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The 3 R's of Volunteer Management *A Few Strategies for Recruitment, Retention, and Recognition*

Recruitment Strategies:

- Ask, ask, ask. The biggest reason people in your community are not volunteering is because they haven't been asked to do so.
- Get your board involved by having them submit names of potential volunteers or doing a phone-a-thon for volunteers.
- Create and send bulletin board kits for coalition members and local libraries.
- Use NVCN name in your materials and benefit from the national program coverage.
- Submit special interest stories on volunteers to local newspapers, radio, and television.
- Use current volunteers as speakers at civic groups and congregational meetings.
- Ask local restaurants to post a flyer in the window.
- Partner with local businesses to get free ads in a local paper.
- Initiate a "bring a friend day" for your next meeting with volunteers. Most volunteers become involved because they are asked to volunteer by someone they know.

- Ask local grocery stores to put a flyer in customer bags.
- Hang posters in the post office of a local college campus.
- Create a recruitment brochure.

Retention Must Dos:

- Volunteers want to do a good job... Prepare your volunteers to be successful with a well-organized and informative training program. Remember to include information about your mission, volunteer expectations and responsibilities, agency policies and contact people, effective ways to serve others, and general information about the people to be served.
- Volunteers want to be useful... Structure placements to ensure volunteers feel they are making a difference. Use action words to describe volunteer responsibilities such as "shopping for a neighbor, helps others stay healthy and independent" or "visiting your neighbor, gives others comfort and fellowship."
- Volunteers want to be heard... Encourage feedback from your volunteers, examples include: evaluation forms, monthly meetings, open door policy, suggestion box, and focus groups.
- Volunteers need to be recharged... Support your volunteers throughout the year by being a resource for them. Return calls promptly, provide regular communication from your agency, sponsor on-going training to help them with new skills or refresh old skills, offer

opportunities to share concerns and stories with other volunteers, and allow opportunities for "breaks" in volunteering when needed.



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Recognition Ideas:

- Highlight volunteers on your Web site.
 - Work with local congregations to provide volunteer recognition during services or in bulletins.
 - Work with local businesses to provide discounts or coupons to volunteers.
 - Send “Fun Pun Gifts” such as:
safety pins - *volunteers secure the success of our program*, plastic ruler- *you measure up as a fantastic volunteer*, stick of gum - *thanks for sticking with us and making such a difference*, cupcakes - *you take the cake as a great volunteer*, Hershey hugs - *you deserve a hug today, thanks for volunteering*.
 - Acknowledge start date of volunteers by listing “anniversary of service” in a program newsletter or a sending card. You can also acknowledge hours served.
 - Nominate volunteers for community awards sponsored by your United Way, civic clubs, mayor’s office, local print and television media, and corporations.
 - Send birthday cards or inspirational quotes to your volunteers.
 - Take pictures of your volunteers in action and send them copies with a lollipop and a note, “You’re on Candy Camera.”
 - Send letter of commendation and acknowledgement to volunteer’s employer.
 - Provide donated tickets to local community events for volunteers and families.
- Create special place in your program office to honor outstanding volunteers (Hall of Fame, Volunteers Honor Roll, etc.).
 - Send inspirational quotes or virtual postcards through email