteer who just wants to donate time and make a difference in the life of an individual with a disability---your decision to spend time with us is greatly appreciated.

Thank you for joining us!

## Volunteer Job Description

**Job Title:** Stepping Stones Center or Camp Allyn Volunteer

**Reports to:** Volunteer Coordinator or Assigned Staff

**Volunteers should have a sincere desire to work with people with disabilities and be willing to help others. A positive attitude and sensitivity are required in order to be a good volunteer at Stepping Stones Center.**

### Responsibilities:

**Day Camp volunteers** assist staff in carrying out all daily program activities, performing all assignments in a responsible manner and according to rules and procedures. Volunteers must be able to participate fully in activities and follow directions.

**Year-round program volunteers** assist program staff in a basic support role. This includes interacting with program participants, engaging in games or structured activities, assisting in the pool area and in some instances providing duties as a mentor. Year-round volunteers will always work in conjunction with a staff person and are expected to adhere to the agency rules and regulations.

### Specific Duties:

1. Assist the Staff in organizing daily activities.
2. Assist participants when arriving or leaving the facility.
3. Assist assigned participants in moving around facility.
4. Assist, guide, and encourage participants as needed in daily activities including but not limited to...art, sports, creative expression, outdoor education, boating, aquatic program (volunteers are expected to get in the pool with their camper) and special events.

5. Assist participants in the locker rooms and rest rooms .

**NO VOLUNTEER SHOULD EVER ASSIST IN REST ROOMS OR LOCKER ROOMS ALONE.** Staff members are required to be present and will be able to help you at ALL times.

6. Assist staff with cleanup and other duties.
7. Be flexible and cooperative when asked to change groups as needed.

## Things To Remember... When You Meet A Person Who Has A Disability

- \* A person who has a disability is a person who has the same needs and wants as you do. Sometimes they just have different ways of expressing them.
- \* Concentrate on what the participant **CAN ACCOMPLISH**, not what they **HAVE DIFFICULTY MASTERING!**
- \* Encourage participation to the fullest extent of the participant's abilities.
- \* **NEVER** discuss a person's disability in front of them or talk about them like they're not there. Any questions or concerns should be discussed with a staff member in a private setting.
- \* The participant probably has many other interests besides those connected to their disability. Try to find things that he/she is interested in to talk about or make a point to ask a staff person what the person likes.
- \* Offer assistance if asked, or if the need seems obvious. Don't over do it or insist on helping. Respect the individual's rights and be patient.
- \* Do not complete activities for the participant.
- \* Be considerate of the extra time it might take for a person with a disability to get things said or done. Let the person set the pace when talking or walking.
- \* Speak directly to a person with a disability. Don't use a companion to be a conversational go-between. **Slow down and listen carefully!**
- \* Don't move a wheelchair or crutches out of reach of a person who uses them. Do not sit in or lean onto a wheelchair.
- \* Never start pushing a wheelchair without first asking if you may do so.
- \* Give whole, unhurried attention to the person who has difficulty speaking. Don't talk for the person, but give help when needed. Keep your manner encouraging rather than correcting. When necessary, ask questions that require short answers or a nod of the head.
- \* **Treat all participants/campers with respect and dignity!**
- \* **Relax and be yourself! Having FUN is part of the experience!**

## Health & Safety Issues

Stepping Stones Center strives to provide a safe and healthful environment for our participants clients, staff, volunteers, and others while serving community needs in an informed, sensitive and nondiscriminatory manner. Because people may not even know they have an infectious disease, it is very important to use universal precautions and treat everyone as if they may have an infectious disease. Means to achieve this goal will include relevant training and educational opportunities as well as specific control measures.

### Things to remember:

- \* Use latex-free surgical style gloves when feeding someone or helping them in the restroom. Latex-free gloves can be found in all locker rooms and rest rooms. Ask if the participant has an allergy to latex!
- \* Wash hands after feeding or toileting any participant, even though you wear gloves.
- \* Wash hands after you use the restroom.
- \* The agency policy and guidelines are reviewed with volunteers at the time of training.

*Copies of the  
Agency Chronic Infectious Disease Policy  
and Guidelines are available upon request from  
the Volunteer office.*

- \* **If you take any medication while volunteering, it MUST be locked in the nurse's office. ALL participants/campers, volunteers, and staff medications (including aspirin and cold medicine) must be distributed by the nurse.**
- \* **NEVER** leave a participant/camper alone. Alone is **NOT OK!** Stay with your assigned unit or group at all times.
- \* One of our major responsibilities is to promote safety and to create an environment which is as safe and injury free as possible. In the event of an accident or injury, notify a staff person immediately and he/she will decide the appropriate course of action. Every high risk area (the lake and pools) has its own set of safety rules. The supervisor in that area will explain these rules. In all situations, report injuries (your own or a participant/camper) and any questions regarding safety or first aid to your immediate supervisor.

## Stepping Stone Center -- Expectations of Volunteers --

All volunteers at Stepping Stones and Camp Allyn are expected to:

- 1.) Ask questions and communicate with staff.
- 2.) Demonstrate appropriate behavior and a respectful, sensitive attitude towards our program participants.
- 3.) Follow all established rules and emergency procedures.
- 4.) Exercise caution and good judgment when working with participants.  
**\*\*\*\*Never leave a participant unattended! \*\*\*\***
- 5.) Accept the Agency's right to dismiss any volunteer for poor performance, breaking rules or policies.
- 6.) Volunteers wishing to work in childcare areas at Stepping Stones or Camp Allyn **MUST** submit additional paperwork including a medical form signed by a physician. Extreme care is taken when placing volunteers with our youngest participants. Individuals not in compliance will **NOT** be permitted to volunteer until the proper paperwork is completed.
- 7.) **ALL** volunteers **Must** sign in with staff upon arrival.

## --Volunteer Expectations-- of Stepping Stones Center

Stepping Stones Center (including Camp Allyn) is expected to:

- 1.) Provide a Volunteer Coordinator who will supervise volunteers and respond to related questions or problems.
- 2.) Provide Agency staff in the assigned volunteer work area and work site to offer appropriate training as necessary .
- 3.) Maintain accurate attendance records and evaluations as needed.
- 4.) Serve as a reference source for volunteers seeking employment, college admissions, school credit, etc.
- 5.) Provide a safe working environment and maintain adequate public liability insurance for volunteers while they are working for the agency.
- 6.) Respect, appreciate, and recognize the contributions made by our volunteers.

## Policies and Procedures

**Drugs and Alcohol:** Stepping Stones Center will not permit any use, exchange, or distribution of drugs by a volunteer. Anyone suspected of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol will be dismissed immediately.

**Smoking:** Volunteers may NOT smoke or be in the possession of cigarettes while on the grounds of Stepping Stones Center or Camp Allyn.

**Telephone Calls:** Staff will direct volunteers to telephones that may be used as necessary. We ask that volunteers limit the use of the agency telephones whenever possible. Emergency calls for our volunteers should be made through the receptionist at either Stepping Stones Center or Camp Allyn. Those numbers are listed on the last page of this handbook.

**Cell Phones:** The use of cell phones, both calls and text messaging, is prohibited while volunteers are working in program areas or with summer campers. Cell phones should be left at home or locked in your vehicle.

**DressCode:** Please dress so that you are comfortable and able to perform your volunteer duties. Summer programs are held regardless of weather, so be sure to dress appropriately. Please call, with questions regarding specific clothing requirements. Open toe shoes, heeies or sandals are **NOT** appropriate!

**Transfer:** Any one volunteer wishing to transfer from their assigned area must see the Volunteer Coordinator. We will always try to accommodate your wishes, however, at times a volunteer may be asked to work in an area that presents certain challenges. After several days if you still are not comfortable ask to be switched to another volunteer assignment.

**Food and Beverages:** Day Camp volunteers need to bring lunch each day. Meals are provided at Camp Allyn for volunteers during Fall/Winter/Spring Respite weekends. Year-round volunteers can bring lunch or may go off site as necessary. Soft drink and snack machines are available at both facilities (NOTE: drink and snack machines at Stepping Stones may only be used before or after day camp). Be sure to bring change with you!

**Warnings and Dismissals:** Warnings can be given for breaking any rules within the Volunteer Handbook and for inappropriate behavior. (This includes at camp or on the buses). Warnings may be written or verbal from the Volunteer Coordinator. Volunteers will immediately be dismissed for: possessing, using drugs or alcohol, smoking, willful neglect of a participant, fighting, leaving the grounds during camp hours, stealing, or using undue force with a participant. Agency administration reserves the right to dismiss a volunteer for these and other violations of agency policy

## Policies and Procedures

(continued)

**Swimming:** Each pool has its own staff. Volunteers will assist the staff as directed and may assist with dressing and helping participants to benches in pool area. Volunteers who are scheduled to go in the pool will receive directions from pool staff and are expected to adhere to all guidelines as explained by the staff. **One-piece swimsuit is required.** (No 2-piece suits allowed. Volunteers are expected to get in the pool with their campers.

**Parking:** During summer camp all volunteers at Day Camp Stepping Stone **MUST** park in the Red Bird Lake lot (around the big bend in Given Road). Volunteer's cars **may not** enter the main driveway for any reason. Volunteers driven to camp should also be dropped off in the same Red Bird Lake parking lot. Buses, vans and camper's cars can enter the main driveway.

Camp Allyn volunteers should park in the area adjacent to the dumpster. In all cases be considerate of other's vehicles.

Year-round volunteers may park adjacent to program areas at times other than summer camp season.

**Personal Possessions:** Any volunteer who wishes to bring personal possessions such as money, sports equipment, musical instruments, etc. is directly responsible for those items. The agency will not be held responsible for any lost or damaged items brought voluntarily on the grounds.

Stepping Stones Center or The Rotary Club of Cincinnati are not responsible for the loss or breakage of personal property.

**Confidentiality:** Information about participants is **confidential**. Refrain from talking about participants on social media networks like: Facebook, Twitter, My Space, Utube & Flickr or using full names outside of camp. **Photographing campers is NOT permitted (camera phones, personal cameras, etc.**

**Respect:** Respect each other. Remember that individuals with disabilities are people, first and foremost. Respect them as well as staff and other volunteers. Respect all of participant's belongings.

**Safety:** Stepping Stones Center regards the safety of clients, campers, staff, volunteers and visitors to be of primary importance. Therefore, it is mandatory that reasonable procedures be followed in the event of a fire or other emergency. Should you find yourself in such a situation:

- \* remain calm and help others to do so;
- \* confirm that staff have been notified;
- \* leave the building as quickly as possible;
- \* once all individuals have evacuated the building, proceed to designated meeting area (All volunteers should make sure they understand these procedures including the location of their designated meeting area).

## IMPORTANT NOTICE

You are required to return this signed and dated page to:

Stepping Stones Volunteer  
Services Office

Given or Allyn locations.

Form can be mailed to:  
Stepping Stones Center  
Volunteer Office  
5650 Given Road  
Cincinnati, OH 45243

call 513/831-4660, extension 27  
with questions.

I have read and accept the policies set forth in the 2010 Volunteer Handbook provided to me as a registered volunteer of Stepping Stones Center.

The policies and procedures are the same for both Given and Allyn facilities (unless otherwise noted).

My signature below indicates that I understand and agree with ALL information.

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Volunteer signature

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Date