



# EYE ON YOUTH AND EDUCATION

A curriculum for planning your service-learning project

## Ensuring the Future for Today's Youth

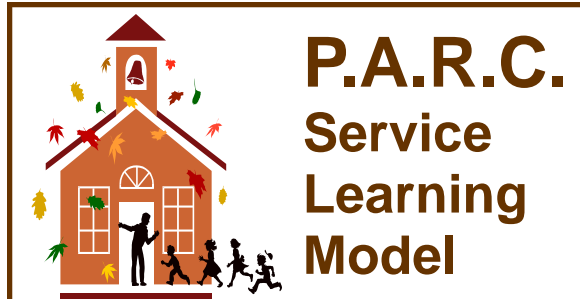
A good education is a vital component in the formula for success. As more and more students begin to attend college, the need for solid reading, writing and math skills become ever more important.

In addition to preparing students for college, having these skills gives students confidence in their abilities and allows them to lead more fulfilling and productive personal and professional lives.

Besides being able to learn, every young person also needs a mentor, a caring adult in their lives, someone they can trust and talk to, and who can provide guidance.

Service learning is a great way for us to get involved and find ways to help students and schools in some of the problems that they face. With service learning, we grow and develop while participating in organized service.

There are four main parts to all good service learning projects: Preparation, Action, Reflection, and Celebration. This guide will take you through the steps of planning your own education service learning project. It will also give examples of projects to consider and tips on setting up mentorships and tutoring activities.



## P.A.R.C. Service Learning Model

**Preparation:** Identifying and analyzing issues, choosing a project, learning skills needed to perform the project, and outlining the logistics (all the details) of the project

**Action:** Performing the service as planned. Be ready for new circumstances that may arise.

**Reflection:** Enabling us to learn from the service experience. This is how service is tied back to the classroom or our lives.

**Celebration:** It is important for us to realize we have made a difference and to celebrate our accomplishments.

## In Fact...

*Mentored teens are 46% less likely to get into drugs, 59% get better grades, and 73% raise their goals.*



## Connect Service to Curriculum

**Math:** Study the money spent by the government on education - figure out where all the money goes. How much is actually spent on each student?

**Foreign Language:** Compare the educational systems of different countries. Which are the most effective?

**Art:** Study the classrooms at your school. Can you learn better in more visually-appealing rooms? Discuss how studying art can increase your academic abilities.

**Social Studies:** Compare the educational levels of different ethnic and socioeconomic groups. What are the factors that can cause disparities?

**Science:** Study areas of the brain involved in learning. What is necessary for these areas to develop correctly? What causes learning disabilities?

**Family Studies:** Discuss how family background and home life can influence a child's success in school.

**English/Language Arts:** Discuss the literacy and academic abilities of high-school graduates. How does this compare to the skills that will be needed for college?

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# PREPARATION

Preparation is key to the success of any service learning activity. Use the guidelines below for your education project:

### Discussion:

- Discuss current problems in education and ways in which you could enrich students' experiences.
- What are the conflicts that could make academic success difficult?
- What are the needs of students?
- How might you help solve these problems and benefit the lives of youth?

### Brainstorm:

- What kind of service project would you like to do? There are many possibilities to consider. Choose options that are appropriate for your group.
- Who will be the recipients of your service (consider need, location, and ages of participants and recipients)
- How long will the project last, and how much time can you commit to it?
- Connect the service to your classroom curriculum.

### Planning:

- Contact the groups or organizations who could be your service recipients. Tell them the purpose of your service and what activities you wish to perform.
- Choose a recipient, and arrange a mutually convenient time and location for your service (work out a regular schedule if appropriate). Good communication is essential.
- Group leader should visit the site to meet the recipient contact and discuss further details.
- Decide what supplies will be needed.
- Decide if training for volunteers will be needed. Arrange this in advance (see page 4).

### Responsibilities

- Make lists of tasks to be completed: information, materials preparations, maintaining communication with site, permission slips, supplies, transportation, reflection committees, celebration committees, other.
- Assign each task to a separate group or individual.

# Project Possibilities

There are three types of projects from which you can choose: direct, indirect, and advocacy.

**DIRECT SERVICE addresses an issue with hands-on activity. For example:**

Tutor students in a younger-age classroom to help them with their schoolwork.

Conduct an arts workshop or seminar in an underprivileged school.

High school students can be mentors to middle school or elementary students.

Assist with student activities in an after-school program.

Pair each volunteer with a younger student, to teach the student a special skill or craft.

Help renovate classrooms or school grounds to made them safer and more conducive to learning.

Provide hands-on science activities in an elementary classroom.

High school seniors can mentor younger teens on how to prepare for college, such as selecting courses and making themselves good candidates for admission.

Run an after-school club for younger students.

Provide a classroom lesson on a special topic, such as computers or peer mediation.

Help a school put together a special event, such as a career day, parent night or cultural fair.

Pair off with individual students to assist them with projects for a science fair.

Volunteer for a teacher and help him/her grade student assignments.

# ACTION

**You must be the change you want to see in the world.— Gandhi**

Pointers for carrying out a successful project:

### At the start:

- Introduce group to site/agency contact and have them give further instructions about the issue, project, and activities.
- Define ground rules: Cooperative teamwork, positive encouragement, respect for youth, property and other service providers and participants.

**An involved, caring mentor can plant a seed of hope in a child's heart that can flower into ambition, hard work, self-confidence and, ultimately, success. To do that is to know one of life's most exalting experiences.**

*- General Colin Powell*

- Define and delegate tasks to be done.
- Play games to get to know each other (icebreakers) or to build teamwork (team-builders).

### During the Project:

- Keep to your schedule and activity plan, but be prepared for new and changing circumstances.
- Take pictures.
- Keep a positive attitude and have lots of enthusiasm!

### At the end:

- Clean up site if necessary, put away any supplies.
- Prepare for reflection activities and games.
- Fill out evaluations of the project and send thank-you notes.

**INDIRECT SERVICE** involves doing a service at one location that helps a problem somewhere else. For example:

Volunteer at an agency involved in education or youth services.

Hold a readathon, writing contest or other academic contest or campaign at your school to promote development of academic skills.

Hold a book drive at your school and donate the proceeds to a children's shelter.

Raise money to provide a group of younger students with a special educational opportunity they could not otherwise afford.

Assist students or adults in finding opportunities to pursue instruction and learning in special-interest areas (those not available at their school).

Put together informational pamphlets for parents advising them about the choices and responsibilities they have in their child's education.

Put together packets of study skills literature or other aids to help kids succeed in their classes. Make these available at local schools.

**ADVOCACY** is working toward accomplishing goals for your cause by raising awareness and informing the public. For example:

Write letters to stores and companies asking them to donate money or educational materials to support valuable but under-funded school programs.

Organize a conference at your high school to raise awareness of the unmet needs of youth in the community and of the many ways high school students can get involved. Provide volunteer resources for students and have sign-ups for upcoming projects and initiatives.

# REFLECTION

Reflection can be a highly creative and ongoing process in a project. There are some things you want to be sure to address in your reflection, as it the crucial evaluating and learning segment of the service learning model.

Encourage students to reflect from day one. At the end of the project, reflect on the service itself. Reflection helps students to realize the importance of the service they masterminded and carried out. Secondly, it introduces students to the important skill of evaluation. Finally, Reflection allows students to discover for themselves what they learned in their service process.

## Some Ideas for Reflection:

1. Keep an ongoing project journal
2. Create a bulletin board of pictures and student writings about the project
3. Make a scrapbook about your service
4. Tell others about your service and how you felt about it

## Some Questions to Ask:

1. What did we do?
2. How did this project improve or expand education in our communities, or help students at our local schools?
3. What challenged or surprised me during the project?
4. Did others learn anything from us?
5. How did this project change the way I think about education in the community?
6. Did we solve (or help solve) a problem?
7. Did we make a difference?
8. How does this apply to our lives?
9. How do you think this project will influence the actions you take in the future?

# CELEBRATION!

After doing such a great job planning and implementing their project, your students will have no problem organize a fun way to celebrate! It's important to recognize the accomplishments of everyone who put time and effort into serving our community. **Always celebrate and give recognition to participants.** The possibilities on how to do this are endless. How would you like to celebrate?

## Suggestions for Celebration:

1. Throw a party.
2. Invite the media.
3. Give rewards like coupons, free admissions, certificates, buttons, and special rewards
4. Play games
5. Create a bulletin board to show the progress of the project.

6. Write up your project for local papers.
7. Hold an awards ceremony.
8. Devote a special page in the school yearbook to your service.

*If you want to be important—wonderful.  
If you want to be recognized—wonderful.*

*If you want to be great—wonderful.  
But recognize that he who is the greatest among you shall be your servant...*

*By giving, that definition of greatness, it means that everybody can be great because everybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve... You only need a heart full of grace.*

*A soul generated by love.*

*And you can be that servant.*

—Martin Luther King, Jr.

# Strategies for Tutoring and Mentoring

Becoming mentors or tutors is an excellent way to benefit youth in the community. These activities, however, require much more commitment than a one-day service project.

*Investing your time in a child relays an important message that: he/she is an important person, and that you care. Each of us remembers a few special people who influenced us positively, and who instilled a bit of confidence in us along the way. You have the opportunity to be this positive influence in a child's life. You can show them that they are valued, special human beings, while helping them to discover their positive attributes and talents.*

## Mentoring

"Who is a mentor anyway?" A mentor is a person who, along with parents, provides a younger person with support, counsel, friendship, reinforcement, and constructive example. Mentors are good listeners, people who care, people who want to help a younger person bring out the strengths that are already there. Both mature, responsible adults and high school students can be mentors.

Think about how you want to work with a young person:

- 1) What types of activities should you pursue?... Helping youth develop a specific skill, pursue an interest or learn about a particular subject.
- 2) The age and number of youth you want to work with—elementary or middle school age children; one youth or several—for example: mentoring one child one-on-one versus working with a group of children.
- 3) The amount of time you want to spend with a youth—once a week? Once or twice a month?
- 4) Mentoring is about building relationships. Make sure you have a significant time frame to work with—6 months or more.

If you are new to mentoring, you should seek training and guidance from an established mentoring group. Many of these groups are listed on page 5.

Use the community contacts listed on page 5 to for assistance and ideas for setting up your own mentorships.

## Tutoring

Tutors play an integral role in a child's educational experience: for today as well as tomorrow. The easiest way to find tutoring opportunities is to contact your local schools or libraries, but other organizations offer opportunities as well. Tutoring can be a long-term or short-term project, and may involve working with one individual or several. However it is done, tutoring makes a positive impact on a child by allowing them to develop their academic potential and reach their greatest capacity as a learner.

Tips for relating to your student:

- 1) Create opportunities for the student to express opinions and ideas.
- 2) Be patient with the relationship and the academic development of the student.
- 3) Be dependable, caring and honest.
- 4) Be a good listener, use eye-to-eye contact, sit side by side.
- 5) Demonstrate as you talk, show as you tell.
- 6) Be honest, if you are unsure of an answer, admit it and work it out together—modeling that it is ok to make a mistake and not know every answer.
- 7) Encourage the child to learn outside the tutoring session, reinforcing the value of "practice" in learning.
- 8) Bring a variety of hands-on teaching options.
- 9) Find a quiet tutoring area with no distractions.
- 10) Make your session challenging, yet fun.
- 11) Keep students on task

Tutors need to plan ahead and respect the teacher or supervisor, and the classroom environment

- 1) Be prompt and enthusiastic.
- 2) Be non-disruptive and model mature behavior.
- 3) Be complimentary of the classroom environment.
- 4) Use activities recommended by the teacher.

Tips on mentoring:

1. Let your student know first thing about the rules of confidentiality, and the type of knowledge that you must report.
2. Always be honest with your student, and believe what he/she tells you.
3. Model reliability and consistency.
4. Don't do for the student what he or she can do; help him or her become self-reliant.
5. Set appropriate ground rules.
6. Do not criticize, give positive feedback.
7. Be patient with setbacks and disappointments, turn them into learning experiences.
8. Encourage and reinforce good behavior and attendance at school. Help the student realize this prepares them for having a job one day.
9. Be a positive role model.
10. Conduct activities that the students will benefit from and enjoy.
12. Spend time talking about interests, goals, self-concept, and significant influences in the student's life.



## Mentoring Resources

The following agencies can provide you with advice, training and/or opportunities for mentoring in and around San Diego:

Big Brothers/Big Sisters of San Diego County  
(858) 485-6964

Big Sister League, Inc. - Big and Little Sister Mentor Program  
(619) 297-1135

California Mentor Initiative  
(916) 323-9824

Greater San Diego Inner City Games - G.S.D.I.C.G. Mentor Program  
(858) 642-9221

The June Burnett Institute for Children, Youth and Families San Diego Choice Program  
(619) 594-4756

Partners Mentorship Program  
(619) 523-2727

San Diego City Schools/Learn and Serve  
(858) 293-8676

San Diego County Health and Human Services/Polinsky Children's Center - Foster Youth Mentor Program  
(858) 995-5230

San Diego County Office of Education - Safe School Unit Gang Violence Suppression Mentoring Program  
(858) 292-3657

San Diego Urban League Bright Families  
(619) 263-3115

San Diego Youth and Community Services - Vision Achievement Mentoring  
(619) 232-8126

Union of Pan Asian Communities Mentor to Mentor  
(619) 232-6454

Volunteer San Diego  
(858) 636-4129

Walden Family Services Mentoring USA  
(619) 584-5777

YMCA of San Diego County Teen Link Community Project  
(619) 229-9422

## Education Resources

The following is a list of resources that can provide you with information and/or opportunities for education service projects in and around San Diego. For organizations with no listed contact, consult a telephone directory for the center nearest you. Keep in mind that your local schools are some of the very best resources.

Being Alive San Diego  
(619) 291-1400

Boys and Girls Clubs

Children's Hospital & Health Center  
(858) 576-1700

Children's Museum of San Diego  
(619) 233-8792

City of San Diego - Libraries

City of San Diego - Park and Recreation

County of San Diego - Libraries

San Diego City Schools/Learn and Serve  
(619) 725-5597

San Diego SU Foundation - June Burnett Institute, M-span project  
(619) 594-0588

SAY San Diego Main Office  
(858) 565-4148

Volunteer San Diego  
(858) 636-4129

### Internet Resources

National Mentoring Partnership  
[www.mentoring.org](http://www.mentoring.org)

AmeriCorps  
[www.americorps.org](http://www.americorps.org)

Center for Youth As Resources  
[www.yar.org](http://www.yar.org)

Corp. for National Service  
[www.nationalservice.org](http://www.nationalservice.org)

San Diego Education Association  
[www.sdea.net](http://www.sdea.net)

Volunteer San Diego  
[www.volunteersandiego.org](http://www.volunteersandiego.org)

San Diego Public Library  
[www.sannet.gov/public-library/](http://www.sannet.gov/public-library/)

San Diego Area Libraries  
<http://orpheus-ucsd.edu/sdlib/>

YouthBuild, USA  
[www.youthbuild.org](http://www.youthbuild.org)

Youth Service California  
[www.yscal.org](http://www.yscal.org)

Do Something  
[www.dosomething.org](http://www.dosomething.org)

National Youth Leadership Council  
[www.nylc.org](http://www.nylc.org)

**SAVY  
VOLUNTEER SAN DIEGO  
4699 Murphy Canyon Rd  
SAN DIEGO, CA 92123  
(858)636-4139**

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A curriculum guide to  
effective Service-Learning



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