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# Volunteer Handbook



NEW LIFE CENTERS OF CHICAGOLAND, NFP  
1410 N. SPRINGFIELD AVE. – CHICAGO, IL 60651 – 773.252.1104 [PHONE] – 773.252.4852 [FAX]  
Humboldt Park Location

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## **Welcome!**

We are thrilled to welcome you to the New Life Centers' team. It is our hope that you will find unique ways to join in sharing Christ's love through health, education, and employment. Please use this handbook, designed specifically for the Humboldt Park location, as a tool to learn more about the organization's history and your specific place in growing the mission. As always, please freely bring any questions or concerns to your staff contacts. We do our best to assist you and desire to make this experience effective.

## **Background and mission**

From humble beginnings, God has paved the way to continue bringing resources for abundant life to his people. New Life Centers of Chicagoland was launched in 2005 by New Life Community Church, a multi-site church founded in 1986. New Life Centers seeks to serve in the most under-resourced neighborhoods across the Chicagoland area. Currently, there are New Life Center locations in the Little Village, Humboldt Park, Oak Forest, Jefferson Park, and Midway neighborhoods providing a variety of resources. Through family health centers, after-school tutoring, job-skill training, computer access, sports leadership camps, and gang intervention programs, New Life Centers continues to expand to serve individuals of all ages.

New Life Center-Humboldt Park came under the realm of New Life Centers in 2008. After over 100 years of faithful service, Bethel Evangelical Lutheran Church and School made the difficult decision to close due to low enrollment, and programs continued in the then empty school

classrooms and computer lab. The facility was gifted to New Life Community Church in 2008, and now Bethel Family Programs is expanding to remain true to the vision of Bethel's faithful founders - to share Christ in the Humboldt Park community. Below are current program descriptions and opportunities for you to join with us in the mission.

## **Current Programs at Humboldt Park**

### After-School and Summer Education:

S.A.Y. Yes! (Save Americas Youth) was the brainchild of the children of Humboldt Park. When the original computer lab launched in 2006, it soon began overflowing with children looking for a safe after-school space. What are we going to do with all of these kids in the summer? S.A.Y. Yes! was our answer, and it has grown in popularity among both children and parents since that time.

Since the launch of that original summer program, SAY Yes! has grown to serve 60 children ages 4-14 with wholistic educational activities, both in summer and after-school. Based on a nationally-utilized curriculum and taught by certified educators, SAY Yes! mixes best practices in education with a healthy dose of fun and a wealth of love. Each day, Monday through Friday, after-school or summer, children are welcomed by their devoted teachers and eager



volunteers. Children receive healthy snacks, nutrition training, technology access, recreational activities, faith-based mentoring, and, of course, lots of homework help and tutoring.

### Youth Basketball & Mentoring:

Open Gym has been a staple of Humboldt Park for more than a generation. CrossOver expands that tradition of open play basketball, incorporating greater elements of mentoring, career preparation, and life skills training. The program envisions each participant crossing over from adolescence to adulthood, successfully finding a life full of faith, purpose, and passion.

CrossOver currently operates three evenings weekly, with over 50 youth applying for the 30 available spots in this program.

Youth Jewelry Apprenticeship:

Humboldt Park boasts a disadvantage index of 9 out of 10 by the Census Bureau; that is, the disadvantage of youth in our community is cited as greater than 90% of American communities. What could be better for youth in this environment than to participate in an income-earning business before they even enter high school?

BLING (Building Leaders in the Next Generation) takes our beautiful, smart young women ages 11-17 and trains them in the art of jewelry-making. All products made belong to the girl who made them; for each sale, she earns the proceeds, contributing 40% back to the program to purchase further supplies. BLING is available for purchase at Humboldt Park or online. We guarantee you'll look good in BLING!



Adult/Teen Computer Lab:

The way our world is driven by technology, access to a free computer lab is the way New Life Center-Humboldt Park began! Job applications, resume creation, research, email, and more!

**Volunteer Positions**

See the volunteer coordinator for a current description of your specific role and more details on the application process. Below is a spot for your information and other ongoing opportunities.

Your role:

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Description \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Times/Days/Commitment length \_\_\_\_\_

Elementary School Homework Buddy: Helping 1-4 consistent students in grades K-5th complete necessary daily homework and develop an excitement for education! This position includes a great deal of patience, but is very rewarding. Available Monday-Friday from 2:30pm-5:00pm, September-May. A 2 month minimum commitment is requested.

Middle School Homework Buddy: Helping 1-4 consistent students in grades 6th-9th complete necessary daily homework and develop a vision for future education. Be a positive influence in the adolescent search for acceptance. Available Monday-Friday from 2:30pm-5:00pm, September-May. A 2 month minimum commitment is requested.

Summer Program Mentors: Be a guide for a group of 4-8 kids through a week of summer program activities! Everything will be planned - your job is to be the helping hands during crafts, the teammate during water balloon tosses, and the smiling face to greet them each morning. Requests to lead activities are welcome! Available Monday-Friday from 9:30-3:00pm, mid June-early August.

Work Projects: Do you have a few hours to make a difference? Do you have basic skills in painting or organizing? There are constant facility needs in an 80 year old building that could use your attention. Perfect for groups of 5-15! Various times, all year round.

## **Safety Regulations for NLC Volunteers & Staff**

### 1. This is a drug-free environment.

“It is the purpose of this policy of New Life Centers of Chicagoland, NFP to help provide a safe and drug-free work environment for our clients, employees, and volunteers.

New Life Centers explicitly prohibits:

- The use, possession, solicitation for, or sale of narcotics or other illegal drugs, alcohol, or prescription medication without a prescription at New Life Centers of Chicagoland or while performing an assignment.
- Being impaired or under the influence of legal or illegal drugs or alcohol away from New Life Centers of Chicagoland, if such impairment or influence adversely affects the volunteer's performance or the safety of others.
- Possession, use, solicitation for, or sale of legal or illegal drugs or alcohol away from New Life Centers of Chicagoland, if such activity or involvement adversely affects the volunteer's performance or the safety of others.
- The presence of any detectable amount of prohibited substances in the volunteer's system while on the premises of New Life Centers of Chicagoland. "Prohibited substances" include illegal drugs, alcohol, or prescription drugs not taken in accordance with a prescription given to the employee.

New Life Centers will conduct drug and/or alcohol testing through both random testing and for-cause testing at any time. Refusal to comply will result in appropriate disciplinary action.”

2. This is a safe environment, free of harassment of any type.

“New Life Centers of Chicagoland, NFP prohibits sexual harassment of its employees, volunteers, or applicants by any employee, non-employee or applicant. Such conduct may result in disciplinary action up to and including discharge. This policy covers all employees and volunteers. New Life Centers will not tolerate, condone or allow sexual harassment, whether engaged in by fellow employees, supervisors, associates, volunteers, clients or other non-employees who conduct business with New Life Centers of Chicagoland. Complaints should be directed to the supervisor immediately. All complaints will be taken seriously and will remain confidential.

Sexual harassment is any behavior that includes unwelcome sexual advances and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- submission to, or rejection of, such conduct is used as the basis for promotions or other employment decisions;
- the conduct unreasonably interferes with an individual's performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.”

3. This is a responsible environment, holding all to high standards of conduct.

“When determining the level of a disciplinary action to be taken, the following principles will be considered in choosing the severity of the action: New Life Centers of Chicagoland Mission and Standards of Conduct, intent, civil rights, confidentiality, safety, and legal requirements.

In consideration of the above principles, infractions may result in the most serious consequence, up to and including termination after a single occurrence.

Violations of conduct include but are not limited to:

- Creating conflict with co-workers, supervisors, participants, visitors or volunteers
- Horseplay that results in personal injury or equipment damage
- Engaging in vulgar or abusive language or conduct toward others
- Failing to follow hygiene practices or otherwise contributing to unsanitary or unsafe conditions
- Removing, posting, or altering notices on bulletin boards without appropriate permission
- Violating any safety rule
- Damaging or using New Life Centers of Chicagoland owned equipment without authorization
- Excessive use of copy equipment or other equipment for personal use
- Using facility telephones, internet, or other communications resources for unauthorized purposes
- Violating any participant confidentiality guidelines
- Fighting
- Being dishonest, including but not limited to deception, fraud, lying, cheating, rumors or theft
- Engaging in indecent behavior
- Possessing, being under the influence of or drinking intoxicants
- Carrying a weapon on New Life Centers of Chicagoland property, including the parking lot
- Demonstrating gross misconduct or other serious violations of New Life Centers of Chicagoland policies or procedures
- Negligence that resulted or could have resulted in harm to a patient or staff member”

## **Volunteer Application**

Attached at the end of the handbook, please find and complete the application.

\*If serving with a large group (10+ people), consult the volunteer coordinator on whether or not an application is necessary for each individual.

## **Other Questions or Concerns or Ready to Volunteer?**

Contact a staff member to answer other questions, set up an orientation session, schedule your days, create your volunteer description or to receive additional information:

**Kelly Thoes**, [kelly.thoes@gmail.com](mailto:kelly.thoes@gmail.com), 773-252-1104

Check out the website - [www.nlcenter.org](http://www.nlcenter.org) It has loads of information about all of the sites!

**THANK YOU for your interest! We look forward to serving with you!**

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# Volunteer Application - Screening Form

[Confidential]

This application is to be completed by all applicants for any volunteer positions involving the supervision or custody of minors. This is not an employment application form. It is being used to help the organization provide a safe and secure environment for those who participate in our programs and use our facilities.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name:

\_\_\_\_\_

*Last*

*First*

*Middle*

List Maiden Name (or any other name used including previous marriage):

\_\_\_\_\_

*Identity must be confirmed with a state driver's license or other photographic identification.*

Present address:

\_\_\_\_\_

*Street Address*

*City*

*State*

*Zip Code*

Previous address: (Must list all addresses for past 5 years)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security Number: \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

*(Form cannot be processed without Social Security Number)*

Date of Birth: (mm/dd/yyyy) \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have a current driver's license? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, please list the issuing state and your driver's license number:

\_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever been convicted of or pleaded guilty to a crime? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

*(If yes, please explain. Attach a separate page, if necessary):*

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

If you prefer, you may refuse to answer the following question, or you may discuss your answer in private with a leader of the organization. Answering yes or leaving the question unanswered will not automatically disqualify an applicant for youth or children's work.

Were you a victim of abuse or molestation while a minor? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Briefly describe other opportunities that make you qualified for this volunteer position:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Personal references (not former employers or relatives):

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Please describe 3 goals you have for this volunteer position:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

**Applicant's Statement**

The information contained in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. I authorize any references listed in this application to give you any information (including opinions) that they may have regarding my character and fitness for volunteer work. Additionally, I hereby authorize the organization to procure a comprehensive criminal background check as part of this application. In consideration of the receipt and evaluation of this application, I hereby release any individual, church, youth organization, charity, employer, reference, or any other person or organization, including record custodians, both collectively and individually, from any and all liability for damages of whatever kind or nature which may at any time result to me, my heirs, or family, on account of compliance or any attempts to comply, with this authorization. I waive any right that I may have to inspect any information provided about me by any person or organization identified by me in this application.

Should my application be accepted, I agree to be bound by the bylaws and policies of said organization, and to refrain from inappropriate conduct in the performance of my services on behalf of the organization.

I further state that I HAVE CAREFULLY READ THE FOREGOING RELEASE AND KNOW THE CONTENTS THEREOF AND I SIGN THIS RELEASE AS MY OWN FREE ACT. This is a legally binding agreement which I have read and understand.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Applicant's Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
Date

State of Illinois  
Department of Children and Family Services

**AUTHORIZATION FOR BACKGROUND CHECK**  
Child Abuse and Neglect Tracking System (CANTS)

**For Programs NOT Licensed by DCFS**

**NOTE: Do not use this form if you are an applicant for licensure or an employee/volunteer of a licensed child care facility. Please contact your licensing representative.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First Middle

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender (circle): Male Female Race: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street/Apt #

\_\_\_\_\_ City State Zip Code

If you currently reside in Illinois, please list all previous addresses for the past five years.

**OR**

If you currently reside out-of-state, please provide ALL Illinois addresses in which you did reside while living in Illinois.

(Street/Apt#/City/County/State/Zip Code) Dates From/To

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

List maiden name and/or all other names by which you have been known: (last, first, middle)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I hereby authorize the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services to conduct a search of the Child Abuse and Neglect Tracking system (CANTS) to determine whether I have been a perpetrator of an indicated incident of child abuse and/or neglect or involved in a pending investigation. I further consent to the release of this information to the agency listed below.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail this request to:**  
Department of Children and Family Services  
406 E. Monroe – Station # 30  
Springfield, IL 62701

Please type, use bold letters or label:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ (Agency Name)  
\_\_\_\_\_ (Contact Person)  
\_\_\_\_\_ (Address)  
\_\_\_\_\_ (City/State/Zip)

(Submitting Agency Fax Number) \_\_\_\_\_

