

Sample First Contact Email

To whom it may concern;

I left a message on your office phone, but I thought I'd send you an email as well to provide you with more information about our program. I know that NAME has a strong social work program, and I wanted to give your students the opportunity to get some hands on experience in the field.

I work through the Chicago Public Schools' Homeless Education Program (HEP) as an AmeriCorps*VISTA volunteer. My assignment, along with my fellow VISTAs, is to create self-sustainable after-school tutoring programs in homeless shelters around the city. This type of program is so important because homeless students often fall behind in their classes, to no fault of their own, due to the nature of their lifestyle. We want to provide homeless students with an academic base outside the classroom, as well as one on one contact with a caring member of their community.

To date, we've established three programs: one in the Southside neighborhood of Englewood, another in the Uptown neighborhood and one in the Brighton Park area. I've attached an information sheet that lists the location of the shelters, as well as the specific days and times of tutoring.

If interested, your students can contact me by phone at 773.553.2242 or by email at VISTA_NAME@cps.k12.il.us. We would love to get SCHOOL NAME involved in our program! It's really a lot of fun; the kids and our tutors have enjoyed the program so far.

Please let me know if you have any questions. I'm more than willing to meet with someone at SCHOOL NAME or to present this opportunity to your students. Thanks for your time, and I hope to hear back from you soon!

NAME
CPS Homeless Education Program
AmeriCorps*VISTA
VISTA_NAME@cps.k12.il.us
773.553.2242
773.553.2182 (fax)

First Phone Call Talking Points

- **Who: HEP and Chicago HOPES**
- **What: Looking for volunteers**
- **Where: Program overview**
 - Specific Site
 - Site details: dates, times, number of kids (only if they ask)
- **How: Options**
 - Fax/Email/Mail Information
 - Class/Agency Visits
 - VISTA Contact Information

Sample:

Hi, my name is _____ and I'm calling from the Chicago Public Schools' Homeless Education Program. How are you doing today?

We're currently expanding our traditional services to include a new, in-shelter tutoring initiative called Chicago HOPES. This program is so important because homeless students often perform well below grade level and lack the academic and emotional support most of us take for granted. We have after-school programs up and running in three Chicago homeless shelters, and plan to expand to more shelters later this year. All of our programs are volunteer-led, and we're in the process of recruiting volunteer tutors. Right now, we're looking for volunteers for _____ shelter in the _____ neighborhood.

Does this opportunity sound like something your organization/school/business would be interested in?

Great! I have some more information I'd like to give you. If it's convenient for you, I'd love to stop by your organization/school/business to present this opportunity to your members/students/employees. If that doesn't work for you, I can mail or fax more information over this afternoon.

We would love to get your members/students/employees involved in our program. If they're interested, the next step is for them to attend an on-site orientation and training session, and then they can begin tutoring. Please have interested volunteers call me for more information.

Thanks so much for your time! Again my name is _____, and I'm calling from the CPS Homeless Education Program. My number here at the office is 773.553.2242. Let's plan to touch bases in a few weeks. In the meantime, please call me if you have any questions.

TUTOR HOMELESS STUDENTS

with

Chicago HOPES

Heightening Opportunity and Potential
for Educational Success



Where: Cornerstone Shelter (Uptown)
When: Monday, Wednesday, or Thursday 3:00-4:30pm

For more information, please contact the
VISTA Coordinators (Stephanie, Jamie & Jennifer)
at: 773-553-2242
hepvistas@gmail.com

Chicago HOPES
After-school Tutoring
hepvistas@gmail.com
(773)553-2242

Sample Online Posting

Looking for energetic volunteers and to tutor homeless youth!

In partnership with AmeriCorps*VISTA, the Chicago Public Schools Homeless Education Program has started a new in-shelter tutoring initiative for homeless youth. Tutoring is a mix of homework help, general academic skill building and arts and cultural enrichment such as art and theatre workshops and guest author visits. Volunteering is both a challenging and rewarding experience, and the kids are a lot of fun!

Ubuntu Shelter
2905 W. 43rd
Wednesday and Thursday
3:30 to 5:00 pm

For more information or to volunteer, please contact NAME by email at VISTA_NAME@cps.k12.il.us or by phone at 773.553.2242. Please mention Ubuntu Shelter when you call or email.

Call today to make a difference in a child's life!

Sample First Response Email

Dear _____,

Thanks for your interest in our program! Chicago HOPES is working to establish sustainable after-school tutoring programs in homeless shelters around the city. To date, we have programs up and running at four Chicago-land shelters, with plans to expand to an additional shelter WHEN. At this point, we're primarily recruiting volunteers for NAME OF SHELTER.

SHELTER NAME is located at **ADDRESS** in the NAME neighborhood. We tutor at SHELTER NAME on **DAYS AND TIME**. The kids are between the ages of FILL IN HERE, and tutoring is a mix of homework help, general academic skill-building and arts/cultural enrichment. Most of our tutors commit to one day per week, such as every Wednesday, we just ask that you commit to something regular (although if you want to tutor more frequently that would be wonderful!).

If you're interested in tutoring, the next step is to attend a brief, on-site **orientation**. It will last between 30-45 minutes and include more information about the shelter and our program and tutoring basics. Our next orientation is scheduled for DATE AND TIME, but if you're unable to attend this session, we're fairly flexible in scheduling one-on-one orientations.

Please take a look at your schedule, let us know what day you're interested in tutoring on, and we can go from there.

Thanks again for your interest, and I hope to hear from you soon!

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AmeriCorps*VISTA
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