

Team Depot

Path to Pro (Skilled Trades) Youth Project Playbook

September 2026

INTERNAL USE

PATH TO PRO | Why The Trades?

The trades are short on people, and young people are unaware of the careers waiting for them.

Team Depot can generate curiosity through hands-on projects with youth in your community, helping inspire the future tradespeople who keep our industry growing.

4.1 million+

Open construction jobs by 2034

~300K open today

<6%

Of young people want a trades career

The interest gap

#1

Pro customer pain point

Finding qualified labor

How we are closing the gap… Introducing 15 million people to the trades by 2032.

The Home Depot

- **PathtoPro.com** – One-stop-shop resource to build awareness and interest in skilled trades by equipping parents, educators, and community members with helpful tools, information, and career mapping
- **Skills Program** – Free, self-paced, on-demand training offering for entry-level trades prospects to build foundational knowledge (located on PathtoPro.com)
- **Path to Pro Network -** Labor marketplace and job board connects skilled trades candidates to local Pros for hire. Pros may access for free in their Pro Xtra account

The Home Depot Foundation

- **Certifications** – No-cost pre-apprenticeship training programs for separating U.S. military, veterans, youth, underserved communities, and career changers
- **School Programs** – Curriculum and support for trades education in K-12 schools
- **Scholarships** – Financial assistance for tuition reduces barriers for post-secondary programs
- **Education Grants** – Up to $10,000 grants for local K12 programs, community and technical colleges, and nonprofits to tools, products, equipment and new or remodeled training spaces for their skilled trades programs

Source Data: Bureau of Labor Statistics Employment Projects 2024-2034; 2025 average jobs open rate; National Association of Home Builders – Young Adults & the Construction Trades (March 2026); THD Pro Study FY2020

PATH TO PRO | Role of Team Depot

Why should my location consider a Path to Pro Team Depot project?

- Makes a difference in your community
- Strengthens local nonprofit partnerships
- Develops associates as leaders and mentors
- Provides easy-to-execute volunteer opportunities aligned to what we do best – building
- Inspires the next generation of skilled trades professionals
- Supports the future workforce our customers and Pros depend on

YOUR PLAN

Pick the right project

- Every project should introduce youth to tools, basic skills, workplace safety, and careers available in the skilled trades
- Templates are organized by age group; decide which age group and project fits your youth and community
- These are low-planning, high-impact volunteer opportunities

YOUR PARTNER

Build the partnership

- Take time to build a relationship with your local nonprofit
- Look for opportunities to build an ongoing relationship with the organization and youth; plan follow-up volunteer opportunities with the same partner

YOUR TEAM

Recruit the right volunteers

- Bring your best — associates strong on training, skill development, and youth engagement; Kids Workshop Captains are a natural fit
- Volunteers must explain the fundamentals: tool selection, safety, and why both matter. These are kids – pack your patience!

Know before you commit

- Like all Team Depot events, project must be in partnership with a vetted nonprofit partner. Events typically take place at the partner's location but may also be hosted at your store, when appropriate and within nonprofit policies and procedures
- Associates must complete any partner-required screening before participating. All THD associates undergo a background check at hire; however, some partners may require additional screening. Follow their process and also inform THD associate volunteers that the partner has this requirement for all volunteers, but their participation in the event is completely voluntary. If a nonprofit informs you that an associate did not pass its requirements, confidentially and immediately notify your HR partner and do not allow them to participate
- Scale volunteer count to youth count (suggested ratios included on project outlines) — never leave a station unstaffed or an adult alone with a child
- Review the youth engagement practices in this playbook with every volunteer before project day

INTERNAL USE

PATH TO PRO | Nonprofit Partners

Plan your project with a local affiliate of a national youth-focused partner

NATIONAL PARTNER

BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF AMERICA

Boys & Girls Clubs of America

Find the closest Club location to your store - CLICK HERE

NATIONAL PARTNER

Scouting America

Scouting America

Locate a Council near you - CLICK HERE

INTERNAL USE

PATH TO PRO | Getting Started

Five steps from idea to project day. Most projects can be planned in a few weeks.

1

Pick your partner

- Start with a youth nonprofit to work with – a current partner or create a new partner relationship

2

Choose the project

- Select a project to match the partner's age group, space and timeline

3

Submit in Volunteer Management System (Deed)

- Submit the Team Depot application for the project Deed - Team Depot
- Await approval before moving to Step 4

4

Order & prep

- Order kits and supplies early
- Confirm PPE, drop cloths, tables and a first-aid kit

5

Complete project & follow up

- Hold a safety brief, staff every station, and maximize the youth experience
- Provide copies of the Path to Pro flyer to all participating children (linked here)
- Thank your partner and schedule the next one

Captain Reminders

- Confirm with the nonprofit partner prior to event start to confirm all project details
- Recruit volunteers early — these projects are a great first volunteer opportunity for new associates
- Follow all partner photo and media policies

INTERNAL USE

PATH TO PRO | Project Safety

Safe, happy, and healthy youth are the #1 priority!

PPE Use

- Hold a safety brief before any tools come out – all safety standards and expectations from store operations are utilized
- PPE: must be worn at all times during project by all participants - safety glasses, closed-toe shoes, and gloves, where appropriate, etc.
- Be a good example! Leaders must also wear PPE and adhere to all safety standards

Tool Use

- Ensure you have the right tools – check product instructions to verify all needed tools are included so no unsafe alterations are made
- Youth must be supervised at all times while using tools
- If applicable, verify compliance with nonprofit organization safety standards for power tool usage

Jobsite Safety

- Nonprofit partner leadership must be present with volunteers at all times
- Never leave a station unattended or one volunteer with one youth
- Set a clean, well-lit work area with clear walkways and a stocked first-aid kit
- Report any injury, however minor, to the nonprofit partner and the salaried, on-site Community Captain
- Remove all debris as project progresses
- Ensure all volunteers are aware of site emergency exit plans

INTERNAL USE

PATH TO PRO | Project Planning

BEFORE

4–6 weeks out

- Confirm partner, age group, project, and date
- Submit the project in the Volunteer Management System (Deed); add the funding application if supplies are needed
- Order kits, supplies, and lumber early — verify kit pack sizes against youth count
- Ensure you have the right store use tools
- Recruit volunteers and assign one lead per station
- Print Best Practices for Youth Engagement (linked here) and copies of the Skills Explorers flyer for all youth participants (linked here)
- Ensure the partner has secured appropriate participation and media waivers from parents/guardians for all youth participants (this is their responsibility, using their waiver)

DAY-OF

Project day

- Ensure all volunteers check in through VMS (this ensures appropriate waivers)
- Review Best Practices for Youth Engagement with all volunteers
- Hold the safety brief with volunteers and youth before any tools come out - PPE on everyone
- Ensure all projects are built to manufacturer specifications
- At conclusion of project, distribute copies of the Skills Explorers flyer to all youth participants

FOLLOW-UP

After the build

- Close out the project in VMS and report volunteer participation
- Thank your partner and set the next project date
- Share results with your district and community — ensure photos and social media posts are only within the nonprofit partner's media policy

Remember

- Less planning, more impact — these are meant to be simple, repeatable projects
- The goal is not the build itself - it is the kid who leaves thinking the trades might be a career option for them

INTERNAL USE

PATH TO PRO | Best Practices for Engaging Youth

Safety first: if you would not be comfortable with a parent or reporter watching an interaction start to finish, change your plan.

Supervision & Ratios

- Never be alone with a minor
- Avoid private spaces: keep interactions visible and public
- Never drive or transport youth
- Restroom safety: use adult facilities and follow host policies

Physical Contact

- Keep contact appropriate, brief, and public: side hugs, handshakes, and high fives
- No lap sitting, prolonged hugging, back rubs, wrestling, or tickling
- Respect each child's comfort level and personal space

Boundaries & Favoritism

- No personal gifts, money, or favors; keep recognition and opportunities equitable
- Do not share personal information
- Do not discuss personal problems or adult topics. No secrets

Photos, Media & Consent

- Never capture or post a photo of a minor without the written consent of their parent or guardian
- Follow partner and company media policies — never post identifying details or tag minors
- No private texts, DMs, or social media contact with minors

THDF Photo Release Form: thd.co/pr
Print and bring to project day, or send to your nonprofit partner in advance for guardian signatures.

Reporting & Red Flags

- Discipline issues should be managed by the nonprofit partner
- Report suspected abuse, neglect, exploitation, or self-harm immediately to a supervisor at the nonprofit, per policy and law
- If you see another Team Depot associate engaging in questionable behavior, immediately notify the on-site salaried Community Captain

Engagement: Listen & Encourage

- Listen more than you speak: validate feelings and avoid lecturing
- Be authentic: youth value genuine connections
- Let them lead: follow their interests and ask open-ended questions
- Encourage growth: recognize effort and build confidence

INTERNAL USE

PATH TO PRO | Engagement - How the Three Age Groups Compare

One program, three very different builds — know your audience and level-set expectations with your volunteers…

THE SAME AT EVERY AGE
Safety and PPE first · Introduce them to the trades · Maintain patience and a willingness to answer questions · Let them make mistakes — trying, failing, learning and trying again is the lesson

Every project ends with a real, finished item and a real conversation about the trade behind it - what changes by age is the tool in their hands, how long they can maintain focus, and how directly you can connect the project to a potential future career

APPRENTICE | Ages 4-7

TOOLS & SKILLS
Hand tools only — fine motor skills, creative design and painting; reading and interpreting instructions

PROJECT LENGTH
~30 minutes — short enough to hold attention, still meaningful and engaging

WHO KEEPS IT
The child — fun, take-home items they can show their family with pride

WHY IT MATTERS
First time working with their hands and thinking critically in this field; leaves a lasting impression of empowerment and skill

YOUR JOB
Patience is key — expect no prior knowledge. Every question is a chance to spark curiosity

JOURNEYMAN | Ages 8-12

TOOLS & SKILLS
Hand tools only, with real technique — safety, skill building and more complex, multi-step directions

PROJECT LENGTH
~60 minutes — the first time many see a complex project through to completion

WHO KEEPS IT
The club or nonprofit — the piece stays and is enjoyed by their peers

WHY IT MATTERS
Bridges the simple fun of the APPRENTICE and the career focus of the BUILDER; the moment PPE and looking out for others clicks

YOUR JOB
Patience is key — connect the build to the homes, furniture and structures they see every day

BUILDER | Ages 13-17

TOOLS & SKILLS
Power tools, many for the first time — safety, skill building and complex multi-step integration

PROJECT LENGTH
~60 minutes in layers — initial build, finishing and alteration, then ongoing upkeep

WHO KEEPS IT
The club — something that outlasts their time in the space

WHY IT MATTERS
They are actively weighing careers; this opens the door to trades schools, construction clubs and entry-level jobs

YOUR JOB
Comprehension is key — go deeper, they can plan their own next step in the field

PATH TO PRO | APPRENTICE (Ages 4-7): Project Menu

One set of guidelines for every APPRENTICE build — then pick the take-home project that fits your partner's group size and timeline.

PROJECT GUIDELINES • These apply to every project on this page. Confirm all four before you order.

BUDGET & APPROVAL
- Not to exceed $1k-$2k per project
- Account for additional review time if needed; 4-6 week planning min.

SKILLS INTRODUCED
- Fine motor skills and creative design (painting)
- Reading and following simple instructions
- Hand tools only — no power tools at this age

VOLUNTEERS
- Great first project for Kids Workshops leaders and new volunteers
- 1–2 volunteers per group of 4–6 youth; never leave a station unstaffed

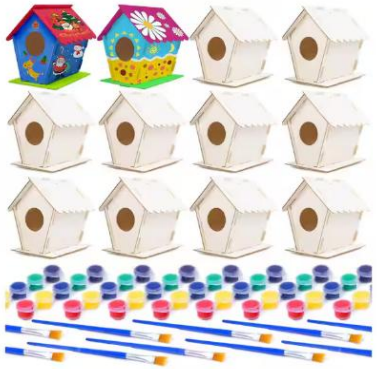
RATIO & TIMING
- Short builds — plan ~30 minutes to hold attention
- PPE on everyone; safety brief before any tools come out

BUILD & PAINT BIRDHOUSES

Build it, then paint it — the take-home project with the biggest smiles, and the easiest one to scale up for a large group.

Youth & time: 10–20 youth · ~30 min

Supplies: Justincity DIY build & paint birdhouse (12 per pack, paints and brushes included); PPE and drop cloth



STANLEY JR. BUILD KITS

Real tools sized for small hands — every kit ships with the tools they build with, so the first hammer swing happens right there at the table.

Youth & time: ~10 youth per kit · ~30 min

Supplies: Stanley Jr. build kits (tools included); mini aprons (optional); PPE and drop cloth



KIDS WORKSHOP EVENT KITS

The easiest way to serve a big crowd — ready-to-build kits like the race car, train and plant starter that every child finishes and takes home the same day.

Youth & time: 8–15 youth · ~30 min

Supplies: Kids Workshop Community Event Kits (packs of 24–48, ordered through the standard Ariba catalog); mini aprons (optional); PPE and drop cloth



INTERNAL USE

PATH TO PRO | APPRENTICE (Ages 4-7): Project Template

One set of guidelines for every APPRENTICE build — then pick the take-home project that fits your partner's group size and timeline.

PROJECT GUIDELINES • These apply to every project on this page. Confirm all four before you order.

BUDGET & APPROVAL
- Not to exceed $2k per project
- Account for additional review time if needed; 4-6 week planning min.

SKILLS INTRODUCED
- Fine motor skills and creative design (painting)
- Reading and following simple instructions
- Hand tools only — no power tools at this age

VOLUNTEERS
- Great first project for Kids Workshops leaders and new volunteers
- 2 volunteers per group of 4–6 youth; never leave a station unstaffed

Safety is Key
- PPE on everyone; safety brief before any tools come out

STANLEY JR. BUILD KITS

Youth Engagement

- 1 youth per kit – ideal for smaller groups of 10-15 youth ·
- Up to ~60 mins for total build; allow extra time for decoration

Supplies:

- Stanley Jr. Build Kits (tools included); paint and brush included
  - Mini aprons (optional – order via ARIBA); PPE and drop cloth

Community Captain Reminders:

- Recruit first-time volunteers for these low-impact projects. These are very short, mid-week projects and are a great way to spread Team Depot culture to new volunteers
- Consider recruiting KWS leaders; experience working with youth in a patient, productive manner will be valuable
- During the project:
  - Allow youth to make mistakes and ask questions; a critical part of learning is failing and trying again!
- After the project:
  - Connect with the youth NPO leadership and discuss future opportunities for other age groups



INTERNAL USE

PATH TO PRO | JOURNEYMAN (Ages 8-12): Project Menu

One set of guidelines for every JOURNEYMAN build — then pick the project that fits your partner's space, timeline and youth count.

PROJECT GUIDELINES • These apply to every project on this page. Confirm all four before you order.

BUDGET & APPROVAL
- Not to exceed $3k per project
- Account for additional review time if needed; 4-6 week planning min.

SKILLS INTRODUCED
- Basic carpentry, measuring and tool safety
- Hand tools only — no power tools at this age
- Gardening basics; staining or painting

VOLUNTEERS
- Recruit new volunteers — no tool experience required
- 8–12 associates minimum; 1–2 per build station, never unstaffed

RATIO & TIMING
- Plan ~2–3 youth per item, 15–25 youth per project
- PPE on everyone; safety brief before any tools come out

CONVERSION TABLE & BENCH

Two builds in one — a picnic table that folds flat into a bench.

Youth & time: 15–25 youth · ~60 min

Supplies: Best Choice conversion picnic table/bench



KIDS' TABLE & ROCKING CHAIR

Kid-sized furniture built by kids — the club can use it the same day.

Youth & time: 15–25 youth ~60 min

Supplies: Kids' wood picnic table; kids' outdoor rocking chair



ADIRONDACK CHAIR & TABLE

The classic patio set — simple assembly, big finished look.

Youth & time: 15–25 youth · ~60 min

Supplies: Outsunny Adirondack chair; Hampton Bay table; stain or finish (optional)



TRELLIS & RAISED BEDS

Planting day — first tools, first seeds, something that keeps growing.

Youth & time: 12–30 youth · ~90 min

Supplies: Growing trellis; plants and raised bed soil; trowels, hand shovels, gloves



HYDROPONIC GARDEN

The science build — food grown indoors, no soil required.

Youth & time: 15–25 youth ~60 min

Supplies: 60-pod hydroponic gardening kit; pod kit and water tank for the system



BENCH SET

Fastest finish on the page — a seat they can sit in before cleanup.

Youth & time: 15–25 youth · ~90 min

Supplies: Karl Home 2-person bench; Karl Home backless bench; hand tools, stain (optional)



INTERNAL USE

PATH TO PRO | JOURNEYMAN (Ages 8-12): Project Template

One set of guidelines for every JOURNEYMAN build — then pick the project that fits your partner's space, timeline and youth count.

PROJECT GUIDELINES • These apply to every project on this page. Confirm all four before you order.

BUDGET & APPROVAL
- Not to exceed $3k per project
- Account for additional review time if needed; 4-6 week planning min.

SKILLS INTRODUCED
- Basic carpentry, measuring and tool safety
- Hand tools only — no power tools at this age
- Gardening basics; staining or painting

VOLUNTEERS
- Recruit new volunteers — no expert tool experience required
- 8–12 associates minimum; 1–2 per build station, never unstaffed

RATIO & TIMING
- Plan ~3-4 youth per item, 15–25 youth per project
- PPE on everyone; safety brief before any tools come out

TRELLIS & RAISED BEDS

Youth Engagement

- 12-30 youth total – 3-4 youth each per trellis build
- Up to ~90 mins for total project; allow extra time for planting

Supplies:

- Outdoor Raised Bed & Trellis (tools not included), Back to the Roots Organic Soil
  - PPE needed, work alongside NPO partner to select and order live goods & soil

Community Captain Reminders:

- Recruit semi-skilled volunteers for these low-impact projects. Experience in training and coaching is a bonus!
- Consider recruiting volunteers with DIY and gardening backgrounds
- During the project:
  - Allow youth to make mistakes and ask questions; a critical part of learning is failing and trying again!
- After the project:
  - Connect with the youth NPO leadership and discuss future opportunities for other age groups
  - Consider follow-up seasonal projects to re-plant and continue project series





INTERNAL USE

PATH TO PRO | BUILDER (Ages 13-17): Project Menu

One set of guidelines for every BIGS build — then pick the project that fits your partner's space, timeline and youth count.

PROJECT GUIDELINES • These apply to every project on this page. Confirm all four before you order.

BUDGET & APPROVAL
- Not to exceed $3k per project
- Account for additional review time if needed; 4-6 week planning min.

SKILLS INTRODUCED
- Basic carpentry and layout
- Power tool use, supervised at all times
- Staining or painting (optional)

VOLUNTEERS
- Recruit volunteers – some experience with tools or building preferred
- 2–3 associates per build station; never leave a station unstaffed

RATIO & TIMING
- Plan ~3–4 youth per item, 60–90 minutes
- PPE on everyone; safety brief before any tools come out

PICNIC TABLE

The centerpiece build — every kid can point to where they sat.

Youth & time: 12–30 youth · ~60 min

Supplies: ProWood picnic table kit (treated or untreated); Turtle Play kids' table as a companion build



ADIRONDACK CHAIRS & BENCH

Fastest finish on the page — a seat they can sit in before cleanup.

Youth & time: 12–20 youth · ~60 min

Supplies: Outsunny Adirondack patio chair; cedar garden bench



PORCH SWING

Highest wow factor — the build the club still talks about.

Youth & time: 8–16 youth · ~90 min

Supplies: Outsunny 2-person wood patio swing; staining and painting supplies (optional)



CIRCULAR PICNIC TABLE

Angles and layout — real trade math hiding inside a build.

Youth & time: 12–30 youth · ~90 min

Supplies: Best Choice circular picnic table; optional patio umbrella



POTTING BENCH

Two trades in one afternoon — carpentry plus planting.

Youth & time: 12–30 youth · ~60 min

Supplies: Yaheetech potting bench; pots and planting kits for club use or take-home



RAISED GARDEN BEDS

Scales to any group size and keeps producing long after you leave.

Youth & time: 12–30 youth · ~60 min

Supplies: Best Choice raised garden bed; Vigoro elevated cedar bed with shelf



14

INTERNAL USE

PATH TO PRO | BUILDER (Ages 13-17): Project Template

One set of guidelines for every BIGS build — then pick the project that fits your partner's space, timeline and youth count.

PROJECT GUIDELINES • These apply to every project on this page. Confirm all four before you order.

BUDGET & APPROVAL
- Not to exceed $3k per project
- Account for additional review time if needed; 4-6 week planning min.

SKILLS INTRODUCED
- Basic carpentry and layout
- Power tool use, supervised at all times
- Staining or painting (optional)

VOLUNTEERS
- Recruit volunteers – some experience with tools or building preferred
- 2 associates min. per build station; never leave a station unstaffed

RATIO & TIMING
- Plan ~3–4 youth per item, 60–90 minutes
- PPE on everyone; safety brief before any tools come out

PICNIC TABLE

Youth Engagement

- 12-30 youth total – 3-4 youth each per trellis build ·
- Up to ~90 mins for total project; allow extra time for planting

Supplies:

- ProWood Premium Outdoor Picnic Table (tools not included),
  - Drill/impact driver for assembly, PPE (gloves, eye protection, etc)

Community Captain Reminders:

- Recruit semi-skilled volunteers for these low-impact projects. Experience in training and coaching is a bonus!
- Consider recruiting volunteers with carpentry and power-tool experience
- During the project:
  - Allow youth to make mistakes and ask questions; a critical part of learning is failing and trying again!
- After the project:
  - Connect with the youth NPO leadership and discuss future opportunities for other age groups
  - Consider follow-up project to paint and stain tables



15
INTERNAL USE

PATH TO PRO SKILLS EXPLORERS | Overview

Skills Explorers is a free skilled trades curriculum provided by THD for community organizations to use with youth ages 11-17

OVERVIEW

- Free skilled-trades curriculum program for youth, created by The Home Depot for the community
- Educator-led videos for partner facilitators to use with kids ages 11-17
- Explore tracts such as Electrical, Home Repair, Painting, Gardening, and more
- Complete interactive activities, projects, and real-world challenges
- Discover the tools, techniques, and technologies used across the skilled trades

USE CASES

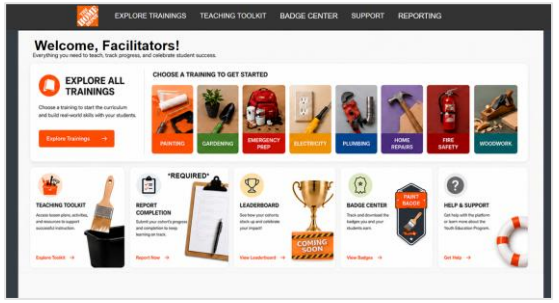
- Available to youth-based clubs, afterschool programs, nonprofit partners, and more
- May be leveraged as a stand-alone education tool or video resource alongside a Team Depot project
- Should also be promoted as a continuation of trades learning following a Team Depot project

TEAM DEPOT USAGE

- Team Depot may leverage Skills Explorers curriculum alongside your projects, if you wish to do so (example project on next page)
- Print the flyer (linked here) and share it with your partner ahead of project day
- Bring copies of the flyer for all youth participants on the day of your event

SEE IT IN ACTION

- Facilitator-led video content walks youth through each project step - anyone can run a session with little to no trades experience
- Sample lesson pages show how a session flows from introduction to hands-on build
- Learn more at https://www.pathtopro.com/skills-explorers/
  - Note: To ensure clean tracking of youth participants, only nonprofits may register for facilitator accounts, not THD associates or Community Captains. Nonprofits may then share their email login with THD associates (a password is not required)



Facilitator-led woodwork video content



Skills Explorers example

INTERNAL USE

PATH TO PRO SKILLS EXPLORERS | Example Team Depot Use Case

This is one example of a project that Team Depot may use alongside the Skills Explorers curriculum, showing the video and then engaging on the project. This example is not a prefabricated kit.

TOOLBOX BUILD Ages 11-17 (Journeyman & Builder)

Build, paint, and fill a toolbox

Skills Introduced: Power tool and hand tool usage; basic carpentry

Budget & Approval: Not to exceed $2k per project

Youth & time: 10–15 youth · ~30 min

Supplies: PPE including safety glasses and gloves; wood boards for the bottom, sides, and end pieces; wooden dowel for the handle; wood glue; finishing nails; hammer or Nailer; saw; tape measure; square; pencil; drill and drill bit for handle holes; sandpaper; wood filler; clamps; and optional finish such as paint, stain, or clear finish

Optional take away gift to fill toolbox: Anvil Homeowner's Tool Set, Homeowners Tool Kit with Case

Volunteers: Recruit semi-skilled volunteers; 1-2 volunteers per group of 4 youth participants

Skills Explorers Content: Ensure you have a way to show video (i.e., TV or laptop, if a small group). Leverage the demo Video Link and associated PDF Project Guide. Note: the nonprofit partner must register as a Skills Explorers facilitator and then provide you the email address (no password required) for you to view the video. THD associates are not to create their own login





INTERNAL USE

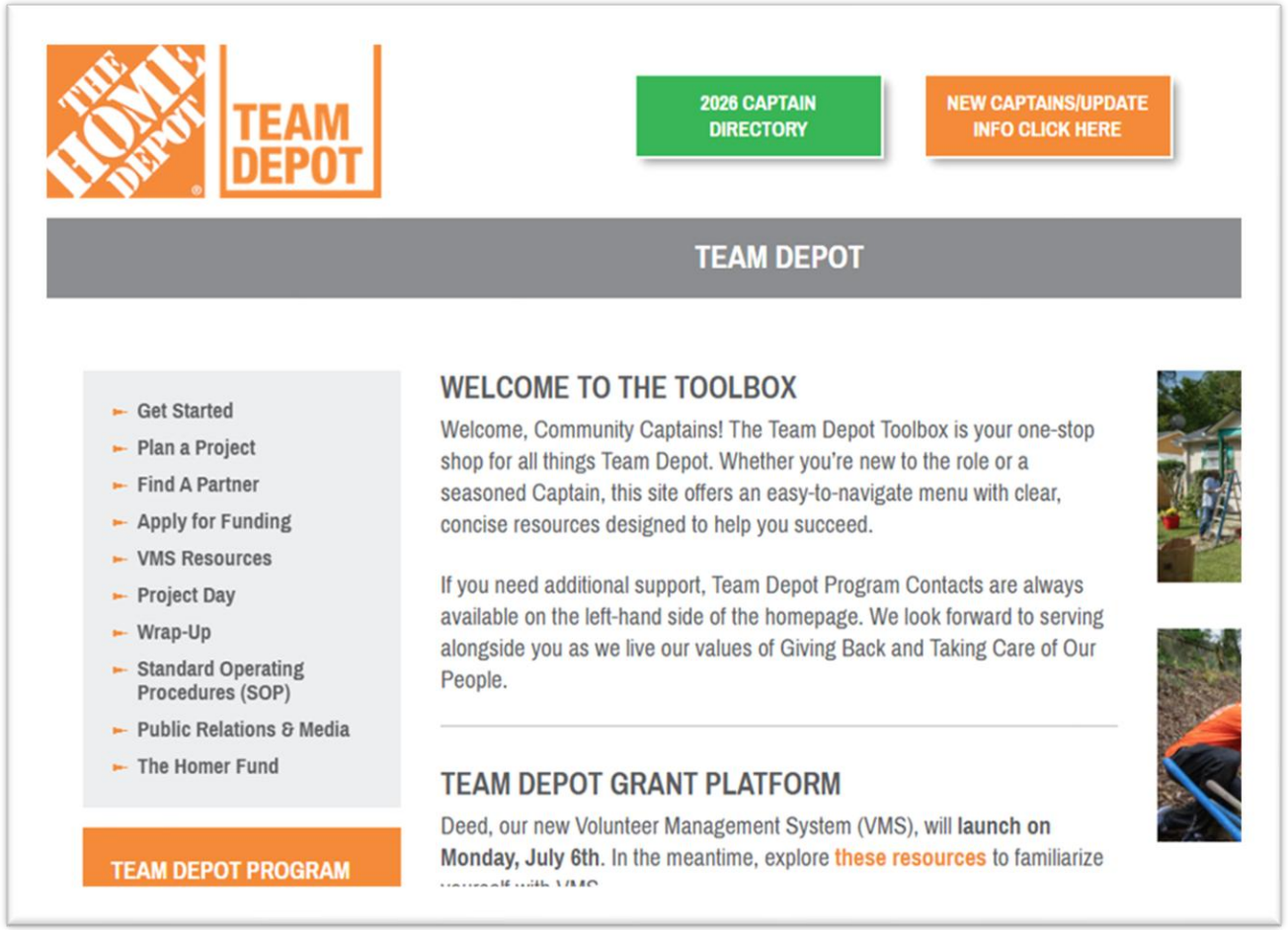
PATH TO PRO | Grant Submission (Standard Process)

Community Captains

- Team Depot Toolbox
- Key Captain Functions in VMS (Quick video)
- VMS One-Pager: Partner Org Guide
- Captain VMS Instruction Guide
- Captain VMS FAQs
- Team Depot Funded Application
- Team Depot Volunteer Only Application

Associate Volunteers

- Team Depot Associate Guidelines
- Team Depot VMS Quick Guide



INTERNAL USE