

Children's Room Summer Volunteer Description

Sanctuary For Families
At the
Bronx Family Justice Center

Sanctuary for Families is the leading nonprofit in New York dedicated exclusively to serving survivors of domestic violence, sex trafficking, and their children. Sanctuary for Families is committed to the safety, healing and self-determination of survivors of domestic violence and related forms of gender violence. Through comprehensive services for our clients and their children, and through outreach, education and advocacy, we strive to create a world in which freedom from gender violence, intimate partner violence, and domestic violence is a basic human right.

Each year, Sanctuary helps thousands of survivors and their children build safe lives by offering a range of high quality services to meet their complex needs. These services include clinical, legal, shelter, children's and economic empowerment services. Sanctuary also works to end and prevent domestic violence and its far-reaching impact through outreach, education and advocacy. Sanctuary provides services in our Manhattan Office, the Manhattan Family Justice Center, the Bronx Family Justice Center and the Queens Family Justice Center, as well as in our crisis and domestic violence family shelters.

Expected hours per week:

Volunteers are asked to work 10 hours a week.

This volunteer opportunity is for the summer school break, beginning in mid-June and ending around the end of August.

The FJC is open Monday through Friday 9-5. The Children's room is an essential client service, part of the main walk-in services offered at all Family Justice Centers, and is also open Monday through Friday from 9am to 5pm. The Volunteer is asked to work 10 hours a week. More or less hours a week will be considered on a case by case basis.

Volunteer's expected duties:

The Volunteer assists with the Children's Program run by Sanctuary for Families at the Bronx Family Justice Center. The Volunteer's main duty is to assist with supervision of children in the Children's Room. This involves providing a safe and nurturing environment in which children

can play while their parents are in meetings with service providers at the center. The volunteer must also assist parent/legal guardians as they sign a consent form for the child to enter the room, explaining rules to the parent/legal guardian and the child, and engaging the child in safe, age-appropriate play. The volunteer also assists with planning and preparing arts and crafts and other games for groups of children who visit the room.

While the children's room is not therapy or counseling, the room is considered a therapeutic space for children. Sensitive issues and concerns relating to the child's home situation are often raised during the child's time in the room. Thus the volunteer must have a firm understanding of issues of confidentiality, concern for limits and boundaries, a clear understanding of some of the issues the child is facing as a child witness to domestic violence, as well as an understanding of the volunteer's role in relation to clients and other service providers. The volunteer is fully supported in her role and supervisors are always readily accessible for questions or concerns that come up during their volunteer work.

The volunteer, depending on ability and time of volunteer placement, may assist with data management and entry, using the Sanctuary for Families' database which tracks the services provided in the Children's Room to parents and children.

The volunteer will assist in promoting free educational, recreational and other events around NYC to parents who come to our center.

The volunteer has the opportunity to attend trainings which are run by the NYC FJC for all new staff, volunteers, and interns, if these trainings are offered during the volunteer placement time. These are a series which include an introduction to the NYC FJC, multiple introductory trainings about domestic violence and its effects on children, risk assessment of clients, cross cultural competency, and legal trainings, among others.

The volunteer participates in a training for all volunteers at the Sanctuary for Families main office

The volunteer may have the opportunity to participate in outreach related to domestic violence services and prevention within the Bronx community.

The volunteer will be in contact with professionals working in law enforcement, legal services, administration, counseling and case management services. In her work assisting in supervising children in the children's room, the volunteer comes in contact with these service providers regularly.

The volunteer will have the opportunity to learn basic office skills including communicating and collaborating with team members, with a supervisor, collecting and entering client data using several databases, faxing, photocopying, professional writing skills, and use of Outlook, Excel and other computer programs.

Additional Qualifications:

The volunteer should have good communication skills, and must be able to work well with a team, in an environment which can sometimes be high-paced. Useful traits in a volunteer well suited to this position are flexibility, adaptability and creativity. The volunteer should be able to accept constructive criticism. Competency in Spanish language is extremely useful, as many of our clients are Spanish speaking. It is helpful if the volunteer is passionate about working with children. Lastly, emotional maturity is a necessary qualification as continuous work with child clients who have experienced domestic violence can be emotionally draining.