



# Volunteer Handbook

Your guide to a successful volunteer experience  
2015

Start

# Volunteer Handbook

*Your guide to a successful volunteer experience*

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# Little Heroes' Dreams

## *Who we are and what we do*

Little Heroes' Dreams is a Singapore-based not-for-profit organisation set up to foster sustainable development of orphanages, children homes, communities and other organisations caring for underprivileged children in Singapore and Southeast Asia, by developing capabilities empowering these organisation to provide the best care and support for these children.

A group of us, sharing the passion of helping underprivileged children, formed Little Heroes' Dreams in early 2015. Prior Little Heroes' Dreams, all of us were working in our own ways to make changes to our community. However, it was not easy for us as individuals to make long term meaningful impact to the kids in need. To go far in making changes, the few of us decided to join hands to consolidate our resources and efforts so we can help change lives for the disadvantaged children.

Our guiding principle is to find a way to help our beneficiaries become professional and self-sufficient, in order to care for these children long term.

### **OUR MISSION**

To help thousands of underprivileged children living in Southeast Asia to realise their dreams, ensuring shelter and protection, healthcare and good education.



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# Why Volunteer With Us

## *Value based work*

Little Heroes' Dreams (LHD) encourages the teamwork of our members, beneficiaries and volunteers so that we can offer the best services possible to underprivileged children, enabling them to be the best they can and have a bright future.

Volunteers contribute their unique talents, skills and knowledge to enable our beneficiaries to deliver a range of services for the children that would not be possible without their contribution.

LHD is to be a trusted partner of NPOs who care for underprivileged children (beneficiaries) helping them to become sustainable and capable of providing quality services to the children they care for.

The Volunteer Programme is a direct service for our beneficiaries offering access to a strong and diverse volunteer base and first relieving our beneficiaries from volunteer management duties. When graduating from LHD support, they will take professional management of volunteers into their own hands as one of the building blocks of their sustainability.

Our daily work is based on and guided by some core values:

- **Love of Humanity**
- **Safety & Privacy Protection**
- **Accountability**
- **Transparency**
- **Teamwork & Respect**



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# Why Volunteer With Us

## *Value based work*

### Love of Humanity

Philanthropy etymologically means "love of humanity" in the sense of caring, nourishing, developing and enhancing "what it is to be human" on both the benefactors' (by identifying and exercising their values in giving and volunteering) and beneficiaries' (by benefiting) parts. At Little Heroes dreams we are driven by this love for humanity and are passionate about changing the lives of other people for better. We invite our volunteers to share this same value with us.

### Safety & Privacy Protection

The safety and protection of privacy of individuals we are working with is our greatest importance to us. Particularly as we are directly working with children, we set ourselves high standards in assuring the safety of these children as well as protecting the privacy. These standards also hold true for everyone who is working with us (members, volunteers, partners, and beneficiaries).

### Accountability

We undertake great responsibility in doing the work we do and are accountable for the decisions we make. Each of our members and volunteers is making a commitment to our organisation, our beneficiaries, and our donors and supporters to report, explain and be answerable for resulting consequences of their work.

### Transparency

We believe in providing transparency to our supporters, volunteers and partners. We openly publicise our financial records and are audited by external accredited auditors. We encourage everyone who is working with us (members, volunteers, partners, and beneficiaries) to post any question they have to our team and hold our team responsible to provide adequate answers.

### Teamwork & Respect

We believe that working effectively as a team enables us to provide the best possible services to our beneficiaries. Doing so requires that each individual working with us is treated with respect and as equal.



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# Why Volunteer With Us

## *Type of work*

### What you can do with us

Volunteers can engage in a wide range of activities.

- in programmes directly working with our beneficiaries
- in small project teams using their professional skills for fundraising events and supporting communications/outreach
- on a regular basis supporting administrative functions

### Who are we looking for

We are looking for motivated, engaged people who want to join our cause and share our values.

We are looking for a wide variety of skill sets:

- experiences in working with children
- certain skills for activities (sports, art) and knowledge (tutoring, teaching, counselling, etc.)
- professional accountants, marketing and advertising professionals, event managers, lawyers, auditors, etc.
- business professionals, engineers, educational backgrounds, NGO/NPO experience

Please refer to our Catalogue to get an overview, what a broad range of activities can benefit from your contribution.

### We are looking for different schedules:

- time commitment on an ongoing basis
- flexible one-time engagements of different durations
- roles where a high level of individual responsibility and engagement is necessary
- roles where you work closely together with others in a team



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# Why Volunteer With Us

## *How volunteers are placed*

As we do not have a fixed set of job descriptions for our volunteers, we place a lot of emphasize to find a best-fit environment. This way, we create a mutually enriching environment. Your contribution is most valuable to us. And you love what you do. Here are the steps to discover your ideal volunteering experience:

### **Your interests, skills and motivation**

To create the best experience for both, our beneficiaries and our volunteers, the job assigned needs to fit your interests and skills. Your application already helped us to understand your motivation and what you like doing.

### **Orientation and Preparation**

Now, you get to know us and our way to work. Working with kids requires utmost care and responsibility. You will learn about our child safety policy, some basic rules and the values that guide all our work like love of humanity and respect.

### **Assignment and Support**

On the job, ongoing support is available. Naturally, emergencies, conflict or other tricky issues might occur. We are there to support, advise and mediate. Together with respectful communication, we will solve it.

### **Feedback and Learning**

Your contribution is valuable to us, as is your feedback. We cherish your fresh perspective on our work and strive to get better. Regular sharing and 360° feedback sessions offer an environment to reflect and learn.



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# Orientation – Need to Do

## *Be prepared*



These are the five steps that are designed to give a good preparation to all volunteers:

### **Step 1 - Register**

Please provide us with your contact data and personal information by filling the application form.

### **Step 2 - Meet & getting-to-know**

We will invite you to a first meeting where we get to know each other. There is a questionnaire that helps you and us find out more what you can do best.

### **Step 3 - On-Boarding**

Next, you are required to attend an on-boarding session. It will enable you to fulfil your role effectively, as you familiarize yourself with all our general requirements and guidelines.

### **Step 4 - Sign-Up**

After the on-boarding session, you will know about Do's & Don'ts, policies and important information about your rights and responsibilities as a volunteer. To acknowledge this formally, you need to sign two documents:

- Statement of Commitment
- Release of Liability

### **Step 5 - Welcome and start**

To officially welcome you as volunteer, you will receive a formal appointment letter. Please return a signed copy to us. Now, all the preparation is done, you're an official LHD volunteer.

**When you have taken all steps, please check if you can tick all boxes in the "need to know" section!**



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# Orientation – Need to Know

## *Be prepared*



These are the points that will support you in having a great volunteer experience:

What	A clear description of you volunteer job has been worked out, fitting your motivation and skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When and how much time you can invest</li> <li>• Goals, type and content of your volunteer job</li> <li>• Responsibilities that come with the job</li> </ul>
Who?	You have the contact details and you have been introduced to the core contact persons for you volunteer job.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff with special functions (child safety person, board contact for volunteers, volunteer coordinator)</li> <li>• Contact person for the programme in LHD</li> <li>• Contact person for the programme in the Partner Organisation</li> <li>• Your peer volunteers with whom you work together for the activity</li> </ul>
Why signing?	You signed the important documents and you are aware of the related policies and implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statement of Commitment (for Child Safety Policy and Code of Conduct)</li> <li>• Release of Liability (for clarification of legal responsibilities)</li> </ul>
How to?	You discussed Do's & Don'ts and our internal communications and mechanisms during the on-boarding session.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do's &amp; Don'ts</li> <li>• Code of Conduct</li> <li>• Child Safety Policy</li> <li>• Feedback Mechanism and Grievance Mechanism</li> <li>• Back-up System and Emergency Mechanism</li> </ul>
What for?	You are on important mailing lists, so that you do not miss celebrations or other fun joint events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peer Exchange for Volunteers</li> <li>• Getting-Together Events on an ad-hoc basis</li> <li>• Fundraising Events</li> <li>• Events, where LHD participates</li> </ul>

We are committed to create a professional environment and clear expectations.



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# Go - On the Job

## *Your job description*

Roles and responsibilities vary through the different tasks, each volunteer has her/his individual job. Your personal job description will fit your interests, skills and motivation. It defines your individual rules of engagement:

- when and how much time you can invest
- goals, type and content of your volunteer job
- responsibilities that come with the job

### **General Do's and Don'ts**

At Little Heroes' Dreams, we are committed to create the best environment for you to enjoy your volunteering and make it a rewarding experience.

Part of this is putting in place some professional rules and regulations which are mandatory for everyone. This clear set framework helps everybody to prevent misunderstandings or conflict.

These rules and regulations are:

- General Do's & Don'ts
- Child Safety Policy and its Code of Conduct
- Release of Liability
- Conflict of Interest statement



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# Go - On the Job

## *Do's and Don'ts*

Keep aware of the general Do's & Don'ts and the rules and regulations. They are mandatory for everyone. This includes:

- Be well informed about our Child Protection Policy when working with children directly. Make sure you are part of safeguarding the children.
- Be well informed about our Code of Conduct for Child Protection. And strictly observe all rules given therein.
- Be well informed about our risk management procedures and what your liabilities might be. Check the emergency numbers and "Release of Liability".
- Be well informed about the Conflict of Interest Policy. Immediately notify the Board, if applicable.
- Be well informed about privacy rights of children and beneficiaries.



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# Go - On the Job Do's



These are some general points, that will help to create a rewarding and joyful volunteering experience:

- Act responsible. You are a role model for the kids!
- Honour your commitments.
- Dress for the occasion.
- Inform the VM as soon as you are aware that you have to cancel.
- Please be prepared to cover small expenses (up to SG\$50) out of your own pocket.
- Inform yourself proactively on where an activity takes place and how you get there.
- Be respectful.
- Be punctual.
- Be responsive. (that helps us to plan and organise better)
- Be clear about your job description. Before you start.
- Ask, if you are not sure. There are no stupid questions. It's only stupid, not to ask.
- Have emergency contacts available.
- Follow the child protection policy and code of conduct!
- Help others to observe the child protection code of conduct.



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# Go - On the Job *Don'ts*



These are some general points, that will help to create a rewarding and joyful volunteering experience:

- Ignore our Child Protection Policy.
- Ignore our Code of Conduct for Child Protection.
- Ignore privacy rights of anyone you engage with.
- Condone or take part in illegal activities.
- Do not be a bad example.
- Never take risks unconsciously.
- Do not discriminate against anyone.
- Do not stigmatize children; do not engage in disrespectful behaviour.
- Do not belittle anyone by showing off how well your life works.



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# Go – Back-up System

## *What to do, when you don't know what to do*



We are human and we are all different, so it is to be expected that there are mishaps and sometimes conflict. As long as we deal with these situations responsibly, it's still ok.

### **In case of conflict:**

- Be aware that conflicts can happen.
- Do not let frustration built up. Try to tackle conflicts early on.
- Try to take a step back and look at the situation as calm as possible. Maybe a good way to settle things will open up already.
- Maybe you find a good way to handle it in the feedback mechanism.
- If not, consult a third party to mitigate and help overcome conflicts.
- You can always turn to the Volunteer Manager. Other Members of Little Heroes' Dreams are happy to support conflict resolution as well.

**If that fails, please turn to the grievance mechanism.**



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# Go – Back-up System

## *What to do, when you don't know what to do*



Sports events, outings to remote places or being on a construction site are only some situations, where accidents could happen. Be aware about the risks that you or your group might be exposed to. Take the necessary precautions ahead of time.

### **In case of emergency:**

- Have the important emergency numbers ready available:

**Emergency Ambulance and Fire: 995**

**Non Emergency Ambulance: 1777**

**Police Emergency: 999**

- Stay calm! Focus! What is the most important thing to do?
- Try to think clear!
- Make sure to contact the guardian of children you're with.
- Do not abandon a group of children in case of emergency that only creates the next.
- Seek help from those around you.



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# Feedback

*Please come back to us*



## Feedback Mechanism

The outside perspective gives us the opportunity to learn about us, start reflecting our usual behaviour and improve on performance. Feedback is appreciated as a valuable tool in our team to keep good communication going. It is also necessary to promote accountability as it helps us to better understand consequences of our actions.

- Be mindful with this powerful tool (feedback).
- Everybody likes to be treated with respect and as an equal.
- It is not the person itself, but only her/his action that deserves feedback. This is most important when you interact with equal humans who are still searching for their self and might not have found a balanced relation to themselves.
- Be encouraging and give a chance to grow. It can have devastating effects, when feedback is perceived as derogatory or rejecting the person itself.

With this caution in place, there are three different **feedback channels**:

- Day to day Experience: open communication
- Regular Feedback Options: share and learn
- Grievance Mechanism: being prepared for the worst cases



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# Feedback Channels

*Please come back to us*

## Day to day Experience: open communication

- You might want to share directly with the Volunteer Manager or the representative of our beneficiaries about something you observed during your work. Just get in touch and share your observations. Some representatives of Little Heroes' Dreams might be around during activities and might share their observations with you as well.
- When there are activities with the children or other group activities, try to make time at the end for sharing and feedback. If possible, offer the opportunity to hand you written (more anonymous) feedback when you lead an activity.

## Regular Feedback Options: share and learn

- We invite you to share and connect with your peers at our Volunteer Regulars' table. Time and Place will be distributed by our Volunteer Manager.
- Every year, we invite our volunteers to discuss, share and learn with us as part of Little Heroes' Dreams annual planning meeting. You have the chance to exchange with other volunteers, with some of the beneficiaries and the Board of Directors and Members of Little Heroes' Dreams
- Your work is an enriching and educating experience, so you might want to tell others about it. When you need to move on and stop volunteering for Little Heroes' Dreams, we offer a formal acknowledgement of you volunteer work in form of a certificate. We offer this for everyone who had been with us for a minimum of 6 months or took large part in implementing at least 3 major events. Please get in touch with our Volunteer Manager on details.



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# Feedback Channels

*Please come back to us*

## Grievance Mechanism: being prepared for the worst cases

- Sometimes, humans fail. We aim to identify and solve problems at the earliest possible stage. Our feedback mechanism is there to realize this.
- But sometimes that seems inappropriate. If you make a troublesome experience or feel the need to report an incident, we suggest, you think about the following steps.

## Regular Feedback Options: share and learn

- 1 If the issue involved relates to children, please refer to one of our Child Safety Persons:
  - Alexis Oh Li Ki
  - E-Mail: lynn@rahnsch.de
  - HP: 96686977
  - U-Yun Wong
  - E-Mail: uyunwong@gmail.com
  - HP: 91510828
- 2 Consult with the volunteer manager. She/he will impartially investigate into the matter and if need be, involve the Board of Directors or take other necessary steps, like seeking support from outside (police, consulting, coaching).
- 3 Consult with the volunteer contact person in the Board of Directors:
  - Dr. Ingo Moench
  - E-Mail: moench@gmx.com
  - HP: 96440079

**If all that fails, seek support from outside in an appropriate way, e.g. call on the police, consult a lawyer etc.**



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# Feedback Channels

*Please come back to us*

## ...other ways to share and learn

- We all strive to improve our skills and knowledge. Little Heroes' Dreams wants to offer you the opportunity to benefit from our contacts and experience. Most of our members have taken part in trainings, workshops or other learning events and can share their experience on them with you.
- We're happy to provide you with contacts and experience, if you want to embark on a particular learning journey. Please do check with our Volunteer Manager or look for updates on our website.



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# Join the Family *Celebration*

There will be regular events and opportunities where volunteers are invited to be part of the larger Little Heroes' Dreams group.

Look for updates on our website or in our mailings to you!

As volunteers, you're automatically invited to take part in our fundraising events, for example the already huge golf tournament "Swing for the kids!" that will come up next in March 2016.



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*every child has a dream and together we can make it real*