

STEPPING STONES MUSEUM FOR CHILDREN

Youth Enrichment

Application Form for 2010

Thank you for expressing interest in our Youth Enrichment at Stepping Stones (*YESS*) program. Designed specifically for students in grades 7-12, *YESS* will provide you with an opportunity to gain valuable skills while contributing to your community. In addition to performing voluntary work in a fun and creative environment, we will be offering you new, exciting and unique cultural, theater and early childhood education related experiences throughout the coming year. We are growing and so are the opportunities for youth in our program!

As a *YESS* participant, you may be trained to participate in the following roles:

- *Play Guide*: Help visiting children and caregivers explore play in the galleries.
- *Activity Presenter*: Introduce and lead daily arts and crafts or science activities for visitors.
- *Birthday Party Assistant*: Assist museum staff with providing memorable experiences during birthday parties.
- *Workshop or Tour Assistant*: Help museum staff teach educational programs to students, campers or scouts.
- *Character*: Transform into a costumed character and bring smiles to children and adults alike.

Responsibilities may include:

- Helping visitors engage in new and exciting play in exhibit and activity areas.
- Setting a positive example for other youth and visiting children.
- Following directions given by staff supervisors and mentors.
- Working as a team with all staff and volunteers.

To qualify, you must be:

- A 7-12 grader.
- Able to learn and communicate information to museum visitors.
- Friendly, outgoing and patient with children and adults.
- Able to make good decisions and ask for help when necessary.

Time commitment includes:

- A minimum commitment of 7 hours per month.
- Attendance at monthly trainings and meetings.

Your acceptance into the *YESS* Program will be based on the written application and the degree to which you address your

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|--------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| ✓ ability to make good choices | ✓ communication skills | ✓ leadership potential |
| ✓ ability to work with others | ✓ creativity | ✓ positive attitude |
| ✓ acceptance of differences | ✓ enthusiasm | ✓ problem-solving skills |

If you are interested in applying, return the completed application and Parental Permission Form to Stepping Stones. Please call Alison Minor, Youth Programs Manager at (203) 899-0606 ext. 240 if you have any questions. *We look forward to hearing from you!*

Directions for Parent: Acceptance into the Stepping Up Program is based on your child's ability to meet specified criteria. It is very important that your son/daughter completes the entire application independently. As it may be the first time he or she is completing a form, we ask that you review the application when done to ensure that all questions have been answered and that the responses fully reflect the applicant's skills.

Directions for Applicant: Please be sure to answer all questions on the application and to use very clear, printed handwriting. Return the completed application AND the parent permission form to: Youth Programs Manager, Stepping Stones Museum for Children, Mathews Park, 303 West Avenue, Norwalk, CT 06850.
203-899-0606 ext 240

Please remember that your acceptance is partially based on your responses. Take a few minutes to think through your answers before writing them down.

Name a place that you really enjoy visiting.

What do you like about that place?

Describe one memorable experience you have had with a child or children.

“You must *be* the change you want to see in the world” Gandhi

Why do you want to volunteer your time?

(continued on back)

References

References may be called to provide us with a better idea of your skills. List two adults, *who are not family members*, who can be contacted to provide a reference for you (neighbor, teacher, guidance counselor, etc.).

1. _____ Daytime Phone: _____

2. _____ Daytime Phone: _____

Availability

Indicate when you are available to volunteer by writing "yes" or "no" in the blank spaces.

Mondays (summer only)	_____	Saturdays	_____
Tuesdays	_____	Sundays	_____
Wednesdays	_____	Evenings	_____
Thursdays	_____	Holidays	_____
Fridays	_____		

How did you hear about Youth Enrichment at Stepping Stones?

Commitment & Code of Conduct

If I become a part of this program I understand that I am committing to participate for one year - a minimum of 7 hours per month, nine months per year, and will be expected to attend monthly trainings during this time.

As a YESS participant I will be a very important member of the Stepping Stones team. When I am at Stepping Stones I will do my best to treat visitors and fellow team members with courtesy and respect. I will play a part in making sure that Stepping Stones is a safe place for everybody.

- I will use appropriate language at Stepping Stones.
- I will do my best to make good choices by not running, initiating water fights, playing tag or roughhousing.
- I will focus on my responsibilities by not bringing friends or siblings to Stepping Stones during my shifts.
- I will be respectful of materials and I will use exhibits appropriately.
- I will adhere to my daily schedule and ask supervisors for permission to take a break so the staff always knows where I am.
- I will not be afraid to say "I don't know" and to ask for help from the Stepping Stones staff!

Your Signature

Date

Dear Parent/Guardian,

The YESS Program, and the outstanding youth that it represents, plays a vital role in fulfilling the Stepping Stones mission. Every day, these bright faces interact with children, caregivers, staff and volunteers to enhance the visitor experience.

YESS staff and peer advisors evaluate the applicant's interests as well as their abilities to determine if the our program is the right fit. It is important to note, however, that not every applicant is accepted at the time they apply. In some instances, some youth have thrived after taking another year to develop certain skills.

The support of parents and guardians is represented in the applicant's level of participation and is thus important to the overall success of the program. We realize that your role is much more than providing transportation to and from the museum for shifts, classes and monthly trainings. The museum sincerely appreciates your involvement and looks forward to receiving your son or daughter's application.

Sincerely,

Alison Minor
Youth Programs Manager

Please review the following points, and complete the spaces below.

- I understand that my son/daughter's responsibilities will include volunteering in the museum galleries where they will have direct contact with caregivers, children and exhibit content.
- I understand that my son/daughter will be expected to commit to participate in museum programs that total at least seven hours a month for any nine months of the year.
- I understand that my son/daughter is expected to participate in monthly trainings.
- **I have reviewed my son/daughter's application and understand the Code of Conduct signed by my son/daughter.**
- I understand that I can contact program advisors at any time with questions.

Printed name of Parent/Guardian

Printed name of son/daughter

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date