



Youth On-Site Guidelines for Macomb County Habitat for Humanity

The enthusiasm and interest of youth can be an example for many as they discover how to help others in need in their community. Macomb County Habitat for Humanity appreciates the support of youth as we strive to prepare homes for lower income families as a family foundation for generations. Since so much of what we do is related to construction, there are more safety and liability issues with our work than you might find with other social service agencies open to volunteer help.

Federal regulations prohibit youth involvement below the age of 14 in general construction activities. They can visit the work site to deliver or serve meals or to hand out water, and tour the site during the noon break for lunch when construction activity is paused.

Youth aged 14-17 are limited in what they can and cannot do on site also. Volunteers 14-15 can't work on general construction activities and can't use ladders and power tools. Good opportunities for them are: landscaping, site and building cleanup, and gofers. We have had a youth team who assembled a picnic table from parts prepared for them by adults, so they could build without power tools.

Volunteers 16-17 can help with general construction but can't use ladders or power tools due to those hazards. Good opportunities for them are: all of the above plus siding, trim or prime painting, tiling and other things after the house is fully closed in. On a building schedule these activities suitable for those under 18 are later in the process, so are typically found in late summer or fall in our area.

Each youth aged 14 through 17 present on the job site should be accompanied and supervised by an adult. The section at the bottom of our typical insurance waiver has a place for the required signature from a parent or a legal guardian. For every four youth (17 and under) we need 1 adult (18 and older) on site. Anyone can count for the ratio – parents/guardians, teachers, and/or older siblings.