



Volunteer Guide

2024-2025 School Year



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Section 1: Overview of Seeds 4 Success

Welcome to Seeds 4 Success!

Dear Volunteer,

Congratulations and welcome to the team! You are now part of an incredibly important team of volunteers working in the City of Annapolis to help children dream, learn, grow, and share. Our mission of ***working together as a community to provide children from low-income communities with the skills and support to achieve success in school and life*** begins with our volunteers!

Volunteers are the backbone of Seeds 4 Success (S4S), role models for our participants, and our community ambassadors. The health, care, and safety of the children and youth who participate in our programs are paramount to our mission.

We expect all volunteers to conduct themselves in a professional, nurturing, and inclusive manner. This manual provides guidance for fulfilling your role as a volunteer. Please refer to it on our website at <https://seeds4success.org/volunteer/> as often as needed, as amended versions may be available.

Because of the work we will do together, our vision will become a reality - ***every child in Annapolis will have the opportunity to build a bright future.***

Our staff and board of directors appreciate your time and energy. We look forward to working with you! If you need to contact us, please refer to the Staff Contacts section on pages 7-8 in this guide.

We hope you will find being a Mentor rewarding and fun!

Sincerely,

Jen Pastrone
Executive Director



Seeds 4 Success' History and Timeline

In 2008, in response to heightened local gun violence, a group of Eastport women formed Eastport Girls Club (EGC), an after-school program. In 2011, EGC was officially incorporated as Seeds 4 Success (S4S). Their grassroots effort that began with a \$500 check from a local civic association is now a 501(c)3 research-based, results-oriented organization with expert staff, dedicated volunteers, and thriving children.



-  **2008:** Eastport Girls Club founded by 7 concerned citizens & \$500 from Eastport Civic Assoc.
-  **2010:** One-on-one mentoring added to Eastport Girls Club (EGC)
-  **2011:** EGC incorporates as Seeds 4 Success (S4S) and receives 501c(3) status. Family added to increase engagement in programs.
-  **2012:** "I am a Reader" program added to help 1st & 2nd grade boys to increase reading fluency and comprehension.
-  **2015:** Summer programming added. College and Career Access Program added expanding services to high school students.
-  **2018:** AmeriCorps Seniors Foster Grandparent Program added placing income-eligible, stipended senior citizens in AACPS school to support academic intervention.
-  **2020:** Covid-19 forces programs to go remote. S4S provides all youth with Chromebooks to access virtual programs.
-  **2022:** S4S reopens with new a new program model - **Learn, Dream, Grow, Share**
Forges partnerships with AACPL
S4S offers Spanish Translation and Interpretation Services in-house.
-  **2023:** Student and Family Impact Teams (SIT, FIT) to increase inclusion and access among children and families .

Seeds 4 Success' Programs

Seeds 4 Success provides a holistic and comprehensive set of programs to support our participants' academic, social-emotional well-being, and college and career readiness from pre-kindergarten to career! All programs are grounded in three principles: increasing equity and access, ensuring cultural relevance, and research-driven content.



LEARN (Grades PK-5)

Every participant enrolled in our Learn program receives weekly one-on-one academic coaching provided by volunteer mentors. Learning goals and activities are determined by Seeds 4 Success assessments, including the [Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Reading Skills](#) (DIBELS) inventory, grade-level content and standards, and individual academic needs. Participants engage in Social-Emotional learning (SEL) aligned to [Second Step's™ Out-of-School Time Curriculum](#) and the [Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning's SEL Framework](#) (CASEL). CASEL includes the competencies of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. SEL activities may be delivered by volunteers and/or S4S staff members. S4S also offers enrichment opportunities, such as summer camps, field trips, STEM days, etc.



DREAM (Grades 6-12); GROW (Grades 9-12)

Participants in grades 6-12 in our Dream and Grow programs meet weekly with their mentors and/or S4S staff. They receive academic support provided by volunteer mentors. Similarly to Learn, tutoring goals are determined by grade-level content and individual academic needs. Sixth grade participants also engage in the DIBELS inventory. Participants in these grades often work on school assignments, projects, and homework during the academic portion of each session to ensure success. SEL is also aligned to CASEL's Framework, planned using [Preparing Youth to Thrive: Promising Practices in Social & Emotional Learning](#), [Be the Change](#) curricular materials, and includes a variety of one-on-one mentoring activities, small group work, and whole group learning facilitated by S4S staff. In addition to enrichment activities offered to Learn participants, Dream participants engage in college and career readiness (CCR) activities aligned to the [Maryland Out of School Time's \(MOST\) College and Career Toolkit](#). These activities build on the 21st Century Skills and include guest speakers, career exploration and planning, executive function skill-building (i.e. time management, organization, etc.) and workforce, technical programs, and college tours. In 2023, S4S will engage for the first time in a pilot program with [LifeRamp](#) to provide virtual leadership and career coaching through their mobile application, facilitated by an internationally certified coach.

GROW (Post-secondary)

As our participants graduate from high school and begin their path to career, they become members of S4S' Grow program. This program provides one-on-one mentoring that includes CCR preparation and life-skills coaching and development. If a participant needs academic support, S4S works with current volunteers to find experts in the appropriate subjects or refers the participant to additional organizations for support. Similar to the Dream program, post-secondary participants will engage in the [LifeRamp](#) application.

SHARE (S4S Community)

Our Share program is designed to deepen S4S family and youth engagement through equitable practices. Our Family and Student Impact Teams (FIT, SIT) are guided by the [Spectrum of Family & Community Engagement for Educational Equity's Framework](#), as we strive to be an organization moving closer to community ownership. These teams meet to share information about the current needs of our communities, hopes for our programs, feedback on our current model, and thereby become planning partners to refine the S4S method. S4S also provides family educational workshops across a variety of topics, such as early learning techniques, academic strategies, child development, trauma-informed care, and mental health and wellness, etc. S4S establishes partnerships throughout the City and County to support additional needs our families may have, such as English language proficiency and financial literacy.



Section 2: Staff Contacts, Roles, and Responsibilities

Executive Director

Jen Pastrone, jen.pastrone@seeds4success.org, 703-927-9859

The Executive Director (ED) ensures that the organization is fulfilling the S4S mission and maintaining an organization that is safe for, and inclusive of, all participants, families, volunteers, and staff. The ED sets the vision for all programs, drives S4S priorities, manages staff, ensures necessary resources are available, and maintains systems to ensure the safety of all individuals involved with S4S.

If you have a concern or feedback about the delivery of programs, the mentoring curricula, staff, or any other programmatic issues, please reach out to Jen.

Director of Programs and Outreach

Kéla Tucker, kela.tucker@seeds4success.org, 410-841-9723

Kéla Tucker is responsible for the planning and delivery of the S4S Dream and Grow programs. She also is responsible for enrolling participants into these programs, coordinating participation with guardians, holding training and educational sessions for volunteers and families, and facilitating SIT and FIT meetings.

If you have a question or concern regarding your mentee's progress and/or participation in the Dream or Grow programs, please contact Kéla.

Learn Program Specialist

Caitlin Tobies, , caitlin.tobies@seeds4success.org, 978-489-5755

Caitlin is responsible for the planning and delivery of the S4S Learn programs. She is also responsible for enrolling participants into this program, coordinating participation with guardians, holding training and education sessions for volunteers and families, and facilitating SIT and FIT meetings.

If you have a question or concern regarding your mentee's progress and/or participation in the Learn program, please contact Caitlin.



Volunteer Program Specialist

Milagros Bounds, milagros.bounds@seeds4success.org, 301-458-5798

Milagros is responsible for the S4S' Volunteer Program. She recruits and onboards volunteers, provides training, coordinates volunteer attendance, and conducts the annual volunteer evaluation and renewal. She acts as the main point of contact for volunteers on the day of programs.

If you have a question or concern about the volunteer program or role, please contact Caitlin.

Program Associate

Tyjah Brown, tyjah.brown@seeds4success.org, 410-533-3847

Tyjah is a proud Seeds 4 Success alumni! She began her S4S journey when she was in third grade and is a graduate of University of Maryland Eastern Shore. She has also been the S4S summer intern. Tyjah has now joined S4S as a permanent staff member!

Tyjah supports all child-facing programs including helping with the coordination transportation for all S4S participants and the implementation of the academic, social-emotional, and career and college readiness curriculum.

If you have a question or concern about your mentee's progress and/or participation in programs, you may also contact Tyjah. She will work with the appropriate Program Staff to address your inquiry.



Section 3: Volunteer Roles and Responsibilities

Volunteer Eligibility

To be eligible to volunteer at Seeds 4 Success, you must:

- Be 21 years of age or older
- Pass a thorough criminal background check
- Abide by Seeds 4 Success' Code of Conduct, and Volunteer Guidelines and Policies
- Maintain consistent attendance at S4S programs.

At this time, Seeds 4 Success is unable to accommodate any Court Ordered Volunteer Hours.

Volunteer Roles and Responsibilities

Volunteer Mentors:

S4S Mentors are assigned to work one-on-one with a S4S participant. Mentors work with children in grades PK-12 and post-secondary to ensure they meet academic, social-emotional, and college and career readiness milestones to be successful in school and life.

Responsibilities:

- Follow the S4S program model and curriculum at every session.
- Provide weekly academic support and coaching.
- Engage with their mentee in social-emotional and college and career readiness learning.
- Participate in surveys to share information about their experience and the needs of their mentee.
- Attend S4S field trips, special events, and celebrations, when able.

Commitment: At S4S, we ask that all volunteers commit to one academic school year. During the year, volunteers are expected to attend weekly two-hour programs on their assigned evening.

- Learn program (Grades PK-5): Wednesdays, 4-6PM at Eastport Elementary School.
- Dream program (Grades 6-8): Tuesdays, 5-7PM at the Eastport-Annapolis Neck Public Library.
- Dream participants (Grades 9-12): Thursdays, with program staff at the S4S office. The Program Manager will be in touch with volunteers if attendance would be needed or preferred on any of those dates.



Volunteer Floater Mentors:

S4S Volunteer Floater Mentors support S4S staff and volunteers at weekly programs and events by filling the role of mentor when a participant is not yet matched with a permanent mentor or their mentor is absent. This role is best for those who cannot commit to a weekly schedule of programs and would like to support programs in a mentoring capacity. Volunteer Floater Mentors are also required to attend all the necessary training and meet all eligibility requirements.

Responsibilities:

- Follow the S4S program model and curriculum at every session.
- Provide academic support and coaching.
- Engage in social-emotional and college and career readiness learning.
- Participate in surveys to share their experience.
- Attend S4S field trips, special events, and celebrations, when able.

Commitment: At S4S, we ask that all volunteers commit to one academic school year, even as a floater. Floater Mentors should plan to attend at 1-2 sessions per month or at an agreed upon schedule to remain in an active volunteer status.

Background Checks

To ensure the safety of our participants, all volunteers must complete a thorough criminal background check before volunteering at programs. This background check includes a federal, state, and local criminal history review and a review of the sex offender registry. Once your background check is complete, the Volunteer Program Specialist will inform you of your eligibility to volunteer. S4S asks that new volunteers cover the expense of their first background check. If this presents a barrier to volunteering, please reach out to the Volunteer Manager. All volunteers are required to submit an updated background check every three calendar years. Seeds 4 Success covers the expense of the recurring background checks.

Volunteer Onboarding and Training

S4S volunteers participate in initial and on-going training each year to support effective mentoring practices and appropriate onboarding to new methodology.

Before working with participants, all new volunteers must:

- Engage in an interest session and initial interview with the Volunteer Program Specialist.



- Undergo a criminal history background check. Details for this process are shared during the initial interview.
- Attend a Volunteer Orientation.
- Attend New Volunteer Program Training.

All active volunteers must attend:

- Mandated Reporter Training for Abuse and Neglect.
- Beginning-of-the-Year Training before programs start with participants.
- Periodic trainings throughout the year.

S4S works hard to provide training during normal volunteer hours to accommodate schedules. At times, training sessions may be recorded to accommodate volunteers who cannot otherwise attend.

Initial 90-Day Probationary Period

Each new volunteer serves an initial probationary period of 90 days or three months service before achieving “active” volunteer status. In the initial 90 days, a new volunteer will be paired with another active volunteer to shadow at least one session and have opportunities to work with a variety of participants. While in the 90-Day Probationary Status, a volunteer who violates the S4S Code of Conduct may be terminated without notice of appeal rights. After the initial probationary period and when transitioning to an “active” volunteer, a S4S staff member meets with the volunteer to discuss their initial experience and assign a mentee, if there is one available.

Mentor and Mentee Matching Process

S4S’ goal is to ensure that every participant is paired with a mentor that is a best fit for them and results in a partnership that is nurturing, inclusive, and supports their success in school and life. This may mean that a participant or a volunteer are not matched immediately until a best fit is determined. There are a variety of factors that determine a successful match – personality, communication style, comfort, connection, etc. As an initial mentor-mentee pairing is being established between a participant and active volunteer, S4S staff communicate frequently with the volunteer, participant, and their guardian to understand if the partnership seems like a successful match. A meeting may be held with the participant, volunteer, guardian, and S4S staff to formalize a mentor-mentee partnership. We ask volunteers to remain flexible as it may take a few attempts to get the best fit possible between mentor and mentee.



All volunteer mentors are asked to commit to serving at least one full school year to maintain a secure relationship for a participant. However, S4S understands that sometimes life brings changes and tries to accommodate necessary changes. A volunteer may request a change in placement or participant re-match at any time during their volunteer service. Please keep in mind that re-matching is at the discretion of S4S staff and depends on both the nature of the initial request and on participant availability. S4S mentoring relationships matter to all participants and a healthy end to a mentor-mentee match is important. S4S requires that any volunteer asking to be re-matched participate in a closure process with their former mentee before being re-matched. If there are any questions or concerns regarding a mentor-mentee match or relationship, please contact the Volunteer Program Specialist.

Cultural Humility

At S4S, we expect all volunteers to practice cultural humility in all interactions with participants, other volunteers, and staff to promote inclusivity.

Cultural humility, as defined by the Center for Disease Control, is active engagement in an ongoing process of self-reflection, in which individuals seek to:

- Examine their personal history/background and social position related to gender, ethnicity, socio-economic status, profession, education, assumptions, values, beliefs, biases, and culture, and how these factors impact interpersonal interactions.
- Reflect on how interpersonal interactions and relationships are impacted by the history, biases, norms, perception, and relative position of power.
- Gain deeper understanding and respect of cultural differences through active inquiry, reflection, reflexivity, openness to establishing power-balanced relationships, and appreciation of another person's/community's/population's expertise on the social and cultural context of their own lives/lived experience.
- Recognize areas in which they do not have all the relevant experience and expertise and demonstrate a nonjudgmental willingness to learn from a person/community/population about their experiences and practices.

Ways to practice cultural humility include:

- Embracing diverse perspectives, experiences and avoiding monolithic or stereotypical depictions of a culture, group, community or population.
- Self-evaluating your own beliefs and cultural identities to be open to others' beliefs and cultural identities.
- Learning about other cultures and not demanding or expecting others to educate you on their culture or customs.
- Researching and learning about your mentee's community, values, and cultural norms.



- Leading conversations with curiosity and avoiding making assumptions.
- Avoiding judgment about how individuals of other cultures may approach a situation.
- Taking time to learn the appropriate pronunciation of names.
- Asking permission before engaging in appropriate physical interactions.
- Learning more about cultural customs (i.e. eye contact, hand gestures, being quiet).
- Avoiding defensiveness when corrected about cultural terms, customs, or expectations.
- Asking yourself the following questions:
 - In what ways am I privileged and does that differ from others?
 - How may I hold power in situations differently than others and what might the impact be?
 - How do my cultural beliefs and identities show up in interactions with others and what might the impact be?
 - How might I intentionally or unintentionally hold bias towards another culture or person?
 - How is my lens different from my mentee's or another person's?
 - How do I practice social awareness to better understand how my actions or words might affect others?
 - How do I know my mentee understood what I said or meant and how do I know I understood what my mentee said or meant?
 - How can I learn more about what values, learning, or behaviors might be different across cultures?
 - How do I make space to embrace cultural differences in my interactions with my mentee or others?

Code of Conduct for Seeds 4 Success Volunteers

The Code of Conduct for Seeds 4 Success volunteers outlines specific expectations of Seeds 4 Success volunteers to ensure the safety of all individuals involved with S4S.

Seeds 4 Success expects that our volunteers will–

- Adhere to the highest ethical standards, act with personal integrity, and engage with all members of the S4S community in a professional manner.
- Practice Cultural Humility and foster an inclusive environment.
- Provide a professional environment that is free from physical, psychological, written, or verbal intimidation or harassment.
- Practice confidentiality when speaking about participants and their families.
- Not physically, sexually, or emotionally abuse, or neglect a child or adult.
- Share concerns about suspicious or inappropriate behavior with S4S staff members.
- Report any suspected abuse or neglect of a child to Child Protective Services.
- Accept personal responsibility for protecting children and adults from all forms of abuse.



Code of Conduct with Participants: Policies outlined in this guide are intended to assist volunteers in making decisions about interactions with S4S participants. For clarification of any guideline, or to inquire about behaviors not addressed here, contact the S4S Volunteer Program Specialist.

S4S provides our participants with the highest quality mentoring services available. We are committed to creating an environment for children that is safe, nurturing, and empowering, and that promotes growth and success.

It is a core value of S4S that Participants, are treated with respect at all times and treated fairly regardless of race, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, gender, or religious preference.

Abuse of any kind will not be tolerated. Confirmed abuse will result in immediate dismissal from S4S. Seeds 4 Success will fully cooperate with authorities if allegations of abuse require an investigation.

This Code of Conduct outlines specific expectations of volunteers as we strive to accomplish our mission together.

Seeds 4 Success expects that volunteers will –

- Adhere to S4S curricula, agendas, and program activity guidelines.
- Adhere to best practices of verbal and physical care and affection as outlined by S4S.
- Adhere to best practices of appropriate and inappropriate verbal and physical interactions as outlined by S4S.
- Not stare at or comment on a participant's bodies or appearance.
- Not date or become romantically involved with participants and their family members.
- Not use or be under the influence of alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, or illegal drugs in the presence of participants or at any S4S program location.
- Not have sexually oriented materials, including printed or online pornography, in the presence of participants.
- Not have secrets with participants and will only give gifts in accordance with S4S policies.
- Comply with our S4S policies regarding interactions with participants outside of S4S programs.
- Adhere to S4S policies regarding electronic communication and social media with participants.
- Adhere to S4S policies regarding working one-on-one with participants in a public setting.
- Not abuse participants in anyway including (but not limited to) the following:



- A. *Physical abuse*: hitting, spanking, shaking, slapping, or unnecessary restraints.
- B. *Verbal abuse*: degrading, threatening, or cursing.
- C. *Sexual abuse*: inappropriate touch, exposing oneself, or sexually oriented conversations.
- D. *Mental abuse*: shaming, humiliation, or cruelty.
- E. *Neglect*: withholding food, water, or shelter.

S4S will not tolerate the bullying, mistreatment or abuse of one child by another child.

S4S will take steps needed to eliminate any form of bullying. Anyone who sees an act of bullying, and who then encourages it, is engaging in bullying. This policy applies to all participants, S4S employees, board members, volunteers, and agents.

- Bullying is aggressive behavior that is intentional, is repeated over time, and involves an imbalance of power or strength. Bullying can take on various forms, including:
 - A. *Physical bullying*: when one person engages in physical force against another person, for example, by hitting, punching, pushing, kicking, pinching, or restraining another.
 - B. *Verbal bullying*: when someone uses their words to hurt another, for example, by belittling or calling another hurtful names.
 - C. *Nonverbal or relational bullying*: when one person manipulates a relationship or desired relationship to harm another person. This includes social exclusion, friendship manipulation, or gossip. This type of bullying also includes intimidating another person by using gestures.
 - D. *Cyberbullying*: the intentional and overt act of aggression toward another person by way of any technological tool, such as email, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or website postings (including apps and blogs).
Cyberbullying can involve:
 - Sending mean, vulgar, or threatening messages or images.
 - Posting sensitive, private information about another person.
 - Pretending to be someone else in order to make that person look bad.
 - Intentionally excluding someone from an online group.
 - E. *Hazing*: an activity expected of someone joining or participating in a group that humiliates, degrades, abuses, or endangers that person regardless of that person's willingness to participate.
 - F. *Sexualized bullying*: when bullying involves behaviors that are sexual in nature. Examples of sexualized bullying behaviors include sexting, bullying that involves exposures of private body parts, and verbal bullying involving sexualized language or innuendos.



Volunteers should report concerns or complaints about S4S employees or volunteers, other adults, or participants to a S4S Program Specialist (regarding child-on-child bullying) or Executive Director (regarding employees, volunteers, or other adults).

Volunteers should report allegations or incidents of abuse to the proper state authority. Please refer to the specific guidelines in the Reporting Child Neglect and Abuse section on page 27 of this guide.

To be eligible to serve as a volunteer, volunteers may not have engaged in or been accused or convicted of child abuse, indecency with a child, or injury to a child.

Verbal and Physical Contact

S4S' verbal and physical contact policy promotes a positive, nurturing environment while protecting participants and volunteers. S4S encourages appropriate contact and prohibits inappropriate displays of verbal or physical contact. Any inappropriate contact by volunteers towards participants in the S4S programs will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of volunteer service at Seeds 4 Success.

This policy covers appropriate and inappropriate verbal and physical interactions including, but not limited to:

Appropriate Verbal Interactions	Inappropriate Verbal Interactions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouragement • Praise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal reprimands • Name-calling • Bullying • Discriminatory or stereotyping comments • Ridicule or humiliation • Discussing sexual encounters • Cursing • Hazing • Off-color or sexual jokes • Shaming or belittling • Derogatory remarks • Harsh language that may frighten, threaten, or humiliate other people • Derogatory remarks about another person or his/her/their family



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inappropriate games like <i>Truth or Dare</i> and <i>Never Have I Ever</i>
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Appropriate Physical Interactions	Inappropriate Physical Interactions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Side hugs • Fist bump • Handshakes • High fives • Holding hands (only with young children in escorting situations) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full-frontal hugs • Rubbing a participant’s back • Kisses • Showing affection in isolated areas or while one-on-one • Lap sitting • Sitting with legs spread apart in front of the participant • Wrestling • Piggyback rides • Tickling • Allowing a participant to cling to a volunteer’s leg • Any type of massage given by or to a participant • Any form of affection that is unwanted by the participant or volunteer

Best Practices for Appropriate Physical Interaction:

- **Volunteers must ask a participant’s permission** before engaging in any appropriate physical interaction. For example, “You did a great job. Would you like a handshake, high five, or fist bump? You can say ‘yes’ or ‘no’ - both are okay!”
- **Volunteers must refrain from an appropriate physical interaction if a participant states or indicates “no”** or that they do not want to engage in the appropriate physical interaction.
- **Volunteers should always be aware of their seated position** to ensure that their mentee can make eye contact, the mentee is seated at the same level (i.e. both in chairs), and that the mentor’s body is positioned side to side or across appropriately with limited physical contact.
- If you are unsure about the appropriateness of a physical interaction, please contact S4S staff.



Best Practices for Inclusive Mentoring

Volunteers are expected to maintain an inclusive and welcoming mentoring space for participants. Below are recommendations for setting up a mentoring session, communication practices, and relationship guidelines. Also, refer to the Cultural Humility section on page 12 of this guide for additional recommendations.

The Mentoring Session:

- Prepare for each session by reviewing necessary program materials, agendas, provided activities and locating necessary materials when you arrive at the session.
- Welcome your mentee warmly at each session.
- Begin with the S4S Goal Sheet to plan for your session together.
- Provide your mentee with appropriate space to work during program activities.
- Avoid physical touch or ask permission for appropriate physical contact.
- Close your session by sharing a highlight or something your mentee did well.

Communication Practices:

- Allow your mentee to share their own ideas and avoid speaking on their behalf.
- Prompt with open-ended questions or responses, seek clarity or understanding (i.e. "Tell me more" or "I really want to understand. What I am hearing you say is...Is that correct?").
- Provide specific encouragement or praise (i.e. "I know you can conquer this math problem because I have seen you do this before." or "When you focused on reading for 10 straight minutes, you were able to find the details you needed to answer the question - good job!")
- Monitor volunteer versus mentee speaking time.
- Avoid sharing or requesting personal information, inquiring about a participant's family, asking for pictures, videos, and social media access.
- Avoid addressing participants with pet names, nicknames, or terms of endearment.

Relationship Practices:

- It takes time to build a deep, trusting, and mutually beneficial relationship. Every participant takes their own unique time to open up to volunteers. Some participants may share much about their lives and others may be more limited - both are okay!
- If your mentee is open to sharing, take time to listen to details about your mentee's day at school, the activities they are engaged in, things that they are excited about in their life.
- Avoid over-rewarding or punishing participants.
- Begin each week assuming the best of your mentee. Do not hold grudges for previous interactions or behavior.
- Do not bribe, manipulate, humiliate, threaten or use sarcasm with participants.



General Guidelines for Volunteers

Supervision: While working one-on-one with your assigned participant, it is the expectation that they are under your supervision at all times and for the entirety of the session. This means that if a volunteer needs to leave the designated mentoring space, he/she must be able to see the assigned participant. If there is a time that a volunteer needs to step away from the designated area and cannot monitor their assigned participant, they must inform a staff member right away.

Weekly Program Agendas and Content: S4S provides content and agendas for all mentoring sessions to include weekly goal-setting forms, academic tutoring materials and worksheets, social-emotional activities, college and career preparation instruction and information. It is expected that all volunteers will abide by the content and agendas set forth by the program. If a volunteer would like to supplement the content of sessions with additional activities, those must be approved in advance by S4S staff.

If a volunteer has questions about an activity or agenda item, they should contact the Volunteer Program Specialist or appropriate Program Program Specialist.

Volunteer Surveys and Feedback: S4S conducts periodic surveys about programming topics and volunteer satisfaction. Volunteers are required to complete these surveys so that S4S staff can better understand the needs of S4S participants, volunteers, and programs.

Technology Use at Programs: S4S provides necessary technology for participants at programs (i.e. laptops, desktop computers, ipads). Volunteers are prohibited from using their personal computers, phones, ipads or other electronic devices with participants at programs. Volunteers should try to avoid using their personal technology when engaging with participants. If volunteer needs to use their cell phones at programs, they should inform a staff member and ask to step aside to hold a personal conversation.

Bathroom Visits (Dream and Grow Only): Volunteers should escort their assigned participant to the bathroom, quickly make sure the bathroom is safe to enter, and allow the participant to use the bathroom independently while waiting outside and within earshot. If a participant needs assistance while in the bathroom, the volunteer should alert staff before assisting the participant. At the Learn Program, only staff are permitted to escort children to the bathroom.

Beverages, Snacks, and Meals: S4S does its best to provide healthy snacks and meals at all programs and monitors allergy and health concerns for each child as indicated by their guardian. Because of this, please do not provide your mentee with any candy, snacks, or meals



without receiving direct permission from a S4S staff member prior to the day of programs. If you wish to bring a snack to celebrate a special occasion, please reach out to S4S at least 24-48 hours prior to the day of programs. All snacks provided by a volunteer must be store-bought and in their original package or container. S4S reserves the right to refuse the distribution of snacks at any time. Due to allergies, peanut products are prohibited from S4S programs. Volunteers are permitted to bring a snack and beverage for themselves. All beverages and snacks must be free of tobacco, marijuana, alcohol, and recreational or illegal drugs. Volunteer snacks and beverages may not be shared with participants.

Medication Administration: Guardians of S4S participants provide necessary medical and medication information during enrollment. S4S volunteers are not authorized to, and are prohibited from, administering any prescription or over-the-counter to participants. This includes, but is not limited to lotions, chapsticks, ointments, perfumes, deodorants, pain relievers, antacids, and vitamins. If a participant has brought medication to a S4S program, please alert a staff member.

Friends, Family, or Non-S4S Minors at Programs: To honor the individualized mentoring space and program time while ensuring all persons attending programming are adequately screened, S4S does not allow volunteers to bring any friends, family, or non-S4S minors to programs. If an adjustment needs to be made to accommodate a volunteer's schedule due to a family or personal commitment, emergency, or circumstance, they should contact the Volunteer Program Specialist as soon as possible.

Volunteer and Mentee Interactions Outside of Programs: As an organization, S4S has strict policies in place concerning meeting or communicating outside of programs to ensure the safety of participants and volunteers and eliminate situations that could lead to abuse. Volunteers within the 90-Day probationary period or matched with a participant for under a school year, are not permitted to engage with participants or their families outside of scheduled programs. Volunteers attending S4S' Learn program are not permitted to engage with participants or their families outside of scheduled programs. After the first year of being matched with a participant in the Dream or Grow programs, a volunteer may be granted permission to communicate with and/or meet with their mentee under specific circumstances and with S4S' and the guardian's expressed permission. Before a volunteer discusses meeting outside of programs with a participant, they must speak directly to a S4S staff member to begin the approval process. S4S staff will consider the request, speak with the participant's guardian, and follow up with the volunteer. Additional documentation, permissions, and background checks (i.e. driving record and proof of insurance) may be required. S4S reserves the right to deny permission at any time for the safety of participants and volunteers.

Volunteers who meet eligibility requirements for, and have been granted direct permission by S4S and the participant's guardian for interaction outside of programs, must follow the



guidelines below. Failure to follow these guidelines may result in termination of the volunteer's service.

1. Off-site interactions are limited to public locations only. Participants cannot visit volunteer's homes or homes of volunteer's friends or relatives.
2. Prior to the interaction, the volunteer must report a scheduled off-site meeting to S4S staff. This schedule must include:
 - a. Purpose or rationale for visit.
 - b. Schedule of the interaction including times and locations.
 - c. Persons attending.
3. If anything unusual happens during the off-site interaction, it must be reported to S4S staff immediately.
4. S4S does not permit volunteers to take participants on overnight trips, unless it is a S4S sponsored trip (i.e. a group college tour arranged by S4S).
5. All adults meeting with the participant must either be a guardian, S4S-approved and background-checked volunteer, or a S4S staff member.
6. Children of volunteers are not permitted to attend off-site interactions.
7. Volunteers are not permitted to drive a participant unless they have gone through a driving record review and approval by S4S staff and provide proof of insurance. **Please note that volunteers are responsible and liable under their own insurance for an accident or injury that might occur while transporting a participant.**
8. When permitted to drive a participant, volunteers must follow all federal, state, and local laws. Volunteers must refrain from texting and phone calls while driving participants.
9. All off-site meetings must occur in a public location in the visibility of others.
10. If a guardian is non-English speaking, volunteers must coordinate with S4S staff for translation and to receive permission. If a volunteer has been screened and approved to be a bilingual Spanish-speaking volunteer, they may contact the guardian for any needed permissions. Permission for off-site interactions cannot be granted by a participant translating for their guardian.
11. All off-site interactions must be recorded in the volunteer portal.
12. Volunteers must follow all the guidelines, policies, agreements and procedures within the Volunteer Guide during off-site interactions.
13. A Volunteer's lack of following the outlined guidelines, policies, agreements and procedures within the Volunteer Guide during off-site interactions could result in dismissal from the S4S volunteer program.

A failure to follow these guidelines could result in termination of volunteer's service at S4S. Also, guardians of participants and S4S staff have the right to revoke permission for off-site volunteer and mentee interactions at any time.

Electronic and Phone Communication with Participants under 18 Years Old: Similar to off-site interactions, electronic communication is only permitted for volunteers who are approved for



such communication. Volunteers who are in a 90-Day Probationary Period and have not been matched with a mentee for a school year are not permitted to engage in electronic communications. All electronic communication between volunteers and participants must be approved by the participant's guardians and S4S and must be in an electronic environment, i.e. text messages, to which the guardian has access. Only the approved volunteer can communicate with the participant. The "Rule of Three" must be observed in all electronic communications between the participant and volunteer. For example, there should be a guardian, volunteer, and the participant on a text message exchange. Exchanges should be limited to content that volunteers and mentees would discuss while at S4S programs and events, such as academics, follow-up about a social-emotional activity or college and career activity, progress at school, additional support needed from the volunteer aligned to their role. Direct, private messaging with the participant and volunteer is not allowed. When calling a participant, the volunteer must first speak with their guardian to ensure they are granted permission to speak at that time.

If there are special circumstances that impact the need for communication outside of programs, a volunteer should share these with S4S staff before reaching out to the guardian or the participant.

Guardians of participants and S4S staff have the right to revoke permission for outside communications at any time.

Translation Support: S4S provides Spanish translation and interpretation to S4S participants and guardians. Participants are not permitted to translate information between volunteers and guardians. If translation or interpretation support is needed, a volunteer must reach out to S4S staff for assistance.

Dress Code

As representatives of S4S, volunteers are responsible for presenting a positive image to our participants and our community. Please dress appropriately for the conditions and performance of your duties. Volunteers must avoid tight or revealing clothing, such as leggings, clothing with profanity or offensive language, adult humor, and nudity.

Time and Attendance

Volunteer attendance is important to the operation of each program. Unless an emergency arises within 24 hours of programming, volunteers should **notify the Volunteer Program Specialist about an upcoming absence 24 hours in advance**. Regular attendance at weekly S4S



programming will be recorded. Volunteers approved to meet with participants for off-site interactions must submit their off-site time through the Volunteer Portal on the S4S website.

Volunteer Portal

The Volunteer Portal is located on the Volunteer tab of the S4S website (<https://seeds4success.org/volunteer>). Here you will find the Volunteer Guide, important program information, and the form to log hours that a volunteer contributes outside of regularly scheduled programs. A volunteer who has been granted permission to meet with their mentee for off-site interactions must report their hours in the portal.

Vacation or Leave of Absence

Volunteers are expected to provide advance notice to the Volunteer Program Specialist of upcoming vacations. Any volunteer who has to miss multiple sessions should provide a short note to their student (either in writing or emailed to the Volunteer Program Specialist). Your note will be reviewed by staff and presented to the participant at the start of the first missed session.

Weather or Emergency Closures

In the event of weather or emergency, S4S will generally follow Anne Arundel County Public School's decision-making regarding the closure of after-school programs. If, for any other sort of emergency, S4S needs to cancel programs for the evening, the Volunteer Program Specialist will communicate the cancellation as soon as possible to all impacted volunteers.

Monetary and Gift Guidelines

S4S works to recognize participants' birthdays and milestones. S4S also hosts a Seeds' Santa event to ensure all participants have presents during the holiday season. S4S strongly encourages volunteers to refrain from exchanging gifts with participants. However, gifts to participants may be given by following the procedure below :

1. A plan to give a participant a gift must be submitted to the S4S Volunteer Program Specialist or Program Manager before the gift is purchased.
2. The S4S Volunteer Program Specialist or Program Manager will determine a cost limit for how much can be spent on the gift.
3. Guardians of the participants will be notified by S4S staff about the gift item and why the participant is receiving the gift.
4. Guardian or Seeds 4 Success may decline the gift.



5. Seeds 4 Success may review any cards prior to them being given to the participant and/or Guardian.

Volunteers are not permitted to provide money or financial assistance to a participant or their family. Volunteers should also refrain from entering into an employment arrangement with participants or their families.

If you find out that a program participant and/or their family is in need of assistance (food, warm coat, electricity, trouble paying bills, etc.) please notify the Volunteer Program Specialist and S4S will connect families to the appropriate resources or services.

Transporting Participants

S4S coordinates and provides transportation to after-school programs and most field trips and events. At times, volunteers support transportation services for participants to after-school programs, field trips, events, summer camps, etc. Eligibility to provide transportation is limited to volunteers who are in “active” status, attending Dream or Grow programs, have followed the S4S Code of Conduct, and have undergone a driving record and insurance review. S4S seeks formal permission from the participant’s guardian before any volunteer is allowed to provide transportation to that participant.

If a volunteer is approved to provide transportation they must follow all federal, state, and local laws. Volunteers must not text or talk on the phone while driving participants (even if you have a hands-free device). Participants must sit in the back seat and wear a seat belt.

S4S staff and the participant’s guardian must be able to contact the volunteer providing transportation.

When transporting participants please make sure to return children to the location where you picked them up and make sure you see them enter the location. Do not bring the participant to any other location unless there is confirmation of alternative plans with the participant’s guardian prior to your outing.

Safety when Providing Transportation. Many of the communities that S4S participants live in experience episodic violence and it is not uncommon to see patrol cars during the day and in the evening when picking up and dropping off participants. It is important to make sure that you are taking necessary precautions when traveling to these locations and make sure to stay alert and aware of your surroundings. S4S staff travels within these communities frequently. Over the years no one has encountered targeted violence. But, the risk is there and as a volunteer, it is



important that you are aware of that risk. If you suspect that a participant may be in danger (specifically when picking up or dropping off) we ask that you reach out to their guardian before dropping off or call 911. If this occurs, also alert S4S staff immediately.

Chaperoning

At times S4S will ask for volunteers to chaperone a field trip, event, workshop, or other gathering. A chaperone is an individual who takes on the care of S4S participants in the absence of parental supervision. Chaperones assume a higher level of responsibility than their mentor role as they monitor a group of participants and are responsible for the health, welfare, and safety of all assigned participants during the activity. The responsibilities of the chaperone will vary based on the activity and will be explained by a S4S staff member before a volunteer agrees to provide chaperone supervision.

A volunteer is eligible to be a chaperone if they have:

- Met the requirements to be considered an “active” volunteer and are beyond the 90-Day Probationary period.
- An up-to-date background check on-file that has been reviewed and approved.
- Consistently upheld the Seeds 4 Success Code of Conduct.

Computer Data Security

Computer information and systems used by S4S participants for their school work such as Brightspace and Powerschool contain personal and sensitive information. The participant is responsible for logging in. A volunteer may not retain usernames or passwords to access the platforms when not in the presence of the participant. If a participant wishes to log into Brightspace or Powerschool during programming, the participant must log in from a S4S laptop, a public library desktop, or their school Chromebook. Participants must enter their own username and password and log out at the end of each session.

Record Management

S4S maintains records on every volunteer through our client management software. Records include contact information, emergency contacts, volunteer service, positions held, duties performed, evaluation of volunteer performance, training attended, and awards or recognitions



received. Volunteer records (applications, reference checks, and background checks) are held confidentially. S4S does not share any of this information with other organizations. If your contact information or any emergency contacts change please notify the Volunteer Program Specialist directly to ensure S4S has up-to-date information.

Volunteer Annual Review and Renewal

At the end of each school year, each volunteer match is assessed by the S4S Volunteer Program Specialist and staff based on volunteer attendance, adherence to S4S Volunteer Code of Conduct, S4S policies and curriculum, and alignment to the S4S mission and vision. During this review period, the Volunteer Program Specialist will schedule a check-in with each volunteer to discuss this assessment along with volunteer feedback and potential renewal for the upcoming year.

Volunteer Recognition

S4S staff and the Board of Directors sponsors recognition events for volunteers to highlight the contributions of volunteers to S4S' mission. Continual recognition of volunteers is vital and occurs whenever possible.

Termination and Exit Procedure

Seeds 4 Success understands that events can result in unforeseen or planned termination of a volunteer's service. If a termination proves necessary, providing a healthy closure between the volunteer and participant is paramount. Therefore, S4S provides a mandatory exit procedure prior to a volunteer terminating their involvement with a participant.

Exit procedure steps include:

1. The volunteer informs the S4S Volunteer Program Specialist of the impending termination of the volunteer's service.
2. The Volunteer Program Specialist begins the exit process by providing methods for closure with their mentee, such as a letter or mediated conversation.
3. S4S staff informs the guardian of the termination of the volunteer's service and explains the circumstances of the termination to the participant and guardian.
4. The Volunteer Program Specialist holds an exit interview with the volunteer.
5. The volunteer submits a signed closure and termination agreement (provided by the S4S) to the Volunteer Program Specialist.



6. Once a volunteer terminates their service, they no longer represent S4S in any capacity. A terminated volunteer assumes all legal risk if they continue any relationship with participants post-termination.

Return of Property

On completion of a volunteer term of service, i.e. the end of the school year, or a termination of service, the volunteer must return all S4S property to the S4S offices. This includes, but is not limited to, technology, folders, documents, name tags, and any other materials. These items may be returned by contacting the Volunteer Program Specialist who will arrange a convenient method of retrieval. This does not include awards, gifts, or tokens of involvement the volunteer received from S4S during the course of the volunteer service.



Section 4: Agreements, Policies, and Procedures

Equal Opportunity and Access

S4S does not discriminate in volunteer opportunities and practices on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, age, disability or any other characteristic protected by law. Any volunteers with questions or concerns about any type of discrimination are encouraged to bring these to the attention of the Volunteer Program Specialist or Executive Director. Volunteers can raise concerns without fear of reprisal.

Reporting Child Neglect and Abuse

To report neglect or abuse, call 911 or 410-421-8400.

Seeds 4 Success staff, volunteers, and agents are required to report suspected child abuse and neglect in accordance with State law and regulations. S4S provides training for volunteers on the signs of abuse and neglect. More information about knowing the signs of abuse can also be found here:

<https://dhs.maryland.gov/child-protective-services/reporting-suspected-child-abuse-or-neglect/signs-neglect-abuse/https://dhs.maryland.gov/child-protective-services/reporting-suspected-child-abuse-or-neglect/signs-neglect-abuse/>

*DEFINITIONS

- **Abuse** – the physical or mental injury of a child by any parent, or other person who has permanent or temporary care or custody or responsibility for supervision of a child and a person who, because of the person’s position or occupation, exercises authority over the child, including S4S employees, volunteers or agents, or by any household or family members under circumstances that indicate that the child’s health or welfare is harmed or at substantial risk of being harmed. Abuse also includes sexual abuse of a child, whether or not physical injuries are sustained. Abuse does not include the physical injury of a child by accidental means.
- **Mental Injury** – the observable, identifiable, and substantial impairment of a child’s mental or psychological ability to function.
- **Neglect** – leaving a child unattended or other failure to give proper care and attention to a child by any parent or other person who has permanent or temporary care or custody or responsibility for supervision of the child including S4S employees, volunteers, or agents under circumstances that indicate that the child’s health or welfare is harmed or



placed at substantial risk of harm, or mental injury to the child or a substantial risk of mental injury.

- **Sexual Abuse** – any act or acts involving sexual molestation or exploitation of a child by a parent or other person who has permanent or temporary care or custody or responsibility for the supervision of a child, including S4S employees, volunteers, or agents, or by any household or family member. Sexual abuse includes obscene photography, films, poses, or similar activity; pornographic photography, films, poses, or similar activity; prostitution; sex trafficking; incest; rape; sexual offense in any degree; sodomy; and unnatural or perverted sexual practices.

* PROCEDURES

Responsibility to Report Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect

- S4S employees, volunteers, and agents shall report any suspected child abuse and neglect, including physical abuse, sexual abuse, and the mental injury of a child as required by State law and regulations.
- S4S employees, volunteers, and agents shall report any suspected child abuse or neglect whether or not the employee, volunteer, or agent personally knows the child. The responsibility to make the report rests with the first employee or person who is informed of or suspects child abuse or neglect. If an employee, volunteer, or agent is unsure of what to do or needs assistance in making the oral and written reports, the employee, volunteer, or agent shall immediately contact the Volunteer Program Specialist, Program Manager or Executive Director.

How to Report Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect

If abuse or neglect is suspected, a S4S employee, volunteer, or agent must contact Child Protective Services to file an oral report.

Child Protective Services plays a critical role in the fight to stop child abuse in Anne Arundel County.

- **Child Protective Services can be reached at 410-421-8400 24 hours a day**

An oral report will include:

- a) The name, age, and home address of the child.
- b) The name and home address of the child's parent(s)/guardian(s) or individual(s) responsible for the child's care.

A S4S staff member will work with the volunteer to ensure they have the necessary information to file a report.



Additional information of reporting abuse or neglect can be found at the web address below:
<http://dhr.maryland.gov/child-protective-services/reporting-suspected-child-abuse-or-neglect>

If a volunteer submits a report, the volunteer is also required to inform the S4S Volunteer Program Specialist of the incident immediately.

An act or acts of child abuse and/or neglect toward any participant committed by a S4S staff, volunteer or agent will result in the permanent termination of any involvement with S4S and reporting to local authorities.

The failure of a S4S employee, volunteer, or agent to report suspected abuse or neglect, in accordance with State or local law and regulations, will result in disciplinary action. Disciplinary action may include written reprimand, suspension or termination of service.

* Adapted from [AACPS' Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect Policy](#)

Safety and Liability

S4S aims to provide a safe and healthy environment for all volunteers and participants. If a volunteer is injured in the course of the volunteer's service, it is important that the volunteer notify the Volunteer Program Specialist or other S4S staff immediately. The volunteer(s) involved should also complete an incident report and submit the report to the Volunteer Program Specialist.

S4S' general liability coverage, with some limitations and exclusions, protects volunteers for covered injury or damage that results from activities or service that volunteers conduct or perform at S4S' direction and within the scope of their duties for the organization.

S4S' general liability coverage does not provide coverage to volunteers themselves for liabilities they may have incurred as a result of their actions. S4S' volunteer accident insurance coverage covers some injuries to volunteers while volunteers are performing volunteer service on behalf of S4S. In some instances, volunteers must sign a release absolving S4S of liability when S4S volunteers voluntarily and knowingly subject themselves to certain risks while performing volunteer services on behalf of S4S or in the case when volunteers organize outside opportunities for participants that may subject them to unforeseen danger. Contact the Volunteer Program Specialist with questions or for more information about insurance and liability.



Reporting Injury and Incident Procedure

In the event of an incident or injury involving a participant or volunteer, volunteers must notify S4S staff immediately. Volunteers should also complete an incident report and submit the report to the Volunteer Program Specialist, either in-person or via email.

Social Media Policy

S4S recognizes that volunteers may have a personal presence on social media sites. A S4S volunteer's personal social media presence must never create a hostile, disruptive, or unsafe learning, or work environment for S4S or its participants. Volunteers are expected to abide by the following guidelines. Volunteers may not:

- Access social media while working with, supervising, or chaperoning S4S participants.
- Use their personal social media presence to communicate improper or inappropriate messages or content with or about S4S participants, families, or employees.
- Disclose participant or family information over a social media site.
- Post photos of any S4S participant or family member to any personal social media site for any reason.
- Use their personal social media presence to act as a representative of S4S or the S4S Board of Directors.
- Post photos of other volunteers or S4S staff without the consent of the other volunteer or staff.
- Use social media to embarrass, harass, wrongfully impersonate, or intimidate a participant, another volunteer, or employee, or agent of S4S.

Reporting Misuse of Social Media

- When a volunteer or S4S staff member becomes aware of an incident that involves the misuse of social media, the volunteer or staff member shall immediately report the incident to the Volunteer Program Specialist, Program Manager, or Executive Director.
- If it is determined that the incident is a direct result of cyberbullying, S4S will inform the guardian(s) of the participant(s) involved and contact any necessary authorities.
- Participants are encouraged to report the misuse of social media to S4S staff.
- S4S recognizes that some acts pertaining to the misuse of social media could also be delinquent acts. If they are delinquent acts, S4S will report them promptly to the responsible law enforcement agency.



Violation of the Social Media Policy

Violation of the Social Media Policy may result in the permanent termination of any involvement with S4S and reporting to local authorities if applicable.

* Adapted from [AACPS' Employee Use of Social Media Policy](#)

Media and Press Inquiries

All media and press inquiries regarding Seeds 4 Success, its programs, participants, volunteers, staff, families or other S4S agents must be referred to the Executive Director. Volunteers are prohibited from independently engaging in press or media interviews, providing information for stories, press releases, or publishing texts or articles without direct permission of the S4S Executive Director.

Sexual Harassment

S4S is committed to providing a safe environment free from discrimination on any ground and from harassment including sexual harassment. S4S maintains a zero tolerance policy for any form of sexual harassment, treats all incidents seriously, and promptly investigates all allegations of sexual harassment. Anyone engaging in sexual or other unlawful harassment will be terminated from their volunteer service or employment.

Definition of sexual harassment: Sexual harassment is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that makes a person feel offended, humiliated and/or intimidated.

Sexual harassment can involve one or more incidents and actions constituting harassment may be physical, verbal and non-verbal.

Examples of conduct or behavior that constitute sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

- Unwelcome physical contact including patting, pinching, stroking, kissing, hugging, fondling, or inappropriate touching.
- Physical violence, including sexual assault.
- Physical contact, e.g. touching, pinching.
- The use of job-related threats or rewards to solicit sexual favors.
- Comments on someone's appearance, age, private life, etc.
- Sexual comments, stories, and jokes.
- Sexual advances.
- Repeated and unwanted social invitations for dates or physical intimacy.



- Insults based on the sex of the worker.
- Condescending or paternalistic remarks.
- Sending sexually explicit messages (by phone or by email).
- Leering.
- Display of sexually explicit or suggestive material.
- Whistling.

Anyone who wants to report an incident of sexual or other unlawful harassment should promptly report the matter to the Executive Director. Volunteers can raise concerns and make reports without fear of reprisal.

Smoking, Alcohol, and Drug-Free Environment Policy

S4S operates a smoking, alcohol, and drug-free environment for programs.

1. Smoking

Smoking during programming or while in the presence of any S4S participant is prohibited.

2. Drug-Free Environment

While working with S4S participants and while conducting S4S-related activities outside of S4S program sessions, a volunteer may not use, possess, distribute, sell or be under the influence of alcohol, marijuana, or illegal drugs.

Fundraising Policy

S4S appreciates the generous support of donors. Your support of both your time and financial contributions help make our mission a reality. We welcome new opportunities to engage with individuals who would like to contribute to Seeds 4 Success in a variety of ways. If a volunteer would like to fundraise on behalf of Seeds 4 Success or recommend a fundraising opportunity to Seeds 4 Success, please first contact the Executive Director.

Grievance Policy

Federal laws and S4S procedures are in place to ensure that each volunteer is treated fairly. If you believe that you have been treated wrongly as a volunteer and would like to file a grievance, you may contact the Executive Director at (410) 533-3847. If the matter is not adequately



settled, you may write a letter to the S4S Board of Directors explaining why you believe your grievance was not adequately settled by the Executive Director.

Your letter should be addressed to: S4S Board of Directors, PO BOX 4042, Annapolis, MD 21403

Confidentiality Agreement

1. Rationale and Policy

- a. Respecting the privacy of S4S participants (and their guardians and family members), donors, staff, agents, and volunteers is a basic S4S value. All information concerning participants, former participants, staff, volunteers, financial data, donor information and business records is confidential and may not be disclosed or discussed with anyone without permission or authorization from the Executive Director.
- b. Privileged information must be kept confidential both during and after employment or volunteer service. Staff and volunteers, including board members, are expected to return materials containing privileged or confidential information at the time of separation from employment or expiration of service.
- c. Failure to maintain confidentiality may result in termination of your volunteer service. This policy is intended to protect you, as well as S4S, because in extreme cases, violations of this policy also may result in personal liability.

2. Participant Care

- a. S4S expects you to respect the privacy of participants (and their guardians and family members), and to maintain their personal and financial information as confidential. All records dealing with specific participants must be treated as confidential. General information, policy statements or statistical material that is not identified with any individual or family is not classified as confidential. Staff members are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of information relating to other staff members and volunteers, in addition to participants.
- b. “Confidential” means that you are free to talk about S4S, the program and your volunteer role, but you are not permitted to disclose participants’ full names, photos, or descriptions without prior authorization. This is a basic component of participant care and business ethics. Our board of directors, staff, and participants rely on S4S employees, agents, and volunteers to conform to this rule of confidentiality.



- c. Confidentiality is the preservation of privileged information. By necessity, personal and private information is disclosed in a professional working relationship. Part of what you learn is necessary to provide services to the participant; other information is shared within the development of a helping, trusting relationship. Therefore, most information gained about individual participants (and their guardians and family members) through an assignment is confidential in terms of the law, and disclosure could make you legally liable. Disclosure could also damage your relationship with the participant and make it difficult to help the child or youth.
- d. Care shall also be taken to ensure that unauthorized individuals do not overhear any discussion of confidential information and that documents containing confidential information are not left in the open or inadvertently shared.

3. Laws and Penalties for Breaching Confidentiality

Before you begin your assignment as a volunteer, you should be aware of the laws and penalties for breaching confidentiality. Although S4S is liable for your actions within the scope of your duty, giving information to an unauthorized person could result in S4S's refusal to support you in the event of legal action. Violation of the state laws regarding confidentiality of records is punishable upon conviction by fines or by imprisonment or both.





Photo and Social Media Release Agreement

I hereby GRANT or DENY authorization to take, edit, alter, copy, exhibit, publish, distribute, and make use of any and all pictures or video taken and name of name of the Volunteer, Staff or Agent to be used in and/or for legally promotional materials including, but not limited to, newsletters, flyers, posters, brochures, advertisements, fundraising letters, annual reports, press kits and submissions to journalists, websites, social networking sites and other consideration and other legal use. This authorization extends to all languages, media, formats and markets now known or hereafter devised.

The authorization or denial shall continue indefinitely, unless I otherwise state in writing.

By granting Seeds 4 Success this authorization, I understand and agree that these materials shall become the property of Seeds 4 Success and will not be returned.

By granting Seeds 4 Success this authorization, I hereby hold harmless, and release Seeds 4 Success from all liability, petitions, and causes of action which I, my heirs, representatives, executors, administrators, or any other persons may make while acting on my behalf or on behalf of my estate.

I represent that I am of the age of consent (18 years or older), that I am competent to contract in my own name, and that I have authority to sign this document. I have read this release before signing below and fully understand the contents, meaning and impact of the release.

I hereby ___GRANT or ___ DENY the above consent and authorization.

Signature of Volunteer: _____ Date: _____

Name of Volunteer: : _____



Volunteer Guide Acknowledgement Form

Volunteers are the backbone of Seeds 4 Success (S4S) and are role models for our participants. The welfare, safety, and care of our children and youth are paramount to our mission and success. S4S expects all volunteers to conduct themselves in a professional, nurturing, and inclusive manner as discussed within the Volunteer Guide. By **initialing** next to the following, I _____(volunteer’s name) am agreeing that I have read and understand the guidelines, procedures, and policies and will abide by the required expectations of these policies.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer Eligibility | <input type="checkbox"/> Equal Opportunity and Access |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer Roles and Responsibilities | <input type="checkbox"/> Reporting Child Neglect and Abuse |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Background Checks | <input type="checkbox"/> Safety and Liability |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer Onboarding and Training | <input type="checkbox"/> Reporting Injury and Incident Procedure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Initial 90-Probationary Period | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Media Policy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mentor and Mentee Matching Process | <input type="checkbox"/> Media and Press Inquiries |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Humility | <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual Harassment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Code of Conduct | <input type="checkbox"/> Smoking, Alcohol, and Drug-Free Environment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Best Practices for Inclusive Mentoring | <input type="checkbox"/> Fundraising Policy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> General Guidelines for Volunteers | <input type="checkbox"/> Grievance Policy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dress Code | <input type="checkbox"/> Confidentiality Agreement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Time and Attendance | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer Portal | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vacation or Leave of Absence | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency Closures | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Monetary and Gift Guidelines | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transporting Participants | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chaperoning | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Computer Data Security | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Record Management | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer Annual Review and Renewal | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer Recognition | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Termination and Exit Procedure | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Return of Property | |

Signature of Volunteer: _____ Date: _____

Name of Volunteer:: _____