

SAFETY/LIABILITY

Ask yourself:

Have I taken all reasonable precautions?

The key is to think ahead; have a risk management plan.

IT IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT THAT TEACHER/leaders professionally and responsibly address organizational, safety, and ethical issues for young children participating in a service-learning experience. It's important to pay attention to the following items before implementing a program:

- Develop a clear set of expectations for each person's role and job description, linking the project with academic curriculum and the school's mission.
- Discuss the program thoroughly with the school's legal adviser.
- Develop clearly written procedures and policies that reduce risk and danger.

A sample checklist of some items to attend to:

- master charts showing where volunteers are working
- parent permission/release forms, age appropriate and safe contingency plans for bad weather and emergencies, names of responsible adults with phone numbers
- clear and professional supervision
- school district insurance coverage for all drivers
- insurance coverage at the placing agency for underage volunteers
- student health check
- list of possible dangers, with responses e.g. danger from busy traffic

Give traffic safety talk including rules such as:

- Stay on sidewalk at all times.
- Each student will have a buddy.
- No more than eight students per adult.

Assign trained traffic monitors with crossing flags.

- emergency procedures sheet in hands of all staff and volunteers (Call 911. Give address of nearest emergency room, phone number of school with name of contact, etc.)

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