

FAMILIES IN NEED
NEED YOU!

*Become a
Circles Ally*



*We have been
conditioned to believe
poverty is an
unavoidable problem
of society.*

What if that is not true?

*What if we have normalized
an abusive condition
that we could
actually solve?"*

Volunteer with Circles Today!

To learn more about Circles & how to get involved, visit circlesRVA.org



Inside the Ally-Leader Relationship

My husband and I became involved with Circles because we were interested in assisting people who wanted to move out of poverty, and Circles was just forming in our community. We began as volunteers with the meals and childcare programs of the weekly meetings and eventually became Allies. Our Circle got off to a bit of a rough start because our Circle Leader tended to be closed off. She was self-reliant and busy. Her life as a single mother of three demanded this of her and she had become very independent. Gradually, over the course of several months, things began to change. We shared meals, celebrated birthdays, holidays, attended her children's events, barbecued in our backyard and played card games like a big family. It was during this transition that our relationship grew and trust began to take root. Over the next several months, we saw her blossom and her whole demeanor changed. She became more confident, peaceful and engaged. It was wonderful to watch this metamorphosis. It was then that we completely realized the power of what Circles could do. We had been privileged participants in facilitating positive, lasting change for another person, her family and, hopefully, generations to come.



— Angie Hampton,
Circle Ally

The Circles Approach

Circles is a long-term approach to **end poverty permanently in our community**. Each week, local families working to overcome poverty (Circle Leaders) meet with community volunteers (Allies) over dinner and programming. During these meetings, Circle Leaders work on their goals toward self-reliance. Over time, incomes improve, debt and public assistance decrease and necessary relationships are built.

- Allies Commit To:**
- Attend at least two Circles meetings each month
 - Complete Ally Training
 - Pass a background check
 - Befriend their Circle Leader



I entered

the Circles fellowship scared, broken, overwhelmed, exhausted and very suspicious of the 'middle class' leadership and presence. I left the first night with a **boost of hope** I had never before experienced in my struggle to end poverty. I also felt a strong connection to others and was able to honestly admit how alone and vulnerable I had been.

—Rebecca,
Circle Leader

The Benefits of Volunteering

There are many benefits to volunteering as a Circles Ally. By serving as an Ally, volunteers will have an opportunity to work closely with one family and make a real difference in their own backyard. Allies have the unique chance to build meaningful relationships across class lines and witness the impact of their work first-hand. Allies become a part of the Circles community and can serve as individuals, couples or families. **Dinner and childcare are also provided** for all volunteers and their children at each Circles meeting.

The Role of an Ally

Circle Leaders are most successful when they have people in their lives who support them. Allies empower their Circle Leader by:

- Being an intentional friend
- Offering emotional support as needed
- Helping Circle Leaders evaluate and clarify their goals into manageable steps
- Sharing life experience and advice when asked
- Meeting at least twice each month with their Circle Leader

Successful Allies have...

- The ability to lend a listening ear
- Experience in applying for and attending higher education
- Work experience
- The ability to help with career exploration or networking
- Knowledge of basic financial goal setting

