



## What is Helping Hands for Habitat?

Helping Hands for Habitat is a service-learning program designed for students of all ages. The program challenges youth to raise money for their local Habitat for Humanity affiliate.

Participants recruit sponsors to pledge donations for time spent doing volunteer activities, and give them to their local affiliate where the money is used to build simple, decent, affordable housing for families in need.

## What is HFHI?

Habitat for Humanity International is a nonprofit, ecumenical Christian housing ministry. HFHI seeks to eliminate poverty housing and homelessness from the world, and to make decent shelter a matter of conscience and action.

Through volunteer labor and donations of money and materials, Habitat builds and rehabilitates simple, decent houses in partnership with the homeowner families. Habitat houses are sold to partner families at no profit and financed with affordable no interest loans. The homeowners' monthly mortgage payments are used to build still more Habitat houses.

## For Leaders

### Step 1: Preparing the Team

Helping Hands for Habitat is a service-learning program. Before your youth begin you should prepare them to learn from it. Teaching them about poverty housing and ways in which Habitat for Humanity is working to solve this global problem will make the project more meaningful.

Habitat for Humanity believes everyone deserves a simple, decent, affordable place to live. (Habitat's philosophy is "a hand up, not a hand out.") It takes a sustainable approach to ending poverty housing – one family, one home at a time. More information can be found at [www.habitat.org](http://www.habitat.org).

Teach your organization's youth how, through Helping Hands for Habitat, each of them will be a part of that solution.

Once the team members are inspired and understand the importance of their work, you will need to:

- **Set Deadlines:** Decide how long the program will run. Two to six weeks is recommended, but you will want to consider what works best for your group. There may be holiday seasons or community events that help determine your timeline.
- **Recruit Participants:** Get team members enrolled in the program. Send guides home with participants and to share with their parents. Have the parents fill out the enrollment form in the "For Parents" section. Once you have everyone's forms; give each participant an envelope for collection.

## **Step 2: Getting Started**

Have participants read the “For Youth” section. Brainstorm chores or use the list provided. Read through the suggestions for measurements and sponsorship hints, including where to find sponsors and what to say to them. These are broad suggestions, so your group will need some guidance from you when it comes to being effective locally. Remember, the more youth can contribute their own ideas, the more motivated they will be.

You might want to think of ways to create motivational incentives for the group, with prizes and honors to the top volunteers. To prevent any one sponsor’s generosity from overwhelming the competition, it is best to measure success in number of sponsors or hours worked. Before you get started, there are a few key topics you will want to go over with participants carefully. These topics are measurements, time verification and sponsorship.

- **Measurements:** Have a discussion with participants about measuring sponsorship. Whether they want sponsorships by the dime, quarter, or dollar is up to your group, but make sure they all use the same formula.
- **Time Verification:** Each participant should use an identical time sheet. There should be a space for an adult to sign to verify that participants worked the hours they claim.
- **Sponsorship:** Sponsors should be strongly encouraged to set maximum amounts for their pledges. Make sure your participants do not unintentionally push a sponsor out of his or her financial comfort zone by working more hours than the sponsor specified or anticipated, setting the stage for problems paying off the pledge.

## **Step 3: Making Progress**

You can keep the participants motivated and improve their chances of success via reporting sessions. The sessions can include formal reports or informal chat sessions in which participants talk about what they have done and what they have learned.

Even the best-intentioned sometimes procrastinate. Use the reporting sessions to check progress or have participants turn in their time cards weekly to prevent procrastination.

## **Step 4: Making a Difference**

When the program ends, send the participants out to collect their pledges. Stay connected until they collect and turn in the money. Have a party to celebrate and afterwards, sit down and have a debrief session.

Your group has spent a lot of time raising money to end sub-standard housing; now they get a chance to put that money to good use. Try to help the group understand what a difference their efforts really make. Use facts from the Habitat Web site or from your local affiliate to show the impact affordable housing has on a family and a community.

As a group, decide on where you want to give the money too. Options include not only your local affiliate (although it is strongly recommended) but also Habitat for Humanity International or tithing to another country.

Make sure to thank everyone in the group for their efforts and on behalf of Habitat for Humanity International, thank yourself!

## **For Parents**

Your child has shown an interest in Helping Hands for Habitat. Participants in the program volunteer in their community to raise money to fight poverty housing. Participants also gain an awareness of sub-standard housing locally & globally.

Participants also recruit sponsors to pledge donations for time spent in volunteer activities. When the Helping Hands for Habitat program ends, participants collect pledges and send them to Habitat for Humanity International where the money is used to help fight hunger around the world.

The money will go toward a Habitat affiliate in your area.

- **What Your Child Will Do:** Participants will contact the local Habitat affiliate where they can see what volunteer opportunities are available or brainstorm potential volunteer opportunities in the community. They can also refer to the chores list provided by Habitat for Humanity International. They will set a goal for sponsorship and then ask friends, family, neighbors and others to sponsor them. The group will decide together how long the Helping Hands for Habitat program will last and each participant will choose their own volunteer projects. After the program ends, participants will collect their pledge money and, as a group, use it to support their local Habitat affiliate.
- **What Your Child Will Learn:** Participants will learn about poverty housing globally and locally. It can be hard for a child to grasp the concept of the need for affordable housing in a community and what it can mean for a family in need. Helping Hands for Habitat will give them a chance to not only learn about the issue poverty housing but it will also give them the chance to help fight it.
- **How Your Child Will Make a Difference:** The money your child will raise from “helping Habitat” will go into the group’s common pot donation. It will go toward the Habitat affiliate in your area to help sponsor a home for a selected family.

Most importantly, your child’s experience will make a difference to your child. After experiencing the joy of helping others early in life, he or she may spend a lifetime influencing others as a model for making wise choices and positively impacting others.

## **For Youth**

When you enroll in Helping Hands for Habitat, you agree to:

- Decide on the chores/ activities that are right for you.
- Set a goal for the amount of sponsors and money you are going to collect.
- Find sponsors to pledge money for each unit of time you volunteer.
- Keep track of your volunteer time. When the program ends, add up all the time you’ve worked and go collect the money.
- Give pledge money to your leader, who will send it to your local Habitat for Humanity affiliate.

## **Logging Volunteer Hours**

Keep track of the amount of time you work, because that will determine how much your sponsors will pay. Ask the sponsor to pledge a certain amount for each hour you work, like \$1 an hour. Then you keep track of your time and go back to collect.

There are a few important things to remember:

- Get an adult to verify the hours you work. Everyone in the group should have the same time sheet for an adult to sign. That way, everyone knows you have an accurate measurement. Your sponsors will want to know that you really did the work!
- Agree on a maximum amount with each sponsor. If someone agrees to pay \$1 an hour make sure they pledge for a maximum amount of hours.
- Make sure everyone is playing by the same rules. How your group decides to do Helping Hands for Habitat doesn't matter; making sure everyone participates the same way does.

## Collecting Sponsorships

**Q: So where do I get my sponsors?**

A: Everywhere!

Here are just a few ideas:

- Friends and family
- People who are in clubs or on teams with you
- Parents of friends
- People who work with your parents
- Set up a booth at the school cafeteria

**Q: Whose program is this?**

A: It is a program designed by and for Habitat for Humanity International, an organization that works with communities to provide simple, decent, affordable housing for all of God's people.

**Q: How much should I pledge?**

A: However much is comfortable. (Explain that they can give a maximum amount.)

**Q: What are you going to do to earn the money?**

A: I'm going to do what I can in my community.

**Q: How do I know that you actually do the work?**

A: I'll get it in writing. (Show them your time card. Point out where an adult is going to verify that you worked.)

**Q: What will my money buy?**

A: Your money will go to the Habitat for Humanity affiliate in our community to help sponsor a home for a local family.

**Q: When will you collect the money and when will it go to the affiliate?**

A: I'll be calling on you again soon. (Tell sponsors the date your group and leader decided upon.)

## Contact Your Local Affiliate

Ask your local affiliate what the prices of the following materials would be for a Habitat home in your community; use the amount as a goal for the whole group.

- Windows
- Nails
- Landscaping
- Tools
- Bedroom
- Bathroom
- Living Rooms
- Kitchen
- Roof
- Garage





## Suggested Activities

### For all ages:

- Raking leaves
- Dog walking
- Feeding pets
- Taking out the trash
- Organizing recyclables
- Stacking firewood
- Picking up pinecones
- Watering plants
- Weeding a garden or plant flowers
- Reading to a sibling or grandparent

### Ages 10-18

- Shoveling driveways
- Painting
- Garden work
- Washing dishes / windows / clothes / car
- Cleaning a garage
- Vacuuming
- Polishing Silver / Furniture
- Mopping the kitchen floor
- Scrubbing the bathtub / cleaning bathrooms
- Trimming bushes
- Reading for a sibling or grandparent

### Ages 15-18

- Mowing the lawn
- Babysitting
- Tutoring
- Cleaning out septic tanks
- Grocery shopping
- Preparing meals