



# The Right Mix

Faith communities

+ Professional social work

= Success in emergency shelter

# Who are we and why should you listen to us?

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# Volunteer Imperatives

- Create trust
- Keep trust
- Train, train, and train again
- Share successes

# Creating Trust

- Get staff and volunteers together in person
- Communicate openly and personally
- Emphasize staff skill and training
- Give the volunteers important tasks that they can handle

# Keeping Trust

- Admit mistakes
- Validate concerns before presenting a different point of view
- Find more ways to communicate
- Uphold agency values and principles

# Train, train, train...

## Formal training

- Step out of yourself
  - What is it you know that the volunteers don't know?
- Know yourself
  - What are your most important principles?
- Be firm on the requirements
  - Is the training really two hours long?

# ...and train some more

## Informal training

- Every complaint, concern and conversation is a teachable moment
- Quarterly meetings as a group
- Bring volunteers into you if possible
- Empower volunteer leaders to carry your message

# Find a common language

- A core concern everyone shares
- In our case, children
- “The future of the faith depends on raising our children in the faith.”
- “The future of our community depends on raising our children well.”
- Also, ‘guests’ not clients

# Volunteers are important

- Ask more, not less
- Bring them inside the circle
- If one cannot respond, ask another

# Share successes

- That is...
  - What happened to...?
  - Both successes and failures
  - Formally and informally
- Alumni Dinner

# Key Social Work Values

NASW Social Work Code of Ethics

Found on-line in English & Spanish

<http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/code.asp>

Revised in 1999



# Core values

- Self-determination
- Competence
- Well-being
- Privacy and confidentiality
- Advocacy

# Self-determination

- Client (guest) makes the final decision on their case
- Family **MUST** chose to listen staff
- Volunteers need to understand this!
- Not here to “save” people, here to help people

...therefore need specific type of staff.



# Competence

- Staff are trained professionals:
  - Case management
  - Interviewing
  - Documentation
- BA/ BS
  - Social Work
  - Psychology
  - Family Studies

# Well-being

- Looking at clients honestly where they are currently
- Needs Assessments- what does the client want?
- What environment is best for the family and does that match what they want?
- Address physical, spiritual, emotional & mental health - whole person

# Privacy and Confidentiality

- Each family has the right to privacy- in many ways
  - Their own “bedroom”
  - Client file privacy
  - Visitor/ call privacy
- BUT- give names and birthdates to volunteers

# Advocacy

- Micro (One-on-one level)
  - Calls, system pushing, referrals
- Mezzo (Small community level)
  - Collaboration
  - Questioning
- Macro (Big system)
  - Attend meetings
  - Participate in discussions of homelessness issues

**But what is so special...**

...about faith communities?

# The power of unconditional love

- Instant, permanent, unconditional
- True hospitality
- Nonjudgmental care and concern

# Limits

- No proselytizing, ever!
  - Every faith tradition is respected
- Boundaries are critical
- It's not about us, it's about them.

# Can Social Workers do unconditional love?

- Yes, but with different limits
  - Caring unconditionally
  - Advocating unconditionally
  - Non-judgmental perspective of clients
- All within the appropriateness of the Social Work Code of Ethics
  - When in doubt ask



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