



Children's Place Association

Volunteer Information Guide

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THANK YOU for being a champion for our Chicago families and kids.
Through your support, our families can thrive.

Welcome

Thank you for your support of Children's Place Association! We are delighted to welcome you to our passionate community of advocates, committed to making a difference in the lives of families residing in underserved areas of Chicago.

With this Child Champion resource, we aim to provide you with valuable guidance and inspiration, empowering you to positively impact vulnerable children's lives. Should you require any assistance along your journey, please know that we are readily available to offer our support.

Once again, we extend our heartfelt gratitude for joining us as a champion for children and families. Together, we are building a brighter and more secure future for those facing health challenges and poverty, ensuring their success tomorrow and beyond.

Shantal Alonso, JD

Chief Philanthropy & Communications Officer
Children's Place Association

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BECOME A CHAMPION FOR CHILDREN

About Children's Place

MISSION: Building a secure and hopeful today so children facing health issues and poverty succeed tomorrow.

History

Children's Place Association has been partnering with local communities since **1991** to create a brighter future for Chicago's most vulnerable children. We've been tackling health disparities, poverty, and racial injustice, providing stability for children and empowering families for a promising tomorrow. On **April 10, 1989**, Children's Place Association opened. Although we have made significant progress over the years, there remains an urgent need to ensure children facing health inequities and violence feel safe and have access to vital support services for their success. We are thrilled to have you join us in this important work!

Our Programs

- **Child Thrive:** Empowering Children's Success. Our Resource Center offers vital support for children's growth and well-being, including youth mentoring, trauma-informed mental health services, primary care access, enriching after-school programs, and dynamic summer mini-camps. Together, we nurture their potential for a brighter future. (Volunteers needed afternoon, early evenings).
- **Early Education Programs:** Igniting a Lifetime of Learning. Our Early Learning Center and Home-based education programs are dedicated to serving low-income children, aged six weeks to five years old, whose families face unique health conditions or disabilities. With a focus on individualized care, our programs provide on-site health services and specialized curriculum tailored to the specific needs of each child. Through nurturing environments and personalized attention, we lay the foundation for a lifelong love of learning, ensuring every child reaches their full potential. (Volunteers needed weekdays).
- **Adoption & Foster Care:** We specialize in pairing children with trained foster parents who meet their unique needs. At Children's Place, we also facilitate adoptions for children unable to reunite with their birth families. Many of our foster children have special medical and behavioral needs. (Volunteers rarely needed).
- **Child Support & Family Services:** Our holistic approach empowers families to overcome life's challenges, providing essential strategies, skills, and support for a thriving future. We assist families dealing with health issues, trauma, and financial hardships, offering secure housing, summer camps, financial counseling, mental health support, and comprehensive case management. Together, we lay the groundwork for healthy, successful lives. (Volunteers as needed).
- **International:** Illuminating Futures for Vulnerable Children. Children's Place International partners with organizations in developing nations to brighten the lives of children facing illness and extreme poverty. Our mission is to uplift the world's most vulnerable by improving access to essential healthcare, nutrition, and education, while fostering local capacity building. Together, we empower communities, instill hope, and create lasting global impact.

To learn more, visit our website: www.childrens-place.org.

Become a Child Champion

Volunteer Experience: Building a Stronger Community Together.

At Children's Place, we foster an environment where every voice matters. Rooted in values of inclusivity and compassion, we thrive as a community united by a shared purpose. When you become part of the Children's Place family, you:

- Empower Chicago's most vulnerable children.
- Address the inequities of poverty, crime, racism, and economic distress.
- Make a direct and meaningful impact on children and families.
- Provide the vital support that shapes their future, sustaining them throughout their lifetime.

Join us in creating lasting change and making a difference in the lives of those who need it most. Together, we build a stronger and more compassionate community.

Introducing the CPA Child Champion:

Our volunteer Child Champions, advocate wholeheartedly and embrace our mission. They dedicate their time, talents, and services to creating a secure and hopeful today for children facing health issues and poverty, ensuring their success in the future.

As a CPA Child Champion, you can significantly impact in various ways. You can amplify our mission within your network by raising funds and awareness, sharing your unique skills, or lending a helping hand at events and activities. Your support is deeply appreciated, not only by us but also by the children whose lives you touch.

Please be aware that certain volunteer roles may require background checks and fingerprinting to ensure the safety and well-being of those we serve.

How to get involved

After reviewing the options below, please fill out our volunteer survey so we can best match your interests with our needs: <https://www.childrens-place.org/volunteering/>. Together, we create positive change and build a brighter future for our community.

You may also direct any question to us at: volunteer@childrens-place.org.

Volunteer Opportunities

Regular Programming

Outside of events, our programs regularly need support with filing, organizing, and assisting teachers in the classroom. Please note: Volunteers interacting with children must follow compliance—see volunteer training and procedures.

Program Events

Join us in making an impact at our events. Throughout the year, our diverse programs host events that rely on the support of dedicated volunteers like you. Whether you have a few hours or a full day to spare, your service is invaluable in creating meaningful experiences for the children and families we serve.

If you're eager to lend a helping hand at our events, we invite you to fill out our volunteer survey listed at the top of this document. Your involvement will make a significant difference in the lives of those in need.

Special Events

Inspiring hope and creating lasting change. Our special events serve as powerful platforms for several important purposes:

- Raising awareness about our mission, amplifying the voices of children and families in need.
- Uniting and showcasing the remarkable community engagement and social responsibility of our dedicated partners, volunteers, and supporters.
- Shining a light on the issues faced by our youth and families, sharing their inspiring stories.
- Discovering how we can make a meaningful impact, inspire hope, and foster real and lasting change.

These events represent our largest source of private revenue, ensuring the continuity of our legacy for years to come.

Join us in making a difference by attending or volunteering at our special events, including our Annual Spring Gala, Place the Hope Gala, and many others. Together, we can support our families and transform lives.

Special Projects

We have exciting special projects that offer diverse opportunities for volunteers like you to make a tangible difference, whether beautifying our spaces by painting, cleaning up, or handling minor repairs or by providing support for our families by creating meals, assembling essential supplies, or seasonal kits for kids and families your contribution will leave a lasting impact.

If you are interested in participating in any of these events, please fill out our volunteer survey at the top of this document. Your support and generosity will positively impact the lives of those we serve.

Committees and Junior Board

Your involvement makes a difference! If you're interested in becoming a valuable member of one of our committees, such as the Annual Celebration Event Committee, the Junior Board, or our Outreach and Engagement Committee, we would love to hear from you.

Your dedication and contribution to these committees help shape the future of our organization and directly impact the lives of the children we serve. We look forward to having you join our passionate team of volunteers!

Thank you for considering volunteering with us. Together, we can bring joy, support, and lasting change to our community.

Annual Drives

Throughout the year, we have several opportunities to support our community through clothing drives, back-to-school supplies, and bringing holiday cheer. Look at the different options below:

Adopt A Family:

During the holiday season, our Adopt a Family program helps create a joyous celebration for our families. You can choose to adopt a family, assist with gift sorting, or contribute in both ways. Your participation is invaluable in making this program a success. We begin in October to be prepared for delivery in mid-December.

Back to School Supplies:

In late summer, we host a drive to gather essential supplies for our kids as they head back to school. This drive takes place in late July into August.

Clothing Drive:

Help us collect adult and children's clothing to provide to our community in need. This drive takes place in January or February.

Hygiene Product Drive:

Help us gather hygiene products as the hot summer months approach to provide to our community in need. This drive takes place in late spring.

Together, we create positive change and build a brighter future for our community.

Volunteer Requirements

Volunteer Training & Procedures:

- **Regular Volunteers (more than once a quarter):** Must complete training, orientation, and submit required paperwork, including a DCFS background check and medical data. Volunteers must always be with regularly scheduled staff members. Before starting full onboarding, you'll complete a 90-minute trial shift to ensure it's a good fit. After the trial, compliance needs will begin and may take up to six weeks.
- **As Needed Volunteers:** Volunteers participating in one-time client and fundraising events do not need formal volunteer orientation or screening. Event volunteers will receive a general orientation to the agency and event-specific training and information. The agency will not keep individual files on as-needed volunteers.
- **Special Project Volunteers:** Volunteers who visit the agency for a short duration of time (i.e., a college group that visits for a week), will receive agency orientation and training appropriate to roles and responsibilities for their visit.
- **CPA staff and clients who wish to volunteer must have the same training and screening requirements as others.**

Volunteer Protocols & Compliance:

Many of our children have medical complications and are foster kids that require specific guidelines to be in place.

- Regular Volunteers (more than once a quarter) must go through DCFS and health information (background check, fingerprinting, and a TB test).
- Volunteers will follow Agency Policy, Council on Accreditation (COA), and are located HR 6
- Masks, proof of vaccination, and onsite temperature checks may also be required.

*Volunteers will be informed of all requirements prior to the volunteer activity.

Policy:

Volunteer resources will be used appropriately and by agency needs. Volunteers are an extension of CPA staff resources and are welcome in various Children's Place Association functions. Volunteers do

not take the place of paid staff; they do, however, supplement and enhance programs with and under the supervision of paid staff.

Frequently Asked Questions

How much time is needed to volunteer?

Because we have a variety of volunteer opportunities, your time commitment will vary depending on how you choose to volunteer. Your level of commitment is up to you, and we are grateful for every effort you take on behalf of our organization and the children we serve!

What is the age requirement for volunteering at CPA?

The general age is 18 and over. Some specific programs may vary, so inquire about the specific role you are looking for.

Can I volunteer for community service hours?

Children's Place Association is unable to provide court-appointed service hours