

SERVICE LEARNING HELPER'S GUIDE

Service Learning
Group Activities



REVIEWED & RECOMMENDED
National 4-H Curriculum

YOUR HELPER'S GUIDE

Welcome! This guide is designed for adults and older youth working with groups. It includes individual meeting activity guides, as well as information to help you develop as a leader. You'll find plenty of tips to help you guide youth who are working through member guides.

Project Activity Guides

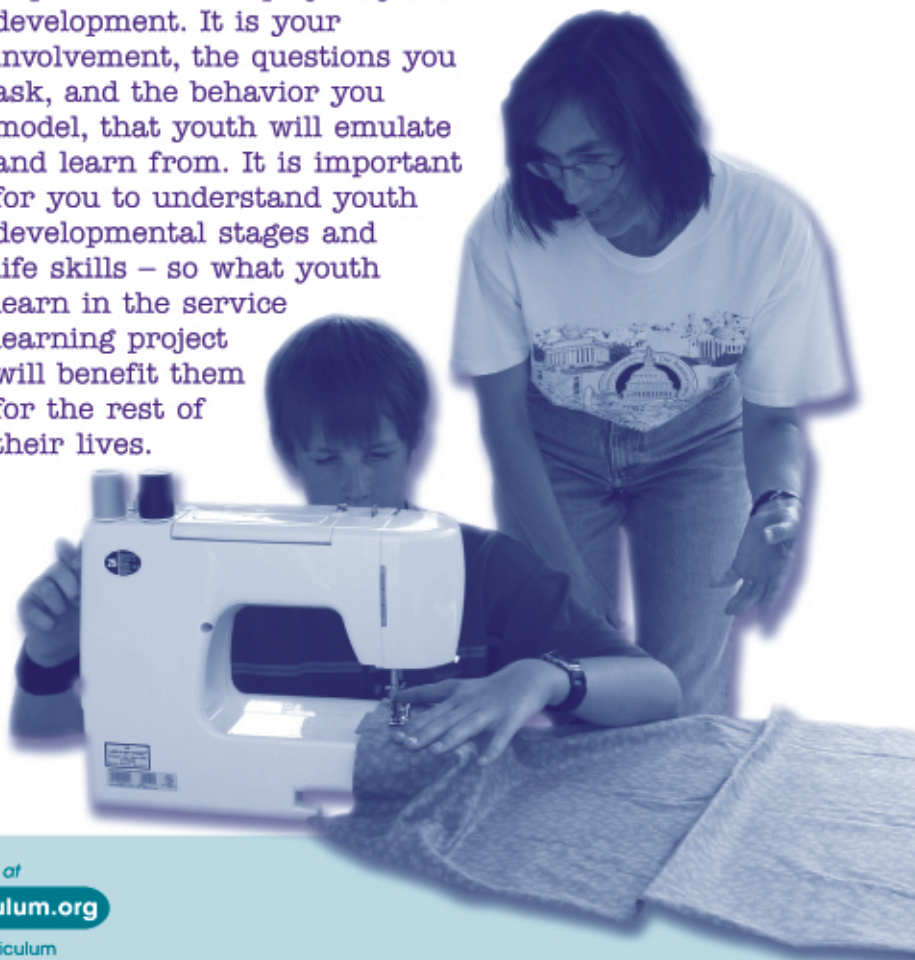
There are two youth member guides in this series. **Agents of Change** (Level 1) is designed for middle school aged youth.

Raise Your Voice (Level 2) is geared for high school aged youth. The Service Learning CD and "Mission Online" website provide additional tools for journaling.

Each guide includes an achievement program to encourage youth to learn more about service learning while developing important life skills. Your assistance will help each young person complete the achievement programs and implement a service learning project.

Your Role

As a volunteer working with youth, whether in classrooms or the extension office, you have an important role to play in youth development. It is your involvement, the questions you ask, and the behavior you model, that youth will emulate and learn from. It is important for you to understand youth developmental stages and life skills – so what youth learn in the service learning project will benefit them for the rest of their lives.



Explore more at

www.4-hcurriculum.org

National 4-H Curriculum

Acknowledgments

Design Team: Ami Neiberger-Miller (Design Team Coordinator and Writer), Barbara Brown (SC), Harriet Edwards (NC), Rhea Galati (GA), Stanley Guy (UT), Cedric Humes (SC), Katharine Leigh (CO), Sue Lerner (WA), Mark Manno (DE), Cyndi Mark (MI), Bill Million (IL), Patrick Nestor (WV), Joanne Roueche (UT), Carol Weatherford (SC), David Weatherford (SC) and Linda Williams (WA).

Edited: Ami Neiberger-Miller, Steppingstone LLC; Tom Zurcher, MI.

Design, Illustration and Production: Rick Miller, Steppingstone LLC.

Photography: Rick Miller, Steppingstone LLC.

Models: Austin Boyd, Judy Boyd, Aundrea Burton, Steven Fernandes, Victoria Kurasz, Drake Miller, Vikkie Miller, Rhiannon Winterbottom, Serena Winterbottom, Greg Zilberfarb, Karli Zilberfarb, Kyle Zilberfarb and Mary Zilberfarb.

Copyright 2005 National 4-H Council. All rights reserved. Reproduction without permission of National 4-H Council is strictly prohibited.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

Your Helper's Guide IFC

Leader Development

Developing Life Skills 2

Experiential Learning Process 3

Youth Learning Characteristics ... 4

Building Helping Skills 5

Journaling 6

Service Learning Nuts & Bolts 8

Group Activities

What's My Service? 10

Take Your Pick 12

Find Your Role 14

Community Mapping 16

Be A Star 18

Journal Jazz 20

Web Wizards 22

Ethics of Service 24

Ovations & Applause 26

Locked in Time 28

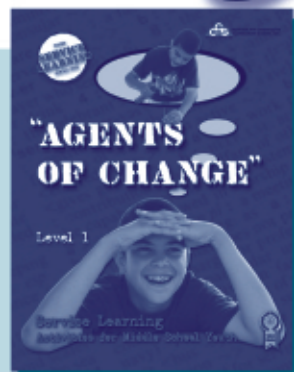
Appendix

Notes for Level 1 30

Notes for Level 2 32

Resources 34

Meeting Plan 36



BU-00102

Level 1 helps youth plan their own service learning project. Activities include: public speaking, newsletter design, journaling and recognition.



BU-00103

Level 2 helps youth plan their own service learning project. Activities include: survey-taking, community mapping, ethical dilemmas and career development.

DEVELOPING LIFE SKILLS

To be successful in your role as a 4-H Service Learning Project Leader or Helper, there are three important concepts that deserve your attention and understanding. Think of them as the ABC's of 4-H leadership.

ABC's of 4-H Leadership

- A) Ages and stages of youth development
- B) Basic life skill development
- C) Cycle of experiential learning

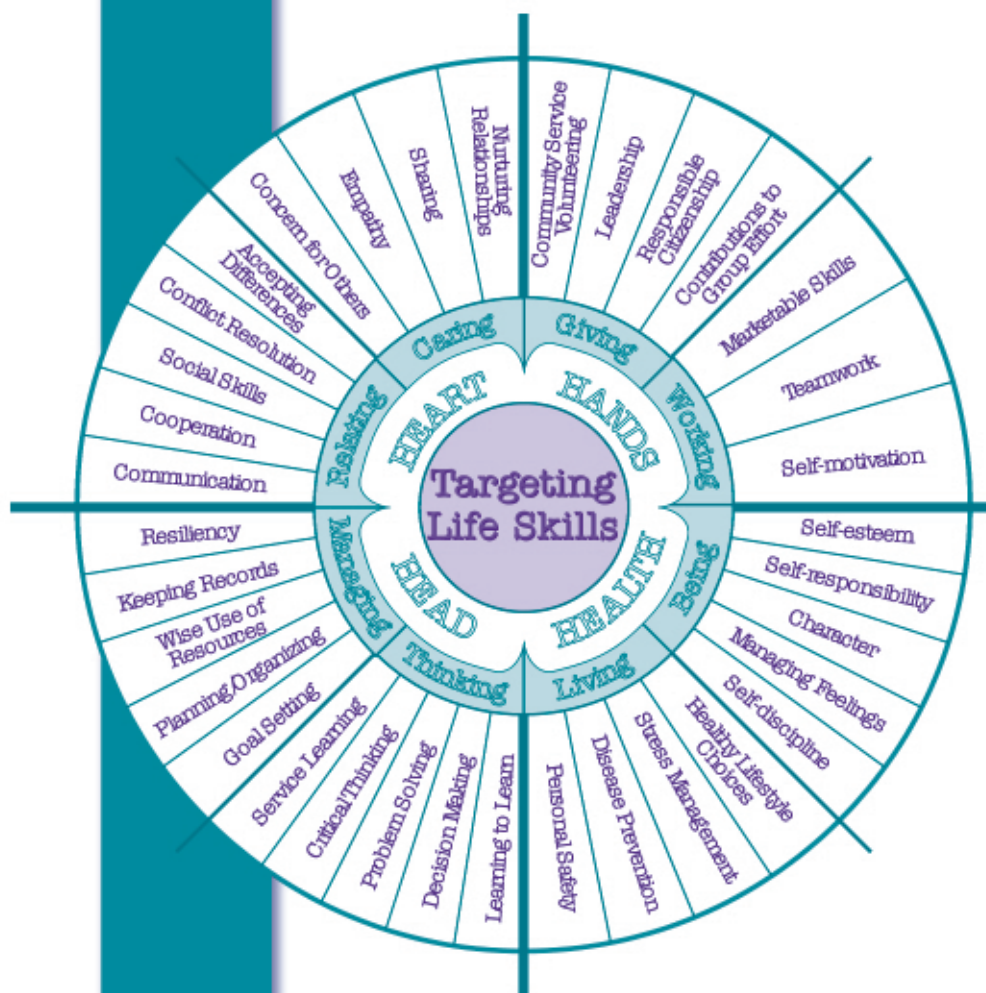
Ages and Stages of Youth Development

As you work with young people, it is important to take into account where they are in their stage of development. Not all people develop in the same way at the same age. But there are certain patterns within youth development that are commonly expressed by most youth. Understanding these characteristics will help you better reach and teach your audience.

Basic Life Skill Development

As a helper for the Service Learning Project, one of your primary goals is to help youth gain knowledge about service learning. However, it is equally important to emphasize the learning of "life skills." These skills transfer beyond the actual activity. Life skills are critical in helping young people become self-directing, productive and contributing members of society.

The Targeting Life Skills (TLS) Model (Hendricks, 1996), identifies and divides the major life skills targeted in 4-H youth development by the four H's from the 4-H clover that represent Head, Heart, Hands and Health. These four are further divided into categories and then into specific life skills as shown.



EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING PROCESS

The five-step experiential process turns activities into learning experiences. Consider the following benefits:

- Use of multiple senses (sight, sound, etc.) can increase retention of what is learned.
- Multiple teaching/learning methods can be integrated to maximize creativity and flexibility.
- Discovering knowledge and solutions builds competence and confidence.
- Learning is more fun.
- Youth learning life skills that will be used later in life.

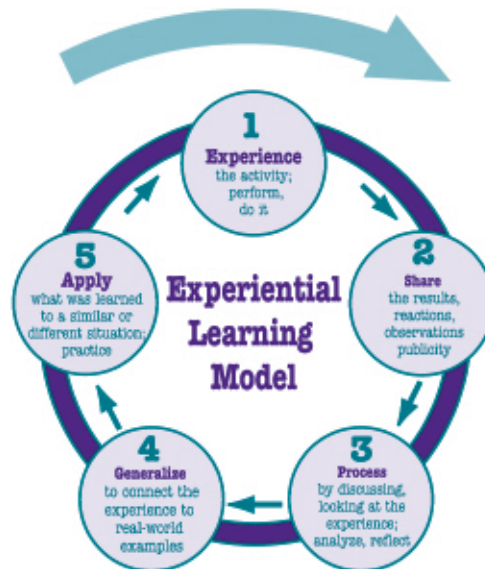
The five steps of the experiential learning model are summarized in three main stages: Do, Reflect and Apply. Not every step of the process is necessary for every activity and sometimes steps within each of the three are combined. However it is important to complete the three main processes of the learning cycle before the lesson is completed.

Do

Youth are engaged in doing the activity before being told or shown how. Refer to the “Mission Possible” section of each lesson. Your role is to observe and encourage, not show or tell how. You also provide resources, information and answer questions with questions.

Apply

Additional questions in “Debrief” will help you facilitate the discussion as you move youth from reflecting on their experiences to applying what they have learned. Youth are generalizing and applying their experiences in this final stage. As you facilitate these discussions, focus on both the subject matter and the life skill. The discussions will become more personal as each youth applies what they are learning.



Pfeiffer, J.W., & Jones, J.E., "Reference Guide to Handbooks and Annuals" © 1983 John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
Reprinted with permission of John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Experiential Model

Reflect

In the “Debrief” section of each lesson, you are given sample questions to use to help youth “reflect” on their experiences. Youth share and process their experience in this reflective stage. This is where true “experiential learning” is different from simply “learning by doing.” Encourage youth to answer each other’s questions. Help youth feel that their ideas and discoveries are important and valued. Encourage youth to further reflect by journaling throughout their service learning experience.

YOUTH LEARNING CHARACTERISTICS

As they progress through various ages, youth will learn and behave differently. How you talk to one age group of youth, motivate them to complete an activity and assess what they learned differs as youth age. The strategies that you employ with a 12-year-old will not work on a 17-year-old. Consequently project helpers have to understand these development phases and adapt their approach to teaching to fit youth. This section is designed to help you understand learning characteristics of older youth within two distinctive phases.

The 12 – 14 Year Olds

This developmental stage varies widely among young teens. Growth spurts beginning with adolescence occur at a wide range of ages, with girls usually maturing before boys. These rapid changes in physical appearance may make young teens uncomfortable. Faster-developing teens may feel thrust into a more adult world they didn't choose. Slower-developing teens may be uneasy about their lack of changes.

Young teens move from concrete to more abstract thinking. Playing with ideas can be as much fun for them as playing sports. Ready-made solutions from adults are often rejected by young teens in favor of finding their own solutions. Helpers who provide supervision, support and minimal direction will do well with this group.

Small groups provide the best opportunity for young teens to test ideas. Justice and equality become important issues. Opinions of peers become more important than those of parents or other adults. Teens enjoy the social interaction and acceptance they receive in groups.

As puberty approaches, young teens begin a roller coaster ride of hormones and emotions. The time period seems to present the biggest challenge to a young person's self concept.

These youngsters face so many changes that they hardly know who they are. Young teens begin to test values and seek adults who are accepting and willing to talk about values and morals.

Adults can help by providing self-discovery activities leading teens to self-knowledge.

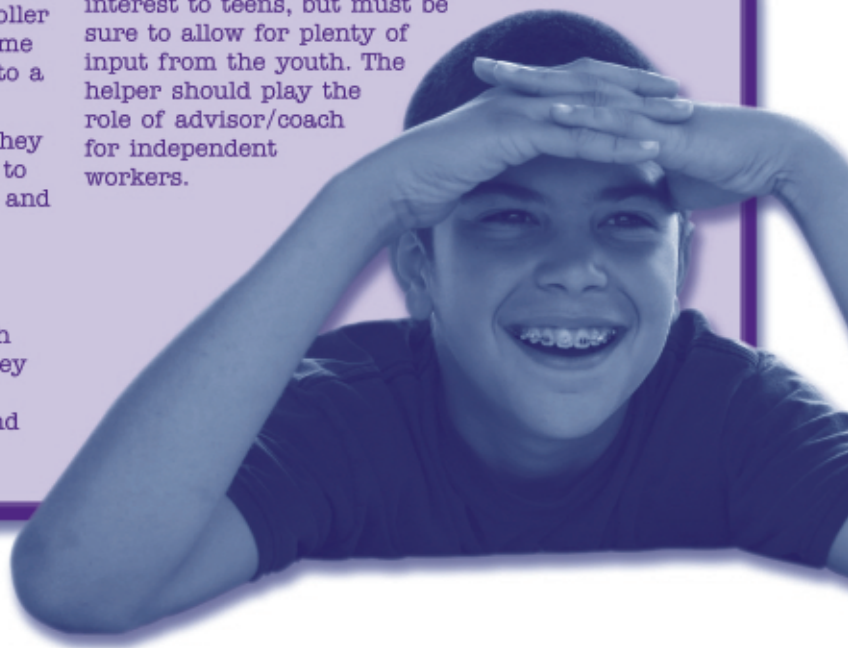
Continue to avoid comparing young people with each other and try not to embarrass them. They want to be part of something important and have opportunities to develop responsibility and demonstrate leadership skills.

The 15 – 18 Year Olds

Most teens of this age know their own special abilities and talents. In most cases, they have adjusted to post-puberty's many changes. By now teens tend to be wrapped up in themselves and their peer group rather than family, teachers and other adults. Relationship skills are more developed and dating increases. Acceptance by members of the opposite sex is of higher importance.

Mid-teens begin to think about the future and their plans. Their vocational goals influence the activities they select and teens set goals based on their personal needs and priorities. Any goals set by others for them are usually rejected. As they master abstract thinking, they can imagine new things in ways that sometimes challenge adults.

These teens can generally initiate and carry out their own tasks without supervision. They can help younger members plan and complete their projects. They should be encouraged to take on this leadership role. An adult helper can be helpful by arranging new experiences in areas of interest to teens, but must be sure to allow for plenty of input from the youth. The helper should play the role of advisor/coach for independent workers.



BUILDING HELPING SKILLS

Leadng a group of youth is a challenging and rewarding experience. Each group you encounter will be different. There are many roles that you as a supporter of service learning will likely play. As a supporter you will be expected to:

Provide structure. This will mean different things with different age groups. Be sure to know where your group will meet and what supplies are needed. Think through the session and anticipate possible questions and how you will respond to them. There will be times that you need to provide a “push” to keep the group focused and on target.

Inform. You are a resource for your group. Offer answers to their questions and encourage their suggestions. If you don’t know an answer, admit it, but try to find an acceptable answer for the group.

Educate. Life skill development is the underpinning of 4-H. Capitalize whenever possible on the work of the group and relate it to real life situations. Encourage them to see and communicate how what they are learning in Service Learning can relate directly to the world around them.

Listen. Young people conducting service learning will make tons of observations about the activity itself and the greater implications of service. Allow them to reflect without cutting them off. Encourage journaling among youth members to provide an additional outlet for reflection and processing.

Ask Questions When Youth Bring Problems. It can be tempting to step in and offer a solution when youth are wrestling with a problem. Asking questions can help youth break down where something went awry and help them pinpoint a creative solution. As much as possible, use questions to help youth find solutions on their own to problems. Examples: Why do you think that happened? What could we

do differently next time?

Be a positive force. Working in the public eye can be challenging. Try to remain positive and enthusiastic every step of the way and by doing so you will be foster the same attitude within your group.

Be inclusive. Be supportive of contributions from each and every group member. Demonstrating a sense of respect from the beginning will show group members the kind of behavior you are expecting from them.

Have fun! Use the Meeting Plan outline on page 36 in this guide to help you plan group meetings.



JOURNALING

Journaling provides an excellent avenue for youth to reflect on their service learning experiences. Keeping a journal about your experiences as a project helper can help you grow and develop as you work with young people. You can also become a reflective role-model for your group members and learn to relate to them and their experiences in new ways.

Journaling is the age-old practice of writing down your thoughts and feelings. Keeping a journal can help project helpers reflect on actions, stimulate improvements and spark creativity. Teachers often use personal journals to reflect on teaching practice, student achievement and personal goals. You too can use this tool to develop as a leader.

Your journal for this project should be structured around your experiences as a helper. Your journal may be a paper diary, an audio recorder, a video camera, your computer, or personal data assistant. Whatever method you choose, select one that is comfortable and “feels right” for journaling for you.

Don't feel that your journal entries need to be lengthy. Get your feelings and opinions out in your journal. The writing prompts on this page can help you, but don't feel restricted to them. Try not to worry about how your journal looks or if the writing is grammatically correct – focus simply on getting ideas onto the page.

Walking in a Helper's Shoes

What I enjoy most about being a project helper is...

What I enjoy least about being a project helper is...

One of my favorite memories as a project helper is...

My secret for staying excited about being a helper is...

What I really need to be successful as a helper is...

As a helper, I have personally grown through...

The age groups I enjoy helping the most are...

My goal as a project helper for this year is to...

As a helper, I wish I could have realized...

As a helper, I have learned about...

I wish I had known...

If money was not an issue...

As a helper, I do best at...

When helping youth I feel...

As a helper, I still struggle with...

I like working with youth because...

I believe today's youth need...

Today's youth want...

I changed my mind about...

Applying this to my life will mean...

Prompts for Group Meetings

Before

How can I plan...

How can I show...

Youth will learn...

Hands-on means we will...

Life skills to be developed are...

The impact of this meeting will be...

The best thing about this meeting will be...

The most challenging part of this meeting will be...

To use the experiential learning cycle, I need to...

Empowering youth to serve others means I should...

Providing youth with leadership opportunities means...

My expectations are...

When I help youth learn about service learning, I also hope they will learn...

I hope the atmosphere at the meeting will feel like...

When I help youth lead, I also hope they will learn...

After

What went as expected/not as expected?

What would I do differently?

This week as I prepared to help the group, I did...

I noticed a young person doing...

I saw a group of youth doing...

Youth gained a better understanding of service learning by...

Youth learned life skills through...

Youth reflected and processed information by...

Communication can improve by...

If the meeting could be tasted, the flavor would be...

My leadership style was...

Youth leadership at the meeting was...

Walking in a Youth's Shoes

When I was ____ [average age of youth in your group], what I enjoyed most was...

When I was ____ [average age of youth in your group], what I enjoyed least was...

My fondest memory as a youth was...

Being recognized as a young person made me feel...

Growing up, service learning was...

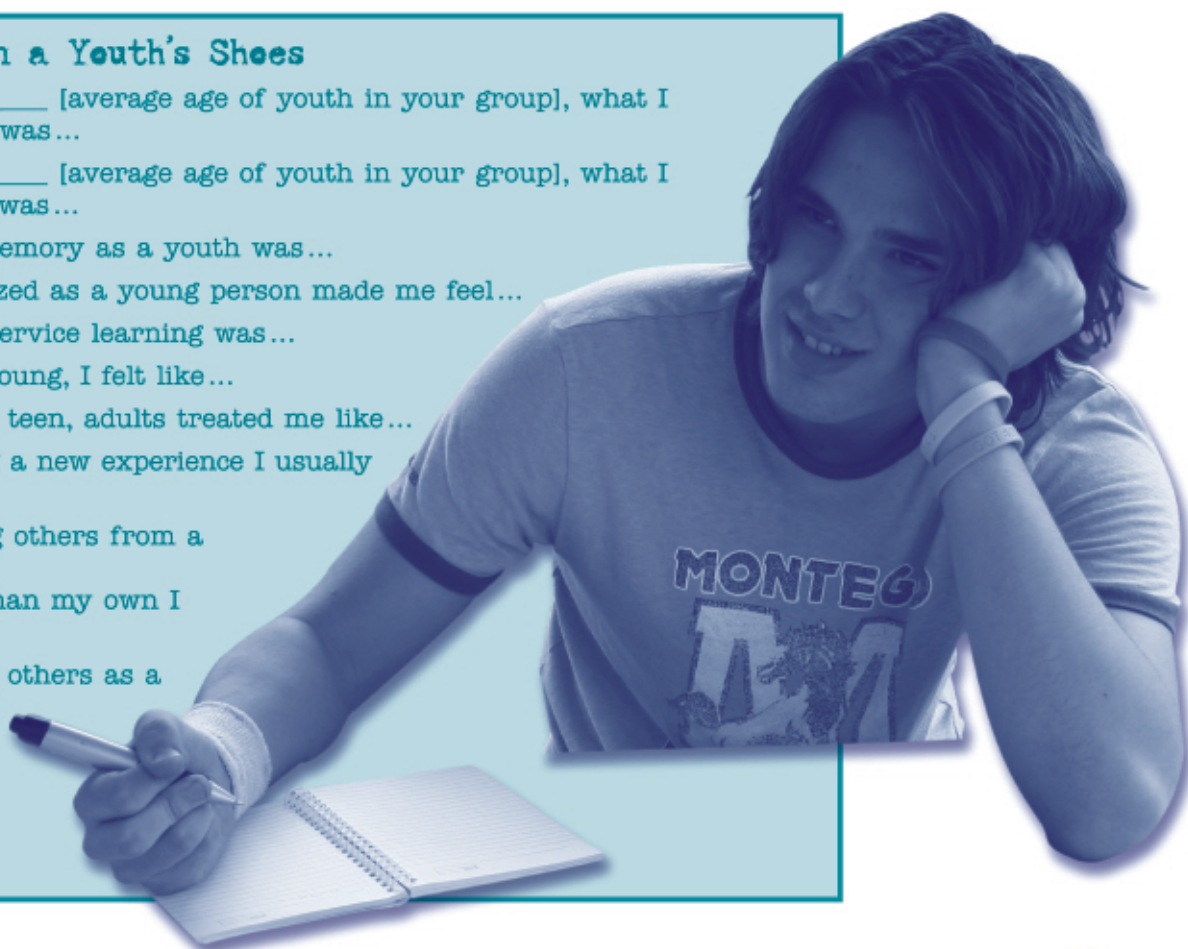
When I was young, I felt like...

When I was a teen, adults treated me like...

When starting a new experience I usually feel...

When meeting others from a different background than my own I feel...

When serving others as a young person I felt...



SERVICE LEARNING

NUTS & BOLTS

It's time to review a few special "nuts and bolts" to help you in your role as a project helper. Knowing the difference between service learning and other types of service lets you nurture quality service learning experiences. Helping youth reflect on their experiences can help them process and learn before your very eyes. Managing risk and fundraising properly can ensure positive service learning experiences that make a difference in the community and also keep youth out of harm's way.

Charity work. A one time or regular commitment to service when there is a need in the community.

Community service. A one time or regular commitment to service when there is a need in the community. May be mandated by an authority as a requirement for graduation or completion of a program.

Service learning. An ongoing planned and meaningful service experience that addresses a community need. Involves active reflection by the person conducting the service. May last a month, a semester, a year or longer.

Volunteer Work. Can be assistance to help with any community need, including office work. Often provided by the volunteer when time is available.

Service Learning - The Difference

Service Learning, community service, volunteer work and charity work are often used interchangeably. Yet these terms all mean different things.

In your role as a project helper, you may find that other people may try to make a service learning project really become volunteer work or community service. Do your best to support a young person who is pursuing a service learning experience.

It may take work to identify an organization or design a project that is truly a service learning experience. But the investment of time is well-worth the pay off in youth development and community improvement. Look for organizations that both serve to meet a real community need and welcome youth involvement.

Dealing With Fundraising

Fundraising is often part of a service learning project. Your club or organization may have policies in place about fundraising that youth will need to follow. It is common for organizations to request that any fundraising done in their name be pre-approved. A charity, government or nonprofit partner organization may also have policies about fundraising that will need to be followed. Many problems can be avoided by being familiar with these policies and following them.

Although the public is generous and supports many worthy causes, in recent years people have become more skeptical and more inquisitive about fundraising for charitable causes. Frequently donors seek to know what percentage of a donation really helps the cause or charity.

Make sure you discuss potential fundraisers with youth. Help them understand the policies for conducting a fundraiser, and make sure youth know how to answer questions from potential donors. Always make sure that fundraising for service learning projects is honest and avoids the appearance of improper management. Generally funds should not be "co-mingled" with a personal bank account. Rather, donated money should be deposited directly into a charity's account or a club account.

Reflection — It's Important!

Reflection is an important part of the service learning process. Questions at the end of each activity in the youth guide, and the group activities in the helper's guide, can help young people reflect on their experience. Make sure you discuss youth responses to these questions.

If you are asking questions directly to a young person, resist the temptation to fill an uncomfortable silence and answer the question for youth. Instead, allow youth participants to consider the question fully. If they seem stuck, offer to re-phrase the question differently or break it down into parts.

Journaling can help youth and project helpers consider the impact of their service learning experiences. Encourage youth to journal after every activity, and after each session at their service learning site.

Nurture a sense of privacy about journals, but be open to allowing youth to share their journals if they choose to. Some people

are comfortable journaling through words, sentence fragments, or full-blown narrative sentences. Others may want to use pictures, song, poetry or art to express their feelings.

Tell youth to view their journals as "their own." Help youth get their feelings out and written down in the journal. It is ok to be "messy" in a journal. Don't worry about spelling or punctuation.



Risk Management

It may seem scary to think about risks to youth safety, but smart project helpers help young people consider the risks involved in their service learning projects. A young person can puncture a foot with a nail by wearing flimsy shoes on a work site. Or be injured by a program client while working at an inadequately staffed facility. While no environment can ever be entirely safe, accidents can be prevented by practicing risk management.

Good risk management involves:

- Developing a plan to manage those risks
- Inventorying potential risks
- Training youth and helpers in safety practices
- Monitoring the environment.

Talk openly with youth about potential risks and help them make a list of things that can potentially go wrong. Review all safety procedures with youth and project helpers. Make sure young people and the people around them understand what to do if something happens that is unsafe while they are at the site for their project.

Liability insurance is important, especially because some young people are not covered by traditional health insurance through their families. Make sure your club, class or organization is covered by liability insurance. If youth partner with an organization locally to conduct their project, the organization will often carry additional liability coverage and may ask youth to complete an application to volunteer as part of their policy.

If youth are engaging in activities that carry some risks, you may want to help them draw up a "contract" spelling out their responsibilities for maintaining a safe environment. You may also want to have their parents sign this contract or draw up a waiver or permission slip for the parent to sign.

Consult your school or organization's management about legal implications and liability insurance.

WHAT'S MY SERVICE?

Service learning, community service and volunteer activities are often used interchangeably, but what do all of these terms mean? How can youth define what a quality service learning experience really looks like? In this activity youth will learn how to define what makes a quality service learning experience and prepare their expectations as they head into service.



Write "Service Learning" on a sheet of paper. Ask youth to define what a quality service learning experience is and have someone write their responses on the paper.

Now tell youth that they are going to play a game. Split youth into teams. Have teams draw scenario cards from a stack and act out the scenarios described. Encourage youth to add to the scenario in order to demonstrate the service learning cycle, show how resources are gathered, partnerships made, etc. After each group performs its skit, have the audience decide if a skit demonstrated all aspects of service learning.

Jill and Sarah collect canned food and drop it off at the food bank. The facility helps needy working families "make it" to the end of the month but would like to do more.

A math class creates and builds awnings at just the right angle to provide the best shade possible for a nursing home.

The club holds a clean-up day at a local park. They pick up trash from the trails and paint the playground equipment.

Pat and Jose start a tutoring class for elementary students attending an after school program.

Reggie and Vicki want to encourage people who live near the beach to turn off their outdoor spotlights so endangered sea turtles don't nest in the wrong location and endanger their hatchlings.

[Debrief]

Reporting Out

What did you like about this activity? What made this activity challenging?

Investigate

How did you demonstrate service learning with your skit? How did you show resources and partnerships to support the project? Describe another way you could modify the scenario and still have a service learning project.

Trace the Links

Describe other times in your life when you have done community service but not service learning. How can you design a service project that is really service learning?

Follow the Lead

Why are all of the steps in the service learning cycle important? How can reflection through journaling make the other parts of the service learning cycle more meaningful?



Explore more at

www.4-hcurriculum.org

National 4-H Curriculum

[Bonus Assignments]

1. Investigate how service learning and community service are represented online by different organizations that support youth activism. Prepare a report on different websites and how they represent it.

2. Research grants available to support service learning projects. Deliver a presentation about opportunities to get funds to support your service learning project.

3. Interview people in your community about what service learning and community service mean to them. Present your findings for your club or group.



INTELLIGENCE

Service Learning

Service learning: (1) actively addresses a real need in the community, (2) is planned and conducted over time, (3) involves reflection by the "doer" about the meaning of the experience and (4) is celebrated at the end.

Not all volunteer experiences are service learning. But many volunteer experiences can be turned into service learning experiences.

For example, conducting a canned food drive during the holidays and dropping off the cans at a food bank may not be service learning. It may not address a real need in the community, be conducted over time, involve reflection, and is not celebrated. That does not mean that a holiday canned food drive is not meaningful and does not offer lessons for youth, it simply may not be service learning.

How can a canned food drive be turned into a service learning project? Find out about the need in the community to help people who are hungry. Figure out a way to address the problem in an active way that engages the hunger issue. Create a journal, video or scrapbook about the project over time and add to it after each project session. Conclude the project with a celebration event thanking everyone who participated.