**Hosting a Volunteer Group**

**Tips and Tricks for Success**

**Before the Group Arrives – Be prepared**

* Gather Supplies and materials for the project(s)
* Determine where they can store personal items – coats, purses, etc.
* Identify staff leaders for the project
* Notify staff about the group project (who, what, when) and their role
* Have a back-up project or two prepared (shelf reading, put like books together, sort DVDs, dusting, measuring)
* Consider, and plan for, any risk/safety concerns regarding the project
* Send the group organizer a quick email confirming the project. Include:
  + How to enter the building if the project is before/after closing
  + Who they should ask for when they arrive, and where to meet them
  + Say “Thank you!”

**Project Day**

* Arrive Early to arrange materials
* Greet the Group:
  + Smile and introduce yourself.
  + Provide a quick overview of the Library / your department.
  + Describe the project.
  + Explain why the project is important. How will it impact our patrons, staff & other volunteers? How many people will be served? How is this activity connected to our mission? etc.
  + Share general housekeeping: where are the bathrooms, any safety concerns (like “lift with your legs, not your back”), where they can stash their stuff, etc.
  + Collect the short-term volunteer applications (and parental permission if appropriate) from each participant. Have a few blank ones on hand for folks that may have forgotten to bring it with them.
  + Take a group picture
  + Say “Thank you!”
* Launch the project:
  + Train the volunteers for the task. Demonstrations are great!
  + If you’re breaking the group into several smaller teams, enlist the help of other staff members.
  + Check in with the groups as the project progresses. Provide feedback - positive and corrective.
  + Watch the time for breaks and ending time.
  + Start back-up projects as needed.
  + Take “in action” photos or designate a volunteer as the photographer.
* Conclusion:
  + Ask the group to clean-up their tools and gather/store any supplies used during the project.
  + Thank the group again reinforcing how their support helped our mission/program.
  + Optional: conduct a short reflection exercise.
  + Pass out “Thank you” gift if one is available.
  + Make sure everyone has their belongings.
  + Let them know that they are welcome back.

**Post Project**

* Send the paperwork, leftover gifts to SPVR at Central.
* Evaluate the project. Was there enough work for the group? How can we improve the volunteer experience/project management/training/etc.? Should we do this project again?
* Email any feedback the Volunteer Resource Specialist.
* Email the photos to Volunteer Resource Specialist.
* Send a “Thank You!” email or card to the group leader; include the photos of the group.