

## Case study | Hubs in action

# Working with volunteers

Learn more about Community Hubs with these real-life examples. In this case study, Maureen Leahy, coordinator of Meadows Primary Hub, tells us how she works with volunteers in her Hub.

## What was the challenge?

The Hume council has a central volunteer bank called The Hume Gateway. We get lots of volunteers from there. We also have a team of parent volunteers. It's tricky because people often don't think about what they might do as a volunteer. We're asking that person for a commitment, to be a positive role model in the Hub and school.

## What worked? What didn't?

It's important to have a conversation with each new volunteer, to ask what their goals are and see what they need to do to develop their skills and talents to reach that goal. It's almost like a job interview, you need to match the individual to what they're capable of doing and the time they've got available. People need to feel comfortable about what they're assigned to. I try to give volunteers a mentor, such as a teacher's aide if they're working in a classroom or a supervisor if they're working in the kitchen garden. When we started I didn't realise that some staff saw volunteers as someone they could give lots of menial tasks to. That doesn't work. If you've got a volunteer with a Master's degree, don't get her to do the photocopying.

**"You need to recognise that community volunteers bring both personal and professional expertise to the role."**

## Your advice?

If staff aren't ready to work with a volunteer, that's OK. Our volunteers are at different stages on their pathway. Our staff are too.

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[www.communityhubs.org.au/resources](http://www.communityhubs.org.au/resources)

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Community Hubs is a national program that links families and their preschool children to services and support, learning opportunities or the wider community. Community Hubs makes it easier for families to access the assistance they need by bringing local education, health, community and settlement information and services into a familiar and friendly place such as a school or community space.

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