



Building on Youth

What is Building on Youth? Children ages 5 and up can become involved in many aspects of Habitat for Humanity. Building on Youth is a four-part program that involves learning about Habitat, helping Habitat by doing at least two activities, reflecting on the activity through art, and celebrating the accomplishment by sharing the art with the La Crosse community. We will present each child who completes the program with “Building on Youth” Habitat pin or bracelet.

How do we get started? Each child should discuss with an adult (a parent, teacher, Scout leader, etc.) which activities they wish to perform. A list of activities is provided on the reverse side of this page. For some tasks the adult/young person pair or group will need to make prior arrangements with the Habitat staff (this is noted with a * on the activities list). Depending on our build schedule and the number of youth who are participating, please note that not all tasks are available all the time.

Do adults need to accompany the child(ren) if/when they come to Habitat? Yes, we require a 1 adult/2 child ratio for activities that occur at Habitat. We are very interested in keeping kids safe and utilizing their time effectively and would like to have Building on Youth be an activity where adults and children can work side by side.

Why are none of the activities helping to build the homes? We understand that kids would really like to be involved with home construction; however, because of safety concerns and Wisconsin labor laws, children under 16 are not allowed on the job site while work is being performed. Kids that are 16-17 can help on construction tasks but cannot use power tools or work on the roof, ladders or scaffolding.

What if we have a different idea of what to do? Great! Just discuss it with Habitat staff.

Why did Habitat for Humanity start this program? We are committed to involving young people in solving the problem of poverty housing. This program gives them an organized way to be involved and then, through our web site, celebrates their contribution.

Can the young person use this for community service for school, church, or service clubs? Yes, as long as they speak to Habitat staff ahead of time. Those with court-ordered community service should speak with their probation officer or social worker prior to beginning to ensure that the time will count.

What if we have a youth group who wishes to volunteer? For many tasks that occur at Habitat we can take small groups. Please discuss your options with Habitat staff.

What’s this about posting art on your web site? We will post Building on Youth art (paintings, drawings, writings) on our web site. We will only identify the young person by their first name to protect their privacy. All art work becomes the property of Habitat for Humanity-La Crosse Area.

Questions? Call 608-785-2373, email hello@habitatlacrosse.org, or visit www.habitatlacrosse.org.

How to Earn Your Building on Youth Certificate

Learn! Choose one activity

- Attend a house groundbreaking or dedication.
- Read “Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America” by Barbara Ehrenreich (for older kids; available at the library), or one of the children’s books produced by Habitat International: “Dewey Doo-It Builds a House”, “Grandpa's Hammer”, “Raising the Roof”, or “Building Friends” (available for loan through Habitat for Humanity-La Crosse Area; call us at 785-2373).
- Use one of the Family Devotions at www.habitatlacrosse.org/boy.html to talk about poverty housing.
- Read a recent edition of Habitat International’s publication, Habitat World, available on-line at www.habitat.org.
- Learn about how Habitat builds in other countries by visiting www.habitat.org.
- Talk with/interview a current Habitat volunteer.
- Visit the Global Village Center or Habitat headquarters in Americus, Georgia.
- Visit www.raisethefloor.org to learn about surviving on a minimum wage income.

Act! Choose two activities

- Lead a devotion at the job site*
- Interview a homeowner for an article for our web site or newsletter*
- Provide lunch for the construction volunteers at the job site*
- Provide and bring a snack to the job site*
- Collect canned goods for new homeowners
- Use the “A Month for Habitat for Humanity” calendar (on our web site)
- Construct a birdhouse, doghouse, or window box to give to a homeowner (see links on web site for plans)
- Make and/or contribute something as a housewarming present
- Sing or play music at a home dedication*
- Hold a bake sale to raise money for Habitat
- Take a series of photos of the construction process*
- Help set up and clean up for a home dedication*
- Make announcements in your church when volunteers are needed
- Decorate pots for houseplants
- Create a stepping-stone for the partner family
- Challenge your group to collect pennies to use to help build a home
- Create your dream house out of legos or other building blocks, then take a picture
- Etcetera! Be creative and come up with an activity that sounds fun for you to do.

* Call to schedule: 608-785-2373 or email hello@habitatlacrosse.org

Reflect! Choose one activity

Create a picture through a photography collage, a painting, a drawing, etc., or write an essay or story about your Habitat experience.

Then visit with Habitat Staff to talk about your Learning and Acting activities.

Celebrate!

Turn in your “I did it” form along with the artwork, stories, or essays you created.

We’ll add your contribution to our web site and send your “Building on Youth” certificate to you. Please note that only your first name will be used on the web site.

Building on Youth

Please fill out this form prior to beginning your Building on Youth project.

Contact info for young person participating (for group please attach a list)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, state, zip code _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Contact info for adult sponsor (if the certificate are for a class or a youth group, it will be sent to the adult)

Name: _____

Address (if different): _____

City, state, zip code (if different): _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Learn – please describe the activity you plan to do.

Act – please describe the activities you plan to do.

1) _____

2) _____

Reflect – When you have completed the Building on Youth project, please draw or write what this experience has meant to you.

Date

Signature or name of child

Date

Signature of adult partner