

Volunteer work

Sociology



Volunteer Work Volunteer Work Last summer, I had a chance to do volunteer work with the kids at the Ryves youth center. The main activity that I did was to teach the children how to play basketball. The age range of most of the kids whom I interacted with is between five to 13 years old. I introduced them to the various skills and rules in basketball. Moreover, I taught them the value of sportsmanship. I also taught them how to be more thankful for the blessings that they receive every day, no matter how irrelevant and small they may seem. As a volunteer, I was not limited to just playing basketball with them. Later on, I helped some of them with their school work. I usually brought some food for them so we could all eat after our practice sessions. We became so close to each other that they considered me their big brother. Some of them even consulted with me about their personal problems. I believe that I had a good impact on the kids because we became very close. There was a feeling of sadness every time we would part. We became a family. On the average, I think that the Ryves youth center is an effective organization for the youth. The activities they have for the children are age appropriate. There are also lots of volunteers in the youth center. One area where they need improvement is in the screening of volunteers. Since it is a youth center, I think that it is to their advantage that they get young volunteers. I noticed that there are volunteers who are already in their sixties. The problem with that is they can no longer join some of the sports activities which are quite strenuous. They also have difficulty relating with the young ones. Their interests vary greatly from those of the children at the center; thus, sometimes there exists a communication gap. Another thing that I noticed is that some volunteers are just there probably to fulfill some requirements in school. They are not as enthusiastic as should be. They lack

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the social skills to communicate with the kids at the center. This makes the kids aloof with them; thus, they do not enjoy being with them. Ryves youth center should evaluate the applicants for volunteer work at their center before accepting them. They should make sure that their volunteers love to be with the youth. They should show interests in the needs of the kids. In this way, it will be more rewarding for both the volunteer and the children at the center. Volunteering brings with it numerous benefits. Aside from being of help to the kids, more than anything else, volunteering benefited me. I learned to leave my comfort zone and be involved in the community. First of all, I felt that even in my own little way, I was able to help the community. It made me more aware of the different needs of the kids. Whereas before, I did not really care about the needy population of our community, today I feel that I am connected with them. My social skills were improved. I learned how to deal with children and the other people working in the organization. I gained new friends with whom I share the same interests. Another reason why I can say that volunteering is a worthwhile experience is because my physical, mental and emotional well-being was improved. I realized how lucky I am compared to the kids in the youth center. My self-confidence was boosted because I felt that I accomplished something meaningful. It gave me a sense of pride and identity. Volunteering made me feel more appreciated. Since my self-esteem was enhanced, I developed a more positive outlook in life. I also noticed that I seldom get depressed ever since I did volunteer work. There were times when I encountered problems, but the other volunteers of the center became my support group. Furthermore, if I look at my problems and compare them with those of the youth in the center, I realize that my problems are nothing compared to theirs. I feel so blessed

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having a family, unlike the kids at Ryves, some of whom do not have families to love and take care of them. Volunteering at the youth center has made me more physically fit. Teaching basketball to the kids is a good form of exercise for me. Before, I hardly have time to go into sports activities. When I volunteered, I enjoyed playing basketball more because I know that I am sharing my talent to others, aside from improving my physical health.

Overall, I can say that volunteering is a worthwhile experience and I have this firm resolve to do it on a regular basis. I now truly understand that when one focuses his attention on other people more, the "me" attitude will be given less priority and you will enjoy life more. I think it is true that when you give, you receive more, because that is what I experienced. I want to share this experience and so I will encourage my other friends and relatives to join me in my volunteer work. My experience as a volunteer is fun and fulfilling. Volunteering gave me a sense of accomplishment. I do not regret any single moment I spent at Ryves. It is my way of giving something back to society.