

STAR (Supported Teens Alternate Route)



**“Working Together: Developing
Neurodivergent and IDD Inclusive
Volunteer Opportunities”**

Presented in the 2024 PLA Conference

Jungwon DeVone (she/her)
Somerset County Library System of New Jersey
jdevone@sclibnj.org

Preparation and Training

General Training Area	Work Preparation	Methods
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Why we work with volunteers with disabilities• Understanding IDD• Effective communications• About stimming• De-escalation skills• Needs assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Simple and repetitive tasks• Quiet area to work• Flexibility• Characteristics of participants• Delivering supervision & feedback	<p>Department Staff Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• One on one training from the supervisor• Personnel observation• Required training on Niche Academy and webinars <p>SCLSNJ Staff Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• In-house presentations• Volunteer Coordinators Group & Special Populations Committee meetings• Guest speakers• Recommend webinars

STAR (Supported Teens Alternate Route)

Targeted Populations	Procedure	Tasks	Benefits	Limitations
Teens and young adults who are in a high school's post-graduate program	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Application• Interview (Assessment)• Assigning Tasks• Volunteering• Evaluation• Re-assigning Tasks• Certificate of Recognition	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Shelving Media• Cleaning & Dusting• Assembling take-home craft bags• Shredding• Die-cutting shapes• Shelf reading• Sorting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improve interpersonal skills and confidence• Prepare for a more typical teen volunteer program• Feel the satisfaction of knowing they are "needed"• Experience a real workplace• Create a more inclusive community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All volunteers prefer to come in at 4 pm (or later) or on weekends• Staff availability• The number of tasks is not enough for multiple volunteers on the same day

Assessment and Recommendations

Assessment	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understanding work concept• Following directions• Accuracy• Speed• Independence• Time management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communicate with your volunteers effectively• Give a visual and/or verbal heads-up before changing any of their routines• Allow stimming - Get familiar with volunteers' behaviors before starting• Praise for the job well-done• Integrate volunteers into the workplace (e.g. breaks, social conversations)• Exchange feedback with volunteers and/or caregivers frequently• Tailor the assignments• Respect your volunteers