

# FOSTER GRANDPARENT VOLUNTEER SERVICE DESCRIPTION

## Purpose

Foster Grandparent volunteers provide support to children throughout the Treasure Valley. They create meaningful relationships with children by providing tutoring, encouragement and companionship on a one-on-one basis in local schools, Head Starts, and day care settings. We will help you find a site that best fits your interests and needs. Many Foster Grandparents are able to volunteer very near their homes.

As a result of the service provided by dedicated Foster Grandparent volunteers, children:

- Develop healthy behaviors and attitudes in educational settings
- Improve their academic skills (literacy, writing, math, etc.)

## Qualifications

To be a Foster Grandparent Volunteer, you must live in Ada, Boise, Canyon, Elmore, Gem, Owyhee, Payette, Washington or surrounding counties, and:

- Age 55 or older, with an annual income that falls within established guidelines
- Willing and able to volunteer with children at least 15 hours a week
- In good health, able to meet the demands of the service
- Interested in working with children with special or exceptional needs
- Reflect a positive attitude and ability to collaborate with a diverse range of individuals (teachers, students, program staff, fellow volunteers, etc.)
- Flexible and willing to adapt to change

## Time frame

Most Foster Grandparents volunteer during the school year (**August – May**), although limited year-round sites may be available. We hope that Foster Grandparents can at least commit to an entire school year, health permitting. Many Foster Grandparents volunteer for as long as they are able; some have been Foster Grandparents for over 20 years!

## Benefits

In addition to all the rewards that come from making an impact in a child's life, Foster Grandparents also receive a number of benefits:

- Hourly stipend (\$2.65 per hour volunteering). This stipend is a non-taxable, reimbursement that does not affect eligibility for other income-based programs or services
- Mileage assistance for costs incurred to and from volunteer station
- Supplemental insurance while volunteering, including liability, and accident
- Stipend reimbursement for time off
- Free annual physical health assessments
- Opportunities to socialize with children, staff, and fellow volunteers
- Recognition and appreciation, including annual recognition event
- Training (pre-service orientation and ongoing monthly in-service)

## **Suggested Activities**

All Foster Grandparents provide intergenerational exposure to children and offer encouragement and praise. Foster Grandparents also perform other activities depending on the needs of the children and the volunteer site. These activities may include:

### Mentoring

- Modeling appropriate behaviors and skills
- Playing games
- Teaching manners and social skills
- Encouraging and praising

### Tutoring

- Assisting with specific reading, math or other learning activities
- Reinforcing lessons taught by teachers
- Helping a child to follow directions and accomplish work
- Clarifying or translating group instructions to individual students

## **Evaluation**

Foster Grandparent volunteers will be assigned at least three children to focus their attention on during the course of the year. Together the Foster Grandparent and classroom teacher will complete forms to track the child's progress in identified focus areas (social skills or academic improvement) throughout the school year. This will help the volunteer measure the impact of their service.

## **Supervision**

Foster Grandparents have the support of the **Foster Grandparent Program staff** and the **volunteer site supervisors** (specific to each volunteering location).

### **Foster Grandparent Program staff will:**

- Provide pre-service orientation, monthly in-service trainings, and volunteer recognition
- Help process time sheets and stipend checks, and
- Coordinate the annual physicals
- Facilitate volunteer placement
- Act as a resource for support throughout volunteer's service

### **Volunteer site supervisors will:**

- Give direction on day-to-day activities
- Designate students for volunteers to work with
- Sign monthly timesheets
- Complete annual Volunteer Service Plan and Volunteer Progress Report

Foster Grandparents with questions can contact either their site supervisors or Program staff for assistance.