

3) Finally, implementing the F.I.I.V.E program provided the partnering organizations with many lessons learned and promising practices regarding how to best execute a service-learning program that effectively meets the learning and mentoring objectives of older adults and

young people with disabilities. How to recruit volunteers, and determining what types of volunteer activities provide the most effective learning opportunities - while also making a sustainable and positive impact on local communities - were just a few of the lessons learned.

What to Expect from this Toolkit

This train-the-trainer toolkit was developed as a result of the program evaluation conducted for F.I.I.V.E. Chicago by Mather LifeWays Institute on Aging. In the pages that follow, you will find a wealth of information and materials for suggested trainings and activities that you can use to complete a 12-month F.I.I.V.E. program in your own community. With both concrete examples of volunteer activity sessions to implement, as well as scripts with corresponding presentational materials (e.g., powerpoint slides), this toolkit provides you with a comprehensive assortment of instructions, tips, and suggestions for you to get started directing an initiative like F.I.I.V.E. Chicago in your own community.

The structure of each volunteer activity session is flexible; however, we recommend starting with the activities as indicated in this toolkit and make adjustments as you determine what is best

for your participants and volunteers. With each volunteer activity session, we recommend beginning with what we call a “warm-up” or “get to know you” activity. Rather than assigning specific warm-up activities with each volunteer activity session, all warm-up activities are included in the appendix to encourage project coordinators’ autonomy in selecting which warm-ups are most appropriate for participants and volunteers. Individual preferences and group dynamics can vary tremendously so we encourage flexibility and creativity when using this toolkit to implement the F.I.I.V.E. program.

Following a warm-up, a short presentation or introduction is delivered on the chosen social issue (e.g., homelessness) that will be the focus of the day’s volunteer activity. This toolkit includes information and instructional materials on 10 different social issues, but keep in mind the issues that can be addressed are endless -



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

