

Children's Activity Volunteers



Overview

Evening children's activities at Alpha House begin at 7pm and end promptly at 8pm daily. Please arrive by 6:45pm. There are additional children's activity times from 2pm until 5pm on Saturday and Sunday afternoons. This important aspect of Alpha House programming could not happen without volunteer involvement! Two adults (over the age of 18) are needed to supervise the children during these times. Children's activities may occur outside if the weather is nice, in the basement play area, or at the dining room tables. A staff member or the Evening Host will give you instructions, help round up the children, go over the rules, and provide you with a walkie-talkie to use to contact staff with questions, problems, or in case of emergency.

We try to promote a structured, creative, and fun environment. A different activity is scheduled for each evening (see the schedule below). However, volunteers are welcome to prepare a special activity to lead during their volunteer shift, but this is not required. If you have come prepared to lead a special activity, please talk to a staff member when you first arrive at Alpha House. If you are interested in leading a more extensive activity, please contact your Congregation Coordinator prior to your volunteer shift. Your Coordinator will help facilitate the planning of this activity with Alpha House staff.

Please refer to the Volunteer Handbook for more detailed information on volunteering at Alpha House.

Activity Volunteer Responsibilities

- Please sign-in at the front desk and make a nametag.
- Check in with the Evening Host or staff member and let them know if this is your first time volunteering at Alpha House.
- Find out what the evening activity will be or let the staff know if you have prepared something.
- Staff or the Evening Host will direct you to the play area (outside, basement, dining room) and give any special instructions.
- Please make sure that children have asked their parents for permission prior to participating in activities.
- Participate in the evening activity and model healthy interactive play. Redirect kids when needed.
- Alert staff immediately if problems arise, if you have questions or if you are unsure of what to do.
- Please remind, encourage, and model picking up all toys and cleaning up the play area prior to ending activity time.
- Check in with the Evening Host or staff member when leaving.

Important Things to Remember:

Touching: You should not initiate physical contact with children at Alpha House. However, if a child asks for a hug, it is fine to give a quick one. Please do not pick children up without the parent's permission, give piggyback rides, or engage in other overly physical play. Some children have experienced or witnessed abuse, and we need to respect their physical space and mentor appropriate boundaries.

Discipline: At Alpha House, staff and volunteers never discipline the children. We feel very strongly that this is the role of the parents. If, while you are playing or working with children and they get out of control or do something you consider worthy of discipline, please immediately inform the staff. Do not impose consequences for misbehavior (even time out). A gentle but firm tone of voice works best in redirecting children. You may also repeat expectations to the child. If the misbehavior continues, notify staff and they will involve the parent. This helps to maintain parental authority and provides a safe and supportive environment for all of our children, parents, volunteers, and staff.

Helmets: Helmets are required when riding bikes, skateboards, or when using roller skates/blades.

Adult Supervision: Two adults are needed to be with the children at all times when playing outside or in the basement.

Ask for Help: If you ever feel uncomfortable or unsure with a responsibility (too many kids for you to watch, discipline problems, etc.) please tell the staff or the Evening Host immediately.

Questions, concerns, ideas? Please don't hesitate to speak with a staff member, your Congregation Coordinator, or contact Heidi Beck, IHN Volunteer Coordinator!

Weekly Activity Schedule



Monday: Game Night

There are many game options to choose from on Monday evenings. During warmer weather, volunteers and children may go outside and play games like soccer, red rover, basketball, or tag. When it is raining or too cold to go outside, the group can either play active indoor games in the downstairs play area or quieter board games upstairs in the dining room. Downstairs play usually includes games like Simon Says, Mother May I, or Hide and Seek. Alpha House also has a closet full of board games to choose from. If you are volunteering for activity time on a Monday, you don't need to worry about bringing any games with you. However, you are welcome to bring along a favorite game to play with Alpha House children if you would like.

Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday, and Sunday: Open Play

Open play allows the children to exercise their creative imaginations! If the weather is nice, volunteers and children may play outside and do activities such as riding bikes, playing in the play ground, or drawing with sidewalk chalk. If the group stays inside, they will go to the playroom in the basement where there are lots of toys, costumes and other interesting things to do. The children lead the way on these nights, so don't worry about bringing any sort of organized activity.

Wednesday: Art Night

Art night usually takes place in the basement, however sometimes art projects are done upstairs in the dining room. We have many art supplies in our art room. Generally, a staff member or Alpha Volunteer (a regular volunteer not connected to the congregation) will organize the art night activity. As a volunteer, your role is to help the kids with the project and be an extra set of hands. As always, if you have an idea of something you would like to do with the children, please feel free to bring it!

Friday: Movie Night

Every Friday, a staff member rents a movie for the children to watch and sometimes the parents join too! A staff member will usually bring popcorn and juice for the group midway through the movie. As a volunteer, please help supervise the children and enjoy the show. And, of course, have some popcorn ☺