

## 4.1 Introduction and how STAR national can help

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### Why volunteer with STAR?

Life as a refugee in the UK can be full of loneliness, upheaval and uncertainty. By volunteering for local refugee projects students can support people during a difficult time and assist them to build a new life in the UK.

STAR members can make a positive difference to the lives of refugees by volunteering at local community centres and schools. Students can offer a friendly face at drop-in centres, help with English conversation, organise food parcels or clothes collections, run activity clubs and arrange day trips for refugee children. In return, STAR members make new friends and learn new skills.

### What volunteering do STAR groups do?

STAR groups all over the UK are making a huge difference to the lives of asylum seekers and refugees through volunteering. Currently STAR volunteers are involved in over 40 local projects for refugees and in 2009 they supported almost 1800 refugees and asylum seekers through their volunteering. Current projects include:

- ★ Homework clubs in schools and refugee organisations
- ★ Classroom support for refugee children
- ★ School workshops on accessing Higher Education
- ★ English conversation classes
- ★ Night shelters
- ★ Drop ins
- ★ Refugee Women's groups
- ★ Sports Clubs
- ★ Youth Clubs



### How can STAR National help you with your volunteering?

We can:

- ★ Find you volunteering opportunities in your local area
- ★ Find you an organisation to set up a STAR student led project with
- ★ Support the set up and running of your volunteering project by
  - Giving advice and training e.g. how to find and keep volunteers, how to evaluate your project, how to run a student led project.
  - Speaking to or visiting the organisation your are volunteering with (your partner project) e.g. if you are having problems
  - Organising local training for your STAR group e.g. child protection, working with refugee children and young people.

- Being a contact point over the holidays for the organisation you are volunteering with.
  - Helping the new committee get the volunteering restarted.
- ★ Organise National training events on volunteering where you can learn new skills and share your volunteering experiences with other STAR groups from around the UK.
- ★ Put you in touch with other STAR groups who are running similar projects so you can learn from each other