

---

## MOMS ON THE MOVE

Howard Elementary School

Cincinnati, Ohio

We, the parent volunteers at Howard Elementary School, have many programs to encourage parental involvement in children's education. One that I feel works best is our coordination of school volunteers. Parent volunteers help with childcare, tutoring, copying, mailings, and many other tasks.

We felt that parents should feel needed, wanted, and most of all, welcomed at the school. In the beginning of the 1997 school year, we sent home a volunteer survey asking about the special talents and abilities of our parents.

Upon receipt of our surveys, we went about scheduling parents to assist with childcare, tutoring, copying, or office help for teachers. Because many of our parents have young children at home, we needed to have childcare coverage to permit these parents the opportunity to volunteer at the school. We have use of a kindergarten room from 1 to 2 PM Monday-Thursday. Each Monday, parent volunteers also help the teachers by sending out copies of homework and newsletters to the parents of all students. Finally, one mother serves as the "copy mom" daily. The coordination of parent volunteers benefits both teachers and parents. Teachers appreciate all of the volunteer help they are receiving, and the parents feel pride in being able to help out.

As an incentive to our volunteers (who are not all parents), we set up a log of hours for each volunteer. Those that reach 30 hours or more receive a polo shirt that reads "TOGETHER WE CAN". Parents feel honored to wear one of these shirts.

One of the Howard Elementary teachers donated a refrigerator for the workroom. We keep this supplied with soft drinks for our volunteers. Our Ohio Partnership Schools grant money pays for the cost of the necessary supplies. We find that the work provided by the volunteers and the partnership between our school and families outweighs any of the costs associated with keeping the activity running!

*Melissa Bradford, Parent*  
(513) 791-7933