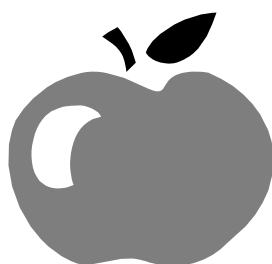

Help! Volunteers Wanted

ACT SCHOOL CANTEEN ASSOCIATION

Ph/Fax: 6282 2158 or 6281 3763

email: actsca@optusnet.com.au
Website- www.actschoolcanteen.org.au

P O Box 56 Curtin ACT 2605



The common bond that binds all school canteens together is the fact that all are dependent, to some extent, on a voluntary work force.

As many school canteens have problems in this area, the main concerns are:

- ◆ to encourage more volunteers
- ◆ to ensure they turn up on the rostered day
- ◆ to keep them coming back

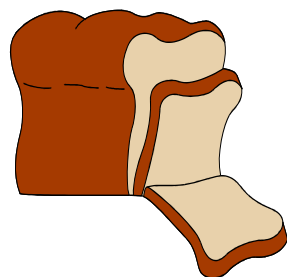
You can recruit by:

- ◆ Making a direct approach to families at school assemblies and orientation days. Take along some "old hands" who can help you to encourage some "new hands" to join you in the canteen.
- ◆ Help can be requested through school newsletters or individual letters. The tone of the request is all important. Let it be known that it is a team effort and invite new volunteers to share in the benefits. Emphasise that it is not all hard work!
- ◆ Try splitting the roster shifts. A couple of hours, or even half-an-hour at serving times, is more achievable to some than the thought of giving up a whole morning.

- ◆ When you have drawn up your roster follow up by sending a copy to each volunteer with full names and phone numbers (with prior approval).
- ◆ Target dads, grandparents and aunties as well as mums on all requests. Depending on your canteen policy, point out that small children are welcome.
- ◆ Start the roster by thanking each volunteer for their time and welcoming them to the "roster team". Suggest they organise replacements from the roster if they are unable to attend, or ring the manager/convener as soon as possible. Be sure to include your canteen or convener's phone number.
- ◆ Reminders for the next week (or fortnight) can be placed in the school newsletter together with thanks to volunteers who have completed their canteen work. It's a way of showing appreciation for their efforts to the whole school community.
- ◆ A quick reminder call the day before roster duty can also avoid having to cope with being short-staffed and conveys to the volunteer just how much you rely on their help

REMEMBER: The volunteer's personal time is very valuable to them. Each person should be treated with professionalism and not **JUST** as someone with time on their hands.

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Having Recruited Your Volunteers, How Do You

It is important that each volunteer knows, preferably in advance, what is expected of them when they come to work in your canteen. This is particularly so with newcomers to the school and those who work on an irregular basis. It can be confusing to come into a new and busy environment where every one else appears to know what they are meant to be doing!

BE PATIENT !

- ◆ Prepare a "Volunteers Work Schedule" and put it in a prominent place in the canteen. Written instructions can make a new helper more confident.
- ◆ Explain the morning tea and lunch arrangements when they arrive and point out the toilet, change room and hand-washing locations. Give verbal instructions clearly and encourage volunteers to ask if they are unsure.
- ◆ If a helper isn't confident in an allocated task, make a mental note not to give it to him/her next time, if possible.
Everyone has special talents, find these and use them.
- ◆ Make each person take a break, no matter how busy or short staffed you might be.

Remember, they are **VOLUNTEERS** and it's a long time on your feet if you are unaccustomed to standing!

- ◆ Contribute to the physical work. Set an example and don't just issue orders!

- ◆ Never repeat confidences or gossip and never discuss other volunteer helpers in a derogatory manner. Be like the three wise monkeys!!!
- ◆ Don't allow "factions" to develop in the canteen. Be diplomatic and head off trouble if you can.
- ◆ Be cheerful and encouraging and always thank volunteers for their help. Check as they leave that they can attend on their next roster day. Volunteers should feel wanted! Send "get well" or "baby" cards if and when appropriate.
- ◆ Try to arrange a special "thank you" to all your canteen assistants at least once a year. This could be in the form of a morning tea or lunch.

Adapted in 2006 by ACTSCA
from articles by:

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IF YOUR HELPERS FEEL APPRECIATED, THEY'LL BE BACK !

TREAT THEM AS THE RARE AND SPECIAL GEMS THEY ARE.

IF YOUR HELPERS FEEL APPRECIATED THEY'LL BE BACK !