

## Volunteers' Daily Schedule – FAQs

*(The general schedule will vary slightly from county to county depending on things such as when the hardware store opens or when the cooks arrive at work, etc.)*

**6:30 - 8:00 a.m.:** Devotions, breakfast

**Why does ASP have devotions?** ASP was founded by a United Methodist minister and is a Christian non-profit. We understand the importance of starting the day by giving thanks to God. The devotion time of meditation and prayer helps us get ready for “faith in action.”

**8-8:30 a.m.:** Make and pack lunches, load supplies, go to work sites

**Where do the supplies come from?** One aspect that makes ASP’s program successful in the communities served is the economic investment over the summer months. Each night after “lights out”, the staff meets to discuss construction at each worksite and to formulate plans for the next day. They compose a hardware supply list. Each morning, one staffer goes to the hardware store. The store might be close to the center or an hour away. Hardware stores can open at 6:30 a.m. or 8 a.m. Sometimes employees help the staffer load their truck and sometimes the staffer is on his/her own. **Our intention is to return quickly, but this changes with the circumstances of each center and each new day.**

**Why are some work sites next to the center and others miles away?** When the staff chooses the homes to work on, they consider where the site is located in comparison to the center. Some families are not helped because they live too far from the center. However, poverty is not always convenient and your worksite may be up to 45 minutes away. Program Managers try to secure volunteer housing in areas of the county with greatest need. Occasionally, though, school boards only offer one school in the county and it may or may not be closest to the need, yet ASP tries to help people who are impoverished and have no place else to turn.

**9-4:30 p.m.:** Work hard! Eat lunch at worksite

**Why are some supplies delivered in the morning and others in the afternoon?** The staff is provided with 2 or 3 vehicles, for their use during the summer. Each day, the staff splits what sites they visit – some go to one part of the county and some to another. The visitation order depends on: the demand for materials, the skill of the group, the specifics of the materials needed, or the needs of the family and volunteers. Ideally, each home is visited each day unless otherwise worked out with the group leaders. Sometimes the hardware store does not carry the materials needed. Then staff must either compensate with another material or travel to a farther store. It is the staff’s goal to deliver supplies to worksites in a timely manner. Volunteers can help the staff and possibly accomplish more in a shorter amount of time by carrying many of their materials out to the worksite with them. Sometimes groups bring a floating volunteer or two to assist with delivering materials. Check with the staff in JC.

**Why do the volunteers eat lunch at the worksite?** This is one of the most important activities in a week. If volunteers eat lunch at the worksite, they have time to fellowship with one another in a new environment. They also can talk with and possibly share their lunches with the family they are serving. “Breaking bread together” is an awesome way to show Christian love. (We discourage you from accepting lunches from the family. They are in a financial bind and we do not want to burden them with taking their precious food resources.)

Occasionally volunteers serve an absentee family. It remains important to eat lunch at your worksite, as there are still valuable lessons to be learned. The families live at the worksite, regardless of their presence during the lunch hour. This is not a place where they spend some time – it is their *home* where they sleep and eat in the conditions volunteers see each and every day. It is a humbling and sensitive experience to eat there.

**Why does ASP ask/expect each crew to put in five, full work days? Why isn't there a day off in the middle of the week?** One lesson that ASP teaches is **stewardship**. Volunteers and staff are here for the families, and we need to be good stewards of our time for them. It is possible, and encouraged, that the construction portion of the work be accomplished in conjunction with spending time getting to know the family. We ask volunteers to commit to 5 days of work and recommend that play or sight seeing be done either before or after your ASP experience.

**5-6 p.m.: Clean-up, plan supplies for next day, relax**

**6-7 p.m.: Dinner**

**Why is it important for the volunteers to eat the dinner provided at the center?** Volunteer fees have paid for this meal. Secondly, staff and cooks have planned and budgeted for a specific number of diners, which means cooking certain quantities of food. Again, we want to be good stewards; taking only what we can eat and eating all we take. This is also a good time to unwind and get to know other volunteers.

**7:30-10:30 p.m. Evening Gathering (EG), chores, free time and other activities**

**Why do we have Evening Gathering (EG)?** This is one part of ASP that founder, Tex Evans, really stressed. He created ASP not to solve poverty issues in Appalachia but to change lives. Each EG strives to teach a lesson. Staff spend significant time creating the EGs provided for the volunteers and it is their goal that they are considered quality programming: mixers, singing, sharing, story-telling, teaching and learning, scripture, and prayer.

**Why are chores important?** Each autumn, ASP Program Managers visit the counties served that previous summer and they ask the facility managers about the condition of their facilities. ASP is truly blessed to have many principals, school boards, and building owners go “above and beyond” to help support the program by opening their doors to 500+ volunteers during the summer months. This causes wear and tear on a building. If we, as participants in ASP, do not leave the center in better condition than we found it, we may not be invited back to a school or in the worst case, a county. Although school is not in session during the summer and ASP occupies the majority of the facility, the manager or principal and community members are always in and out of the building. It is in ASP's best interest to keep the building in top shape and clean at all times.

**What can we do during free time?** Volunteers may have the opportunity to play basketball, football, run, or just hang-out. The staff knows of ice-cream parlors, and restaurants. Getting ice-cream is a great way to boost local economy, bond with your group, and meet local folks. Often, community members will ask volunteers what they do, what ASP is, and where they work. It's great to answer all of these, but probably best to refer them to the staff, and definitely remember to keep the family name confidential! This is when sensitivity is most important.

**10:30 p.m.: Quiet Time**

**11 p.m.: Lights out!**

**Why is there a “lights out” time?** The primary reason why there is a “lights out” time is because volunteers work hard and need sleep for a productive week. Staff meet after volunteers are in bed. While the volunteers are awake, it’s difficult for the staff to focus on their other responsibilities (like planning construction or re-working an EG) because the staff wants to hang-out with all the amazing volunteers! After the staff meeting, which is usually fairly late, the staff locks the school for the night. If anyone is outside, they would be locked out for the remainder of the night.

**Schedule Variations:**

**Thursday night Picnic:** The ASP picnic is a time of fellowship within the volunteer groups and with the families and community members. Volunteers can not only introduce “their” family to their friends, but families can see the others who are served by ASP. After the last groups of volunteers leave in August, the families can process their experience with others who are going through the same feelings and emotions.

**Tuesday Culture Night: Why is it important that ASP have a culture night?** ASP takes place in Appalachia – a part of the country rich in culture, from the coal mines of West Virginia and Kentucky, to the history of flooding in Virginia, or the struggle with factory work in Tennessee. Appalachians have a special perspective, fueled by tough situations and incredible music. The area’s history is complex and disturbing, intriguing and inspiring. It’s worth learning about and taking those lessons home.

**Week One** is a blank slate for the staff and the county! Staff have just completed their “set-up” week of cleaning and getting the center ready for volunteers, making signs, planning EGs, meeting community contacts, setting up accounts, meeting with the cooks, planning a menu, ordering food, taking merchandise inventory, setting up the office, reading applications, visiting homes, selecting and planning projects, sometimes building showers, and much more. If a staff can’t move into their center until the middle of this week, planning becomes more complex. There are still kinks to be worked out, but this is an exciting time for the staff!

**Week Seven or Eight: A few of the centers each summer run for 7 weeks due to school openings in August. Other centers are for 8 weeks.** This is the final week of the summer. By this week, the staff knows their way around, they are close to each family, and understand the difficulties and gifts of the county. One challenge of volunteering Week 7 or 8 is being the “last” group of volunteers. **There is an added bit of responsibility here with both the construction and the closing-down of the center.** It is expected that construction will be completed by Friday afternoon of that week. If it is not, the staff has only a few days to finish the work before they leave the county. Also there will be extra chores for volunteers to help to close-down the center. This might include **a blitz clean on Friday night.** Leaving the center in better condition than it was found is extremely important. ASP has been asked not to come back to a county because of the way centers are left at the end of the summer. Please understand the importance of this and practice sensitivity to the community and the facility.

## Expectations, Rules and Regulations

**These Expectations, Rules and Regulations apply to all volunteers.**

- The ASP staff has overall responsibility for all activities (at the center and worksites).
- The Center staff will inform you of Center or community-specific guidelines prior to your arrival.
- Adult leaders are responsible for their youth volunteers at all times. This includes enforcing all ASP rules and regulations with their youth.
- All volunteers (youth and adults) are expected to participate in the programs, including meals, chores, meetings, evening gatherings, etc.
- Volunteers assist in Center clean up, tool and supply organization, after meal clean up, loading or unloading of building materials.
- Everyone is expected to act responsibly and respectfully within the community.

- ASP's Youth Program is for youth ages 14 and older AND having completed the 8th grade. At no time are young children allowed!
- Possession or use of illegal drugs or alcohol is strictly forbidden! Violators will be asked to return home immediately at your expense.
- Smoking or use of tobacco products is prohibited inside all ASP Centers. A designated area may be identified outside. Use of tobacco is discouraged at the work site. **Underage youth are not permitted to smoke anywhere!**
- Weapons (or replicas) are not permitted.
- Always travel in groups of two or more persons.
- Audio equipment (boom boxes, etc.) is prohibited at the work site and the Center, unless you first consult with your Center Staff.
- Sexual harassment or abuse will not be tolerated.

#### **Worksite related:**

- Working hours are from 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m. EACH DAY. Sight seeing can be done before/after your week. If you leave the work site, all crew members must leave in the vehicle.
- Lunch is to be eaten at the work site. We encourage you to bring extra sandwiches for the family you are serving.
- Work crews are composed of 7 people (ideally 5 youth and 2 adults). Extra adults may be used as floating volunteers.
- Each work crew must have a suitable vehicle capable of transporting 7 people, tools, equipment, building supplies, etc.
- Vans with writing other than a number will be asked by the staff to wash their van immediately.
- No participant is permitted to ride in the back of a pickup truck. Each must have a seat belt.
- Notarized Medical Forms for each volunteer should be kept in the vehicle in which he or she is currently traveling.
- Use tools, supplies and resources responsibly; for their intended purposes.
- Nail guns are prohibited in the Youth Program.
- Adults ages 18 and older only may check out power tools. All volunteers who operate power tools must be trained at home. Youth must be supervised.
- Always keep safety and sensitivity to your family top priority.

- Work attire: Shirts with sleeves, long pants, and sturdy shoes must be worn at the work site. Sweat pants or scrub pants are not considered appropriate for the work site.
- Ask permission from the family prior to taking any photos on the worksite.
- Taping with video equipment is strictly prohibited at the worksite.
- Volunteers are encouraged to invite families to the picnic as your guests. Try to coordinate transportation and assist with any parking or swimming fees.

#### **Center related:**

- **Center attire:** Shirts must be worn at all times. When leaving the Center grounds, shorts of appropriate length will be acceptable attire. **Not appropriate attire at any time:** halter, spaghetti-strap, or tank tops, sports bras worn as an outer garment, sleeveless shirts, Spandex clothing, bike pants, or any clothing expressing alcohol/beer slogans and/or obscenities. Appropriate clothing must be worn at all times including to and from the showers and after “lights out.”
- No pets are permitted at the Center.
- ASP abides by the “Safe Sanctuaries” guidelines.
- Adults and youth will have separate showering times.
- No females are permitted in the males’ sleeping area. Males are not permitted in the females’ sleeping area at any time.
- In sleeping rooms there must be at least 2 adults of the same gender as youth. These adults will sleep away from youth if possible.
- A strict 10:30 p.m. quiet time and 11:00 p.m. lights out applies to all.
- All adults must have a criminal background check, done by its group. ASP checks its employees and Helping Hands volunteers.

**When volunteers sign the covenant sheet, they agree to the rules and expectations of ASP. ASP staff reserve the right to terminate the participation of any individual or group that does not abide by the rules and expectations of ASP.**