

## Promoting Best Practices In Volunteer Management

Eighteen core quality standards for literacy agencies were approved for Literacy and Basic Skills Programs of the Ministry of and Training, Colleges and Universities.

Based on input from community-based literacy agencies in Ontario, Community Literacy of Ontario ([www.nald.ca/clo](http://www.nald.ca/clo)) and Laubach Literacy Ontario ([www.laubach-on.ca/](http://www.laubach-on.ca/)) prepared an additional standard on **Program — Volunteer Relations**. This standard is designed to support and encourage best practices in volunteer management in Ontario's community-based literacy agencies. The standard was adopted in 1996.

### QUALITY STANDARD ON PROGRAM – VOLUNTEER RELATIONS

A quality literacy program provides volunteers with the resources to be valuable members of the organization. They are given initial and ongoing training, direction, and supervision. They are given written information about their rights and responsibilities. They are encouraged to contribute, based on their skills, time, interests, and the needs of the program. They are recognized for their work. The literacy program encourages respect for volunteers at all times from students, staff and fellow volunteers.

#### FEATURE

*The literacy program has a welcoming, respectful environment for volunteers.*

1

#### Suggested Evidence To Feature #1

- Volunteers are made to feel that they are an important part of the literacy program.
- Volunteers are given meaningful jobs in the literacy program.
- Volunteers are given tasks with regard to their personal preference and skills.
- Volunteers are invited to all program events and meetings.
- Volunteers receive all information circulated by the program (i.e. newsletters, etc.).
- Volunteers are asked to help develop the goals of the literacy program.

#### FEATURE

*The literacy program has developed plans and processes for effectively recruiting and screening volunteers.*

2

#### Suggested Evidence To Feature #2

- The literacy program has developed a written process for recruiting volunteers.
- The literacy program recruits volunteers with many different backgrounds and skills.
- The literacy program gives volunteers a clear description of the program and the volunteer work available.
- The literacy program appropriately screens each volunteer.
- The literacy program has developed written processes and policies for screening volunteers.
- The literacy program conducts initial and ongoing screening of its volunteers.

**FEATURE**

*The literacy program provides orientation and training to the volunteers.*

**3**

**Suggested Evidence To Feature #3**

- A volunteer orientation kit is available.
- A volunteer orientation program is in place.
- Volunteers are familiar with the literacy program's goals and mission statement.
- A volunteer training program is in place.
- Volunteers have opportunities for ongoing training.
- Board members receive training in board governance.

**FEATURE**

*The literacy program makes the volunteers aware of their rights and responsibilities.*

**4**

**Suggested Evidence To Feature #4**

- Each volunteer is given a job description for their position.
- Volunteers are consulted prior to any changes to their job description.
- The literacy program has developed volunteer management policies and procedures.
- Volunteers receive anti-harassment training.

**FEATURE**

*Volunteers receive ongoing supervision and support from the literacy program.*

**5**

**Suggested Evidence To Feature #5**

- Volunteers receive ongoing supervision from the literacy program.
- Volunteers are regularly contacted about their support needs.
- Policies are in place for dealing with problems between volunteers, staff, and/or board members.
- Volunteers are informed about changes to the literacy program.
- Volunteers receive an annual performance review.

**FEATURE**

*The literacy program actively recognizes and motivates volunteers.*

**6**

**Suggested Evidence To Feature #6**

- Volunteers experience ongoing appreciation for their work.
- The literacy program has a volunteer recognition program
- Volunteers are recognized for their work in the literacy program and in their community.
- Volunteer recognitions are publicly made known to the community.