

Building on Youth Program with Habitat for Humanity of Greater Portland

What is the program? This program is self-initiated and involves four steps: learning about Habitat, helping Habitat by doing at least two activities, reflecting on the activity through art or writing, and celebrating their accomplishment by sharing their reflection with the community. We will present each youth participant who completes the program with a certificate of participation and an official Habitat volunteer t-shirt.

How can someone get started? Each young person should discuss with an adult sponsor which activities they wish to perform. A list of activities is provided in this packet of information. For some tasks the adult/young person pair or group will need to make prior arrangements (this is noted with a * on the activities list) with the Habitat staff. Depending on our build schedule and the number of youth who are participating, please note that not all tasks are available all the time.

Do adults need to go along with the youth when they come to Habitat? Yes, we require a 1adult/4 child ratio for activities that occur at Habitat. We are very interested in keeping kids safe and utilizing their time effectively and would like to have Habitat be an activity where adults and youth can work side by side.

Why are none of the activities helping to build the homes? Because of safety concerns and labor laws, youth under 16 are not allowed on the job site while work is being performed. Youth 16 & 17 can help on construction tasks but cannot use power tools or work on the roof, ladders or scaffolding. Groups of youth can volunteer but there must be a one adult to four youth ratio.

Can youth help at the Habitat ReStore? The ReStore is a nonprofit store that intakes donated homeowner materials (cutting down on waste and disposal fees) and resells all items at a discount. All funds from the store go towards the construction of Habitat for Humanity homes. 14 & 15 year olds can help at the Re-Store with an adult working beside them and a signed release of liability. 16 & 17 year olds can volunteer independently. Speak with our Volunteer Manager Kate about scheduling your service hours. (14 & 15 year olds: if you can't find a guardian to come with you, feel free to ask our Youth Program Coordinator Stefanie, located at the same number).

What if I have a different idea of what to do? Great! Just discuss it with Stefanie, Youth Program Coordinator or Kate, Volunteer Manager.

Why did you start this program? Habitat for Humanity is committed to involving youth in solving the important problem of poverty housing, but most youth programs have targeted school groups or youth organizations. This provides a way for kids to be involved in a way that is self-directed and fits into their personal schedule as well as the schedule of their adult sponsor.

Can the young person use this for community service for school or service clubs? Yes, as long as the form has been filled out and the hours verified by the adult sponsor. Those with court-ordered community service need to contact Habitat prior to the performing their hours.

What if there is a group who wishes to volunteer? If you have a group of young folks that wishes to complete the Building on Youth program, then it is probably best to plan activities where most of the tasks can be accomplished away from the job site (for example, making snacks and then bringing them to the site). For a few tasks we can take small groups of 5-7 folks. Please discuss your options with the Youth Program Coordinator.

Questions? Contact Stefanie, Youth Program Coordinator. 207-772-2151 youth@habitatme.org

Building on Youth

Learn – Choose one activity

Attend a house dedication – all ages

Read part of all of Nickel and Dimed, On (Not) Getting By in America by Barbara Ehrenreich – for older teens

Read two children's books produced by Habitat International: Grandpa's Hammer, Raising the Roof, Doorway to the World or Building Friends, or another book related to housing and homelessness topics - for younger kids

Check out the “learn activities” on Habitat for Humanity Charlotte's web site at www.habitatcharlotte.org (not all activities can be done in Portland, but MOST can!)

Using www.habitat.org:

Read a recent edition of Habitat International's publication, Habitat World

Learn about how Habitat builds in other countries

Check out their youth and habitat page (under “get involved”) for more education activities

Make an appointment with the Youth Program Coordinator for a brief tour of Habitat for Humanity of Greater Portland's headquarters and ReStore.

Talk with or recruit a volunteer and interview them

Visit www.raisethefloor.org to learn about surviving on a minimum wage income.

Act – Choose two activities

Visit www.habitat.org/ccvp and <http://www.habitatcharlotte.org/BOY-mainpage.htm> for ideas (these ideas were brainstormed by Habitat for Humanity of Charlotte, but MOST also pertain to Portland, ME)

14 & 15 year olds can volunteer with an adult at the Habitat Re-Store (If you can't find an adult to serve with, tap into our own Youth Program Coordinator, who would love to work with you!)

* = Indicates that you should contact Habitat beforehand to coordinate your efforts with our current program!

Interview a homeowner/volunteer for an article for our Youth E-Newsletter*

Provide and bring lunch or a snack to the job site (call 207-772-2151 and ask for Kate, Volunteer Manager to learn how many people will be at the site)*

Draw greeting cards for us to use to thank donors and volunteers*

Visit a site and write a message to the homeowner on material that will go into the home*

Construct a small project like a bird houses, window box, clothing rack, etc. to give to a homeowner or sell as a fundraiser in the ReStore*

Help a homeowner clean their house before they move in* (Occurs infrequently)

Make and or contribute something that can be a door prize at homeowner picnic or Habitat event*

Lead a prayer, sing or play music at a home dedication*

Hold a bake sale to raise money for Habitat (works well if you're positioned door as a religious service or special event is occurring!)

Help serve lunches to week-long volunteer builders during Collegiate Challenge or Workcamp weeks*

Make table decorations for special events*

Help staff a Habitat event such as the volunteer appreciation dinner (in March), the Walkathons (2 in April, 2 in May)*

Help plan the LEGO Youth Can Build Event as a youth representative on the steering committee, OR volunteer at the event (in May 2010 at the Maine Mall)*

Create posters for upcoming Habitat programs and events – especially if your church or group is sponsoring a home*

Make announcements in your church when volunteers are needed*

Challenge your group to collect pennies to use to help build a home

Lead a devotion at the job site (applicable for build days attended by organization with religious orientation)*

Reflect – Choose one activity

Create a picture through photography, painting, drawing, etc. or write an essay or story about your Habitat experience or what home means to you.

Celebrate

Turn in your “I did it” form along with any artwork, stories, or essays you created. We'll add your contribution to our web site using only your first name and last initial. We will send your Certificate and T-Shirt to you.

Building on Youth

(So that we have your information on file, if you are planning to help out at a Habitat site, please send in this sheet with the contact information filled out before you start and then again after you complete your project). Contact info for young person participating (for group please attach a list)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, state, zip code: _____

Contact info for adult sponsor (if certificates and t-shirt are for a group they will be sent to the adult)

Name: _____

Address (if different): _____

City, state, zip code (if different): _____

Phone or email: _____

Learn – please describe the activity you did to learn about Habitat Time spent: _____

Act – please describe the activities you did to help Habitat for Humanity Portland Time spent: _____

1) _____

2) _____

Reflect – Please describe your reflection activity and how it represents what you learned and did. Attach your reflection to this form and mail, email, or hand-deliver to Stefanie Millette, Youth Program Coordinator
youth@habitatme.org Time spent: _____

Young person verification: Please sign here to verify that you completed the above activities

date

signature

Adult sponsor verification: Please sign here to verify that the young person completed the above activities

date

signature