

Skills for Action (Grades 9-12)

Goals

Lions Quest *Skills for Action* is designed to help teenagers become personally and socially responsible citizens.

A personally responsible person:

- Has a sense of purpose and direction
- Makes decisions based on positive goals and values
- Shows respect for others
- Takes care of his or her physical and mental well-being
- Is a lifelong learner

A socially responsible person:

- Recognizes society's interdependence
- Takes positive action on behalf of others
- Identifies, organizes, plans, and allocates resources wisely
- Is knowledgeable about key community and world issues



The following are the major goals of the program:

1. To support the development of responsible, healthy, and drug-free young people through a partnership of the school, community, and family
2. To help young people learn and apply personal, social, employability, and academic skills, including working collaboratively with others, making decisions, exercising good judgment, analyzing information, solving problems, and setting and achieving goals
3. To involve young people, in collaboration with adults, in addressing real-life problems and making meaningful contributions to the school and community
4. To reinforce positive values – honesty, responsibility, self-discipline, healthy living, commitment to family, and respect for and service to others
5. To promote understanding and appreciation of diversity in the classroom, school, and the broader community

“Training for real citizenship requires...knowing what’s going on, caring about it, and doing something about it. If our kids could experience that now, and see that their participation can make a difference, that civic involvement is rewarding and even enjoyable, they’re much more likely to continue being involved as adults”

- Dan Conrad and Diane Hedin,

Components

Skills for Action is adaptable to both school and community settings and has been designed to allow individual facilitators to configure a program to fit their requirements and the needs of their students. Its three basic components – the Advisory Team; instructional materials; and training and follow-up support – are interdependent, linked by a philosophy that stresses active learning, service to others, and school-community-family-collaboration.

The Advisory Team

The Advisory Team is made up of educators, students, family members, caregivers, and community representatives such as Lions, business leaders, and staff from community-based agencies and organizations. The team provides leadership and support. It helps plan for effective short- and long-term implementation of *Skills for Action*, identifies resources, and provides continuing support for the instructors and the program as well as monitors and evaluates the program.

Instructional Materials

At the heart of the instructional materials is an experiential, skills-based program consisting of elements that can be adapted and expanded to meet a broad range of implementation needs. The materials include:

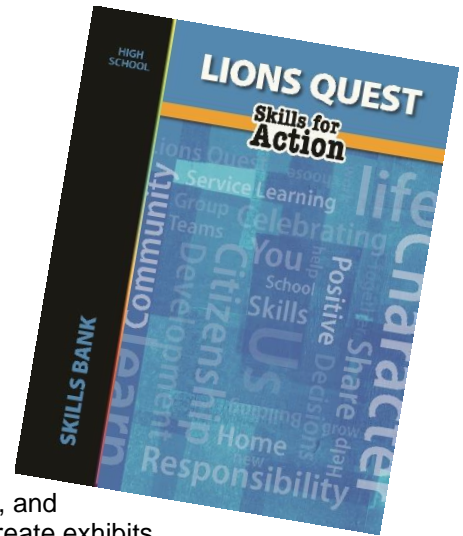
Curriculum Manual: *Developing Personal and Social Responsibility through Service*

This is the core curriculum and is divided into five steps:

1. Investigating Needs, Interests, and Service-Learning Opportunities
2. Preparing and Planning Service-Learning Projects
3. Taking Action through Service-Learning Projects
4. Reflecting on Service-Learning Projects
5. Demonstrating and Celebrating Learning through Service

The Curriculum Manual includes step-by-step instructions for conducting program sessions, assessment tools, and PDF's of resources to be projected for display in class, and printable student handouts and worksheets. The number of class periods that may be required to teach each session is clearly indicated. There are two options for delivery – a project-based model in an existing class or a placement-based model where students work with an outside community-based organization.

Collectively, the five steps foster personal and social responsibility by engaging young people in identifying critical needs in the school and community, planning and carrying out service activities to address these needs, and reflecting on what has been learned and achieved through service. Students create exhibits, presentations, portfolios, and other documentation to share with audiences outside the classroom what they have experienced and learned.



Skills Bank: *Learning and Applying Life Skills*

A highly flexible component of the program, the *Skills Bank* contains four broad categories of skills – Cultural Awareness, Interpersonal Communication, Personal Management and Responsibility, Study and Writing – as well as skills lessons aimed at prevention of substance abuse and bullying behaviour. The 37 lessons in the *Skills Bank* are referenced throughout the Curriculum Manual. For example, the skills lesson “Interviewing” is integrated into the curriculum to provide support and practice for students prior to their interviews of community leaders as part of the service-learning curriculum. The first page of each session in the Curriculum Manual lists *Skills Bank* lessons that can be integrated in teaching the session, and point-of-use references to *Skills Bank* lesson numbers appear in the Curriculum Manual text. The Skills Bank activities can also be used independently.

Facilitators may use *Skills Bank* guidelines and activities and the PDF materials to teach students a skill for the first time or to reinforce or enrich mastery of a skills with which students are already familiar.

Skills for Action Facilitator's Resource Guide & Advisory Team Handbook

This resource includes the program rationale and overview, a discussion of experiential education, general information about implementation and implementation models, classroom strategies and techniques, assessment information, sample letters and forms, and listings of resources and references. The Advisory Team Handbook contains descriptions of the roles and responsibilities of the team and of its individual members. It also includes guidelines for implementing and evaluating the program and sample resource sheets and forms to help the team carry out its tasks.

Making A Difference (Student Magazine)

This student magazine provides thematic readings by an assortment of writers of all ages, quotations, and open-ended questions generally to be answered in writing in student Learning Logs. The magazine is inspirational and motivational. Basic to the program content and skills development, it is referenced throughout the curriculum.

“The service project involved spreading wood chips – hard, exhausting work! While I was working, it dawned on me that I was shoveling for the community, not for money. It made me feel good and gave me a feeling of strength. I felt like I have the power to change my environment for the better.”

- High School Student