

Stay & Play Volunteer Job Description

Position Title: Stay & Play Volunteer

Reports To: Volunteer Manager / Project Lead Staff

Location: Various locations across Cheshire (venues for Stay & Play events)

Purpose of the Role:

The Stay & Play Volunteer will assist in delivering an engaging and inclusive play and social event for children aged 0-6 with Down syndrome and their families. This volunteer will help create a welcoming, safe, and stimulating environment where children can engage in age-appropriate activities, socialise with peers, and develop essential skills. The role provides a fantastic opportunity to make a positive impact on young children's development while supporting families in a community-based setting.

Key Responsibilities:

1. Support Play Activities:

- Assist in facilitating play-based activities for children aged 0-6 with Down syndrome, ensuring that activities are safe, accessible, and engaging.
- Encourage and support children to participate in group and individual activities that promote motor skills, communication, and socialization.
- Help set up and tidy away toys, games, and materials used during the sessions.

2. Provide Individual Support:

- Offer one-on-one support for children who may need additional help to engage in activities or interact with their peers.
- Ensure that children are supported in a safe and nurturing way, providing encouragement and positive reinforcement throughout the session.
- Assist with activities designed to promote the development of fine and gross motor skills, sensory exploration, and language development.

3. Support Social Interaction:

- Foster an inclusive environment by encouraging children to interact with their peers in a positive, respectful manner.
- Assist children in learning social skills, such as sharing, taking turns, and communicating with others.
- Support parents and caregivers in navigating social interactions with other families and building a supportive community.

4. Assist with Safeguarding and Well-being:

- Adhere to safeguarding policies and procedures to ensure the safety of children attending Stay & Play.

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- Ensure that the environment remains clean, safe, and free from any hazards.
- Respond appropriately to any signs of distress or discomfort from children, and alert the Stay & Play Coordinator or staff if needed.

5. Provide Support to Families and Caregivers:

- Offer assistance to families attending Stay & Play by engaging with parents and caregivers to provide a supportive and friendly environment.
- Help families feel welcome and encourage social connections with other families.
- Be available to offer advice or information about other services and resources, as needed.

6. Assist with Set-up and Tidy-Up:

- Help with the setup of the Stay & Play environment, including preparing materials and organizing play areas before the event.
- At the end of the event, assist with cleaning up, ensuring that all toys and materials are safely packed away and that the venue is left tidy.

Key Skills and Qualifications:

• Desirable Skills:

- Experience working with young children, particularly those with Down syndrome or other disabilities, is beneficial but not essential.
- Strong communication skills, including the ability to interact with children, parents, and staff in a positive and friendly manner.
- Patience, empathy, and an understanding approach to supporting children and families.
- Ability to work effectively as part of a team and collaborate with other volunteers and staff.
- A passion for inclusive play and helping children develop social, emotional, and cognitive skills.

• Required Qualifications:

- No formal qualifications are required, though a general understanding of child development or working with children with additional needs is an advantage.
- A willingness to learn and adapt to the needs of children with Down syndrome.

• Desirable Attributes:

- Enthusiasm for working with young children and supporting their development.
- Ability to be flexible, adaptable, and responsive to the varying needs of children in a play setting.
- A positive attitude, with a genuine desire to contribute to the well-being of children and families in the Down syndrome community.

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Commitment and Availability:

- Volunteers are required to commit to a regular schedule that suits both their availability and the needs of the Stay & Play program.
- Time commitments will vary depending on the specific event schedule, but volunteers are encouraged to commit to a minimum of [insert hours per week/month] for each Stay & Play session.

What We Offer to Volunteers:

This role offers a rewarding opportunity to support children with Down syndrome in their early developmental years and make a lasting impact in their lives. Volunteers will benefit from:

- **Training:** Volunteers will receive training in safeguarding, inclusive play, and supporting children with Down syndrome.
- **Support and Supervision:** Ongoing support from the Stay & Play Coordinator, with regular check-ins to ensure a positive and effective volunteer experience.
- **Recognition:** Volunteers will be recognized for their contributions to the Stay & Play program, with opportunities to attend appreciation events and receive certificates of recognition.
- **Personal Development:** Volunteers will gain valuable experience in child development, inclusion, and working with children with special needs.

Equal Opportunities:

Down Syndrome Cheshire is committed to promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion. We encourage applications from individuals of all backgrounds and ensure that volunteering opportunities are accessible to everyone.

How to Apply:

If you have any further questions or wish to apply for the Volunteer Support for Stay & Play position, please complete a volunteer application form available on our website and forward to [Alison Parr](#).