

Dinner at Durham Rescue Mission

Possible Hurdles your group might be facing:

Time. It is typically the first thing brought up when someone is asked to serve dinner at the Good Samaritan Inn. 5 pm is early for many professionals, but that doesn't necessarily mean it is impossible for your group. Some suggestions:

1. If there are members in your group who stay at home, let them arrive in time to make final preparations and get everything set up.
2. Mention to your employer why you need to be there! Many employers will get behind such an activity and will allow you to either work through lunch or just plain leave a little early for an activity like this.
3. As long as some of your group is there and ready to serve you can arrive. Make sure your group talks this through though! It would be a hindrance if everyone showed up late!

The key thing to remember, is that dinner has to be ready to serve at 5pm. And, regardless of where you are cooking, it is good for part of your group to be there by 4pm for set-up.

Kids. Kids are EXTREMELY WELCOME at the Good Samaritan Inn. They actually have a awesome playground and gardens. Kids don't see the walls we do between different types of people, and how awesome it is for the kids at the mission to be allowed the opportunity to run and play with your kids. Some groups have gone as far as bringing sidewalk chalk, water balloons, bubbles etc (enough for everyone to share of course) and a few of the group members were dedicated to the kids (yours and the kids at DRM) during the set-up and clean up time.

Another possibility is to share childcare responsibilities with another group that you trust. Other groups who want to serve have the same dilemma and may be willing to provide childcare for your group in exchange for your group providing it another night.

Fear. Many people get nervous about being around a homeless person. They don't know what to say, they don't know how to act, they are afraid they will say or do something wrong or offensive. These are reasonable fears and it is perfectly normal to have them. In all of my experience in working with the homeless, one thing remains clear: they want to be treated like normal people. Feel free to ask them about their day and their kids. They are prepared and ready to share their story. Listen. Provide encouragement, and feel free to share yours!

Attached are some other good ways to start those conversations!