

substitutions are encouraged! Remember, group best. The social issues presented in this toolkit vary in level of seriousness and therefore the tone of each presentation should be modified to meet the intellectual and emotional functioning of the group. Presentations can be formal or informal - the project coordinator can present a casual five-minute discussion on the topic, guided by the included PowerPoint slides (see appendix B), or an invited guest speaker can deliver a short synopsis on the significance of the topic to the local community (see Additional Program Recommendations for tips on how to secure an outside speaker).

At the conclusion of the presentation/introduction of the social issue, the activity begins. The tangible goal for each activity is to provide a product that will be donated to a local charity or

you know the needs and interests of your non-profit organization whose mission relates to the social issue that was addressed during the volunteer activity. For example, one social issue presented in this toolkit is homelessness. The suggested activity involves creating PLARN blankets out of recycled plastic bags and donating the blankets to a local homeless shelter or other organization that provides services to homeless individuals.

Finally, after the completion of the volunteer work/activity, a debriefing session is highly suggested. Debriefing allows participants and volunteers an opportunity to reflect on their experiences and discuss what they may have learned or enjoyed from the activity and their interactions.

Final Encouragements from the F.I.I.V.E. Chicago Team

While this toolkit provides suggested materials and information to conduct a 12-month F.I.I.V.E. program in your community, it is important to consider the information contained within as a guideline for implementing your own inclusive intergenerational volunteer program. In choosing the social issues and activities presented in this toolkit, our goal

was to offer a program that is accessible to people of all ages and abilities while keeping in mind that no two groups are alike. As the project coordinator of your own F.I.I.V.E. program, you know your audience best so adjust your sessions accordingly. Flexibility is key! Your overall goals are to provide participants and volunteers with an environment where



they feel comfortable connecting with one another, feel engaged with the community, have an opportunity to master skills and develop new ones, and learn something new. Many formats, activities, and topics can be imagined and implemented to reach these goals.

The F.I.I.V.E. goals are well-summarized by this statement: “A community exists when individuals share locale and engage in patterned social interaction, share common identity, participate in interdependent activity, and work toward shared goals and collective action” (Kang, 1997). The F.I.I.V.E. program is structured so that participants and volunteers are encouraged to take ownership of truly meaningful volunteer

work; however, the most novel aspect of the F.I.I.V.E. program is its focus on inclusiveness and learning within the context of *intergenerational* partnerships with populations who are often marginalized in society (i.e., youth with disabilities and older adults). The specific volunteer opportunities you decide to offer to deliver these experiences are endless!

We wish you the best of luck in your endeavors and want to thank you in advance for your willingness to implement the F.I.I.V.E program in your community. Before diving into the volunteer activity session materials, however, we first suggest you read the following pages considering the tools and tips we provide on how to be an effective leader and collaborator.

– *All the Best,*

The F.I.I.V.E. Chicago Team