



Host Family Volunteer Description

Every successful program includes a host family for every session. A host family is a family who has a child within the age group (or an age group slightly ahead) of the program and who can commit to attending the program on a regular basis. The family members play a role in the engagement of the program and networking with other families. They help promote the program to other parents who may be interested in coming, welcome participants and work the room during the program. Having a host ensures that any newcomer will have a peer to interact with in addition to the volunteer running the program. In addition, they can help make connections across participants. Host families often split responsibilities amongst each other such that together they cover the various program sessions.

Before a Program:

- Have a positive attitude and have a smile on your face at GiGi's to best represent the brand.
- Arrive at least 15 minutes prior to program starting.
- Play music!
- Assist in preparing refreshments, when appropriate.
- Greet people as they arrive and introduce yourself. Be energetic!

During a Program:

- Have a positive attitude and have a smile on your face at GiGi's to best represent the brand.
- Play music! This is an absolute must. Keep the music selection appropriate to the age group attending the program.
- Everyone is excited to be here, keep up the enthusiasm. Have fun!
- Ensure new families complete the Contact Information Form, Hold Harmless Agreement, and Permission to Use Photograph Forms. Give the family a Welcome Packet or Celebration Packet.
- Introduce new families to one another. For a new family, this may be their first introduction to the Down syndrome community. Make it memorable!
- Promote the other programs that may fulfill the family's needs. For example, let LMNOP parents know about the Crawlers & Walkers program.
- Please remember to use language that puts the child first, before the diagnosis. For example, "You have a beautiful child." Avoid language such as "a child with Downs" or "a Downs baby."

After a Program:

- Remind families to come to other programs and events!
- Assist the Program Host in filing out the Feedback Form.
- Submit a story about today's program for a blog story.