

Agency Checklist for a Successful Day

Plan

- Assign an alternate staff member to be the **Project Coordinator Backup**.
- If your event is weather-dependent, have an alternate plan. Because many projects are indoors and are not affected by the weather, it is up to the organization and team to decide on an alternate date in the event of inclement weather.
- Have a **contingency plan** if the project takes more or less time than you estimated.
- Have **nametags** available for your Days of Caring volunteers and the staff working with them. This will help you call them by name and get to know them faster.
- Assign staff members to **greet volunteers**, provide orientation, conduct a tour, take pictures, and assist the media.
- Make sure sufficient **supplies and equipment** are available and ready to use.
- Create a task list or **instruction sheet** for volunteers so that your project is as clear as possible. That way, you'll have fewer questions to answer.
- Plan ahead to provide water or other **refreshments** for your volunteers.
- **Remind clients and staff of the day's activities**. To avoid unpleasant surprises, be certain that everyone is aware of the plans.
- Post important **phone numbers** (fire, police, and rescue squad) at the site.
- Have a **first aid kit** on site (bee sting kit, band-aids, aspirin, and ice packs).

Risk-management

As with all service projects, careful planning and risk-management practices are essential. Days of Caring projects are unique because they are one-time projects involving many volunteers—most of whom you will not meet before the day of the project. Yet, there are steps you can take to minimize the risk involved with your project.

Evaluate your project; acknowledge and identify potential risk factors.

- **Education and supervision** are the **two best risk-management tools**. Ensure that there is a project supervisor onsite at all times.
- Ensure that all volunteers complete the liability waiver prior to beginning their projects. Waivers will be provided by the United Way.
- Communicate with volunteers about risks involved and determine volunteers' qualifications.
- Orient and train all volunteers before each activity.
- Eliminate risk when possible.
For example: Volunteers in schools should not be left alone with children. Volunteers should not handle power tools or specialized equipment if they are not properly trained. Make sure the workplace is free of potential safety hazards.

Review your organization's **insurance coverage** and update it, if necessary. If your organization does not carry liability insurance on all volunteers, we advise that you purchase insurance to cover special event volunteers like the Days of Caring.



Coordinate the Project

Attend the match meeting. You and the Team Leader will confirm:

- Directions to the project site.
- Parking details (Should they carpool?).
- The time that the team will arrive at the project site.
- Supplies that the organization will provide.
- Supplies that the team might bring. (Encourage volunteers to bring tools: paint rollers, shovels, pruning shears, etc. However, securing needed materials for the project is the responsibility of your organization).
- Appropriate clothing.
- Skills necessary (especially for construction projects).
- Food arrangements (Who provides snacks, lunch, drinks?).
- Bathroom facilities (for outdoor projects).
- Rain plan (Will your project take place if it's raining? Will you reschedule? How will you coordinate with each other if it is raining? How will the volunteers be informed?)
- Set a time that the Team Leader can visit the project site prior to the Days of Caring.
- Set a time **prior to the event start** for all volunteers under the age of 18 to sign the liability waiver. All other volunteers will sign liability forms at the project site.

Showcase and Celebrate

The Days of Caring is a "ready-made" marketing opportunity for your organization! Don't miss this opportunity to show off your organization to the volunteers, potential donors and the media. Get the message out about what your organization does.

- **Welcome your volunteers** with a banner and make them feel at home at your organization.
- Feature the volunteer team in your organization's **member/donor newsletter** to report your success to the community. Other communication tools might include your web site and letters to the editor thanking volunteers. Please share any published items with United Way for our Days of Caring scrapbook.
- Prepare an **information packet** about your organization for your Days of Caring volunteers.
- Give the volunteers a brief **tour of your organization** and a short orientation to your programs. It's not recommended to do this first thing in the day, as they will be anxious to get started on their project!
- **Invite the volunteers back** later in the year (to see the blooming daffodils that they planted, or to participate in an activity at the recreation center that they painted).
- **Recognize volunteers throughout the day** with smiles and kind words.
- Plan small, special tokens of appreciation (staff delivering popsicles to volunteers on a hot day, students drawing pictures for volunteers, etc.)
- Send a **thank-you note to the volunteer team members and CEO** via the Team Leader.
- Invite volunteers to add their **names to your mailing list** to announce future volunteer opportunities or organization events.
- Send before and after pictures of the project site to the Team Leader.