



# starfire

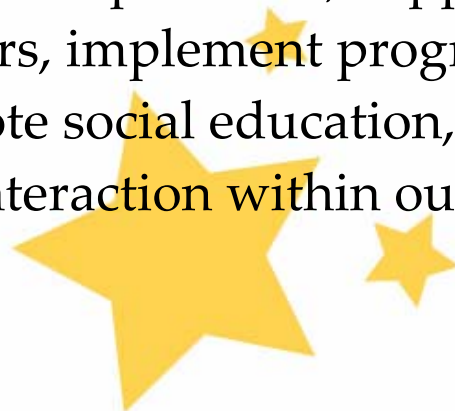
Volunteer Handbook





Starfire is a non-profit organization unique to Cincinnati. We provide inclusive social and service activities for teens and adults with disabilities. Founded in 1993, Starfire is a successor to the Greater Cincinnati Council of Camp Fire. Starfire is dedicated to enabling persons experiencing developmental disabilities to grow in their ability to access the community and interact with other people.

Starfire's unique programs invite members to do service in their community. This is based upon the conviction that the true measure of a community's greatness is how well its members care for each other. A small staff of Program Specialists, supported by dedicated volunteers, implement programs and service projects that promote social education, community skills, self-reliance, and interaction within our community.



## Mission

**To enrich the lives of teens and adults with developmental disabilities through unlimited opportunities that build independence and community inclusion.**

## Our Approach

Starfire's priority is to impact social isolation by teaching individuals with disabilities skills to become part of their community. Every program provides opportunities for individuals with disabilities to learn and practice their social skills and create strategies for interacting in the community.



# Welcome to Starfire



We are pleased that you have chosen to become a member of Starfire's Volunteer Staff. As a volunteer for Starfire, you will touch the lives of many teenagers and adults with disabilities. Volunteering at Starfire is a **unique** and **rewarding** experience.

- ★ Starfire offers more than 110 outings each month. That makes it easy to find the perfect outing for you.
- ★ With flexible evening and weekend options Starfire works with your schedule.
- ★ You get the opportunity to work **directly** with our members on **fun** social activities.
- ★ At Starfire you can bring along your friends and family to volunteer as well. The more the merrier!

Starfire volunteers come from all over the community. They are people of various ages and backgrounds: business persons, students, professionals, retirees, and homemakers, to name a few. With over 400 members and 110 outings a month, volunteers are a critical part of Starfire's success. Everyone brings a quality of compassion that helps contribute to the success of our programs. *No experience is necessary to be a Starfire volunteer, just an interest in getting to know new people!*

Starfire provides people with disabilities with opportunities to enjoy social outings as well as perform service for others in the community. As a volunteer you will join Starfire members on these outings and aid them with socialization, engaging them in conversation with yourself as well as other members.

You choose outings based on your **interest**, **location**, and **availability**. This is the same way that our members choose outings. As you can see, *automatically you have something in common with the people you are going to be with!*

We are happy to welcome you to Starfire and thank you for your interest in becoming a volunteer. This booklet will give you helpful information about Starfire and what you can expect as a volunteer.

If you have any questions or concerns at any time, we would be happy to assist you. It is because of generous and caring individuals like you that Starfire is able to extend its programs to so many people with disabilities.

Welcome!

# Volunteer Information



## What Starfire Expects from You

### **Outings**

*Socialization-* Talk to the people on your outing. Get to know them just like you would any other new person you've just met. Everyone has something to say including Starfire members!

*Safety-* While the outing leader will be your primary safety guide, remember that you are there to help as well. Always be aware of what is going on around you. If you see something wrong notify the staff.

*Independence-* You are here as a friend to promote member's independence. Encourage members to do as many things on their own as possible. If they can't do it, at least let them try first.

### **Sign Up**

Starfire asks that you sign up for at least one outing a month. You can do this by email or phone.

If you cannot make a scheduled outing please call Starfire as soon as possible to let us know.

## What You can Expect from Starfire


### **Support**

A staff member will always be with you. They have the knowledge of the members and are trained to handle any situation.

Starfire strives to make great experiences for members and volunteers. We are always open to suggestions. Your happiness and enjoyment is very important to us!

### **Communication**

Staff will provide you with a reminder call prior to your outings. They will let you know when and where you need to be as well as anything you may need to bring.



Just a reminder... Volunteer expenses directly related to the volunteer experiences (including mileage) are **usually** deductible. Please check with local government tax rules for verification.

**Volunteers can sign up for outings anytime by calling Starfire at 281.2100 or by emailing Lauren Able, Volunteer Coordinator at [lauren@starfirecouncil.org](mailto:lauren@starfirecouncil.org)**

# What is a Typical Outing?



An outing typically consists of six members, a Starfire staff person and a volunteer or multiple volunteers. Outings may be recreational or service oriented. All outings focus on skills needed to be successful in the community.

A volunteer's primary responsibility on an outing is to increase **socialization**. If you feel like you are talking too much then you are doing a great job!

Starfire is broken down into four age groups: Upper (13-21), City (22-30), Ace (31-45), Oasis (46 and older). These breakdowns only apply to members, not volunteers. This is so our members can get to know people in their own peer groups. You are welcome to volunteer for **any** age group.

Examples of outings offered by Starfire:

- Dinner at local restaurants
- Movies and plays
- Attending local professional and college sporting events



- Bingo with Seniors
- Picnic in the park
- Ladies Night Out and Guys Night Out



- Feed the Hungry program
- Shopping for Seniors
- Shopping and dining at local malls



- Ceramics
- Cooking Classes

# Things to Remember When Interacting With Members

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- ★ A person with a disability is a person-someone to meet and get to know.
- ★ Remember that individuals with disabilities are more similar to you than dissimilar.
- ★ Relax. Don't worry about what to say.
- ★ Encourage conversation and interaction between yourself and the members.
- ★ Promote the active participation of the individual with a disability in all aspects of the activity.
- ★ Appreciate what the person is able to do.
- ★ Offer assistance only if asked, or if the need seems obvious.
- ★ Respect the individual's right to indicate the kind of help needed.
- ★ A person with a disability may need some time to speak or get things done.
- ★ Never let the disability define the person. Rather than saying "Bob is disabled" say "Bob is a person with a disability."
- ★ Discuss the disability if it comes naturally into the conversation.
- ★ Be yourself.



## Frequently Asked Questions



### **What is Starfire?**

Starfire is a non-profit unique to Cincinnati that provides inclusive social and service activities for teens and adults with disabilities. You might see a group of Starfire members out at Reds' games, restaurants, movies or Kings' Island. You could find them volunteering at over 30 local agencies, helping to make Cincinnati a better place for all of us.

### **What is Starfire's History?**

Starfire Council evolved from Camp Fire Boys and Girls, Inc. In 1986, the Council's board in Cincinnati initiated a comprehensive review of programs and redirected its resources toward individuals with special needs. As a result of this evolution, Starfire Council was established as a separate non-profit corporation in 1993. Today, Starfire continues to create groundbreaking programs that address the emerging needs of teens and adults with disabilities and is the largest program of its kind throughout the country.

### **Where does the name *Starfire* come from?**

Starfire evolved from the Camp Fire Girls and Boys of Greater Cincinnati. The *fire* in Starfire represented the Camp Fire lineage. Considering "Starfire" was and still is such a unique, groundbreaking program, the star symbolized the organization reaching to new heights when serving people with disabilities.

### **What services does Starfire provide?**

Starfire offers teens and young adults with disabilities the opportunity to develop and cultivate individual interests and talents while simultaneously reducing social isolation through inclusion and peer interaction. Additionally, Starfire members impact the community through service and volunteer activities.

Starfire provides 110 monthly (1300 annual) activities for its members. Starfire activities eliminate the many barriers that prevent individuals with disabilities from participating in within the community (i.e. transportation, accessibility issues, etc.). These outings also provide individuals with disabilities the opportunity to gain skills needed to eliminate social isolation.

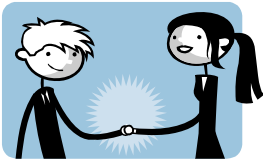
Many teens and adults with disabilities are plagued by social isolation, a leading risk factor attributed to the fact that more than 80% of individuals with disabilities will be abused in their life time. Starfire is the only organization that focuses on reducing isolation through the development of social and community skills.

### **How many people does Starfire serve?**

Starfire serves 460 individuals with disabilities. In addition, their families and caregivers receive valuable respite, greatly increasing Starfire's impact in the community.

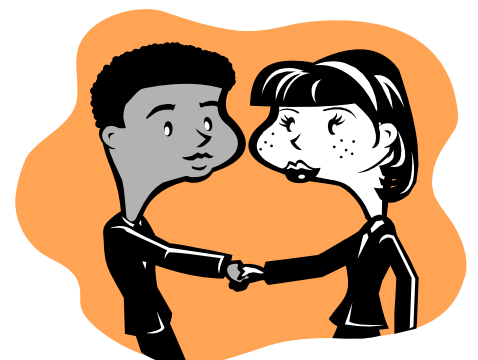
### **Who is eligible to be a member of Starfire?**

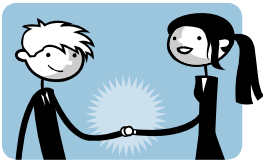
Anyone who has a developmental disability is eligible to be a member of Starfire. A developmental disability is a disability with an onset by the age of 22. Some familiar developmental disabilities are Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Down Syndrome, Mental Retardation.



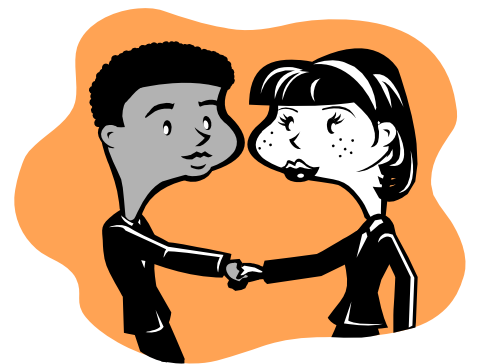
## Getting to know you...

- What time did you get up this morning?
- What was the last movie you went out to see?
- How long have you been a member of Starfire?
- What was your favorite outing ever?
- What is your favorite TV show?
- Where do you work/go to school? What do you do during the day?
- What are your plans for the weekend?
- What is your mom, dad, sister, brother, pet's name?
- How old are they?
- What do they do for a living?
- What is your middle name?
- What did you have for breakfast this morning?
- What is your favorite food?
- What is your least favorite food?
- What is your favorite snack?
- What is your favorite CD or kind of music?
- What station do you listen to on the radio?
- Where do you like to shop?
- If you could go on vacation anywhere in the world, where would you go?
- Where do you think it would be fun to go with Starfire?
- When is your birthday?
- What part of town do you live in?
- Do you take access to Starfire events?
- What is your favorite sport to watch?
- Who is your favorite player?
- Coke or Pepsi? Diet or regular?
- Are you a morning person or a night owl?
- What is your shoe size?





- What is your favorite kind of ice cream?
- What is your favorite holiday—what do you eat on the holidays?
- If you won the lottery, what would you buy?
- Have you ever been on TV?
- Have you ever been to another state? Which ones? Your favorite?
- What is your favorite joke?
- Fill in the blank: “When I dance, I look like\_\_\_\_\_.
- If you could meet one famous person, who would you want to meet?
- If you could ask the president of the United States one thing, what would it be?
- What is the scariest movie you’ve ever seen?
- How long does it take you to get ready in the morning?
- If you were an animal, what kind of animal would you want to be?
- What is the longest amount of time you’ve ever spent in the car?
- What is the best Halloween costume you’ve ever worn?
- If you were a teacher, what subject would you teach?
- If you had three wishes, what would you wish for?
- Who are the greatest people that ever lived?
- What are qualities of a good friend?
- What was your least favorite job ever?
- What things make you happy?
- What are your hobbies?
- What do you like to do when you’re feeling bored?
- What are your greatest accomplishments?
- What are some things to do during a long car ride?
- What are your favorite things to do in the summer (fall, winter, spring)?
- Are you superstitious? (Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>, step on a crack, break your mother’s back, don’t open an umbrella indoors, don’t walk under ladders, black cat crosses your path—bad luck, etc)
- What are some helpful things to do at home. At Starfire?



# Additional Information

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If you would like more information about Starfire or any disabilities you may encounter during an outing you may visit the following websites:



## Starfire

[www.starfirecouncil.org](http://www.starfirecouncil.org)

Phone: 513.281.2100

On Call Phone (after hours): 513.503.6240

Emergency Phone: 513.369.9702

Address: 5030 Oaklawn Drive, Cincinnati, Ohio 45227



## Mental Retardation

[www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/dd/ddmr.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/dd/ddmr.htm)



## Epilepsy

[www.epilepsy.com](http://www.epilepsy.com)

on the left side, click on "All About Epilepsy"



## Autism

[www.autism-society.org](http://www.autism-society.org)

on the top of page, click on "About Autism"



## Down Syndrome

[www.nads.org](http://www.nads.org)

click on facts



## Cerebral Palsy

[www.cerebralpalsy.org](http://www.cerebralpalsy.org)