

Trained Volunteer Program



Very Special Kids provides a range of services for families, including trained volunteer support. Trained volunteers aim to support families with the practical and emotional demands of caring for a child with a life-threatening condition, as well as families who would like support after the death of their child.

Home volunteers

Home volunteers assist families in a variety of ways offering practical and/or emotional support to family members. A family may request a volunteer to spend time with their children, with the registered Very Special Kids child or with the parents. They might also take children out to allow parents a break.

A careful matching process aims to ensure that the volunteer placed with a family is most suited to fulfilling the family's needs. Volunteers receive ongoing support and supervision from a member of the Family Support Team and families who have a volunteer placed in their home are required to have ongoing contact with a Family Support Practitioner to monitor the volunteer placement.

Hospital volunteers

At the Royal Children's Hospital and Monash Children's Hospital, a team of trained volunteers is rostered to visit children registered with Very Special Kids. Hospital volunteers visit on request of the families and may spend time with the unwell child, siblings or parents. Volunteers can also spend time with the unwell child while the family have a break from the hospital. At Monash Children's Hospital, arrangements can also be made for volunteers to visit families while their child is admitted to hospital. Families can request volunteer visits by contacting their Family Support Practitioner or the VSK Support Line.

Very Special Kids' Hospice volunteers

Very Special Kids Hospice provides respite and end of life care to children registered with Very Special Kids. The role of Hospice volunteers is crucial in supporting children, their families and the Hospice staff and they may spend time with children playing, taking them for a walk or supporting the Hospice staff.

Activities volunteers

Volunteers play an important role assisting with programs and activities open to all Very Special Kids families. These include sibling days, adolescent days and weekends, parent coffee mornings, family activity days and the bereavement support program.

Requesting volunteer support

Families wanting to know more about having a home or hospital volunteer can speak with their Family Support Practitioner, or contact the VSK Support Line on **9804 6253** or obtain further information at www.vsk.org.au. Due to the careful matching process, there is usually a waiting time for placement of a home volunteer and a family's geographical location may influence the waiting time if there are limited volunteers available in that area.