

## What is a Visiting Resource?

The role of a Visiting Resource is for those volunteers who wish to have a more intensive involvement in the lives of UMCH residents. Visiting Families, Big Brothers/Big Sisters and Cottage Friends are all Visiting Resources to the United Methodist Children's Home. Visiting Resources are role models, mentors and concerned adults with an active role in our youth's lives.

## Why should I be a Visiting Resource?

The goal of the United Methodist Children's Home is to help children be and feel safe, to feel cared for, and to realize that they are worthwhile and capable. Your choice to volunteer as a Visiting Resource helps us reach this goal. You have a special opportunity to teach the youth of UMCH to develop meaningful, long-term relationships that can make their world a better place.



When you volunteer as a Visiting Resource, you can enrich the ministry of UMCH by providing an additional adult with whom the child can relate. Thus, a child has the opportunity to see himself or herself in the eyes of someone who is there simply because they care. This can raise the self-esteem of youth who generally have very low opinions of themselves.



**Make their worlds  
a better place.**

## What does it take to be a Visiting Resource?

A Visiting Resource must be open to discussing issues with a child as a concerned and caring adult, and report any concerns or significant issues regarding the child to the UMCH staff. Through interaction and participation in activities, a Visiting Resource models and informally teaches social and problem solving skills. A Visiting Resource must be able to listen and communicate verbally while respecting the youth's personal boundaries.

All Visiting Resources need to be flexible and understanding if scheduled visits cannot take place due to unforeseen circumstances, but also highly committed to the responsibility of a relationship with a disadvantaged youth.

## What are the kinds of Visiting Resources?

### Cottage Friend

A Cottage Friend can be an individual or a stable, cohesive group of adults that will develop friendships with each youth in the cottage. You can interact with the residents and staff by learning their names and participating in supervised activities such as games, homework, reading, walks, arts and crafts, cooking, sports, watching movies, etc. You can even attend and help with cottage outings once approved by the UMCH social worker.

To be a Cottage Friend, you must be willing to accept our youth as they are. Long-term relationships are vital for the youth in the cottage, so we ask you to commit to two to four hours weekly for at least six months. Cottage Friends  
**(continued on next page)**

## What are the kinds of Visiting Resources? (continued)

must be at least 23 years old. Groups volunteering as a Cottage Friend must designate one person as a contact.



### Big Brother/Big Sister

A Big Brother or Big Sister is an individual or family willing to make a commitment to visitation and other contacts with a resident who needs a mentor and role model. A Big Brother/Big Sister will maintain a consistent, positive relationship as the child's friend, participating in the child's life with regular visits and in special events (birthdays, graduation, sports events, etc.) These visits may occur on or off campus and are usually unsupervised.

In order to fulfill the responsibilities of a Big Brother/Big Sister, you must be a good role model with the ability to relate to a needy youth. We ask you to make a long-term commitment of (at least) monthly visits. Visits may occur off campus, but as a Big Brother/Big Sister, you may not take a child to your home, or to anyone else's home. You must be at least 23 years old to be a Big Brother or Big Sister.

### Visiting Family

A Visiting Family is an individual or family willing to make a commitment of visitation and other contacts with a UMCH resident. The Visiting Family participates in the student's life — through weekend visits, holidays, vacations, phone calls, notes, etc., and in other special events. You should be able to welcome a child into your family routine and make the child feel a part of your family.

To be a Visiting Family, you must commit to a long-term relationship with the youth, through campus and home visitations at least once a month. You must be at least 25 years old and if married, for a minimum of two years.

As a Visiting Family, you may take the child into your home for weekend visits, including overnight stays, with the permission of the UMCH and DFCS social workers. When the youth is approved for overnight stays, the Visiting Family will need to participate in a home study and an appropriate sleeping area and arrangements must be made for the child, according to Georgia Department of Human Services standards.



## How do I become a Visiting Resource?

To become a Visiting Resource, you must meet the age requirements and follow UMCH volunteer application procedures. These steps are necessary for us to keep our status as a licensed child caring and child placing agency:

- Completed volunteer packet\**
- Satisfactory criminal background checks and motor vehicle records check\**
- Four letters of reference\**
- Satisfactory home study by the Foster Care Recruiter — VF only*

*\*For VF, must also be completed by every member of the household over 18 years old.*

To apply to be a Visiting Resource, or for other volunteer opportunities, contact the Volunteer Coordinator at 404.327.5832 or [volunteer@umchildrenshome.org](mailto:volunteer@umchildrenshome.org).

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*The United Methodist Children's Home is an equal opportunity employer and provider.*



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