

Role of the Strong Start[®] Site Co-ordinator

The team at each location where the program is operating consists of Volunteer Coaches and Site Co-ordinator(s).

Selecting a Site Co-ordinator

- Each site (e.g. school) must designate someone as the Site Co-ordinator. This person must be a staff member the first time a site operates the program.
- For subsequent uses of the program, the Site Co-ordinator can still be a staff member, but could be a volunteer who is experienced in implementing the Letters, Sounds and Words program and has the skills to take on this leadership role.
- If there is a Volunteer Site Co-ordinator, there is still a need for a staff member to be designated as the Staff Site Co-ordinator to support the Volunteer Site Co-ordinator as needed.
- It is possible for two people to share the jobs of Site Co-ordinator.

Training for Site Co-ordinators

Workshops

- Site Co-ordinators who are new to the job attend one 90-min. training session.
- Site Co-ordinators are encouraged to also attend some of the workshops provided for Volunteer Coaches if possible (but attendance is not mandatory). Note: New Volunteer Site Co-ordinators do not need to attend these Coach's workshops since they will have already attended this training when they became a Volunteer Coach.

Resources

- The Site Co-ordinator receives an administration manual and a copy of the Volunteer Introductory Handbook given to volunteers. He/she must read the Site Co-ordinator's Manual carefully and be familiar with the contents of the Volunteer Introductory Handbook.
- Additional tools and the required reports are provided electronically on a CD (e.g. forms, samples of letters, organizational tools, the assessment data record program).

Ongoing Support

- After the initial 90-min. training session for a new Site Co-ordinator, ongoing support occurs through a detailed manual and communication by e-mail or telephone. No additional meetings are planned unless there should be major revisions to the program. The Strong Start[®] management team is always available to provide support.

Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the Site Co-ordinator are outlined in the Site Co-ordinator's manual. Major sections have been reproduced here.

The Site Co-ordinator arranges for the completion of the responsibilities of the organization that is using the Letters, Sounds and Words program.

Start-up Tasks

The organization:

- recruits, screens and supervises volunteers
- arranges for participation of their volunteers in training sessions, assuring that volunteers understand the time commitment (A sample letter is provided);
- selects the children that are best suited to the program
- ensures that written permission for involvement is obtained from parents (a sample form is provided);

- photocopies sufficient numbers of the forms needed for the individual child assessments, and
- ensures that the pre-assessments are completed with each child and any summaries needed for the first coaching session are prepared. (Some parts of these tasks may be delegated to Volunteer Coaches if desired.)
- arranges for appropriate places for volunteers to work.
- assigns program strands to volunteers and creates a schedule of work for volunteers in consultation with volunteers.
- sets up a communication system and tools needed for documentation and organization (tools are provided).
- selects a location for the storage of materials that is easily accessible to everyone.
- ensures that volunteers complete any forms needed to comply with procedures at the site.
- helps volunteers become comfortable with the school setting. (Tools for orientation are provided.)
- prepares information for volunteers regarding significant environmental sensitivities or other health issues of children (e.g. allergies, severe asthma).
- assures that the site has requested sufficient materials. The kits contain consumable materials to support 15 children. If more than 15 children are selected, the Site Co-ordinator needs to contact the Strong Start® Co-ordinator well in advance of the beginning of the program in order to request more materials.
- arranges recognition of the financial sponsor in consultation with the Strong Start® Executive Director

During the 10-weeks of the program

Supporting Volunteers

The Site Co-ordinator supports the volunteers in their assignment by:

- ensuring the volunteers always feel welcome at the site and are updated on information needed to feel productive and comfortable in this workplace;
- notifying the volunteer ahead of time, of changes to the schedule;
- maintaining a folder/binder with the necessary information on each child and keeping it in a location that is easily accessible to Volunteer Coaches and staff members;
- communicating with other staff responsible for the children if needed;
- communicating with the Strong Start® personnel as needed, and
- helping with problem-solving if needed, and providing feedback to volunteers if requested.

Tasks to Complete the Program

The Site Co-ordinator must ensure that:

- a final recognition occurs for the children and the volunteers,
- the kit of materials is complete and returned to the Strong Start® office as requested.
- the post-assessments are completed with each child, and
- the following documentation is completed and sent to the Strong Start® Executive Director.

These forms are provided on computer disks.

after each 10-week session

- Assessment Data Record submitted electronically. This record will have the results for all children. There are detailed instructions on the CD provided.
- Volunteer Hours Worked report (on the CD provided) which is submitted electronically

in June

- Volunteer Feedback Forms (in June only or mid-year if a volunteer is not continuing his/her involvement for another session)
- Site Co-ordinator Feedback Form