

# **COMMUNITY PROBLEM SOLVING**

## **Example of Service and Problem Solving Ideas**

**Community Action projects may emerge as students participate in the Community Service or Community Exploration activities listed below.**

### **Civic/Cultural Issues Category - Community Service**

- Volunteer at a local daycare facility, city offices, a public TV or radio station, etc.
- Create flyers or posters on where to vote in the next election and/or how to obtain absentee ballots.
- Train and give historical walking tours of your community.
- Volunteer in a cleanup or painting effort to help low income or special needs residents.
- Recruit businesses as Safe Places.

### **Civic/Cultural Issues Category - Community Exploration**

- Contact the League of Women Voters or county voter registration officials on how to train and register voters; man a registration booth; explain how to register and distribute mail-in registration forms.
- ☺ Petition the city council to renovate an abandoned building or house; research possible civic uses such as a home for abused women and their children, an after-school facility, senior citizen center, etc.; present ideas to the mayor and council.
- ☺ Beautify the public schools by organizing high school art students and community artists to create and paint wall murals based on town history or the winning ideas from students in each school.
- Intern at a local art or history museum.
- ☺ Survey residents on neighborhood crime; interview police and town officials on prevention methods; create and distribute a flyer on crime prevention and safety issues to all community members.

### **Education Category – Community Service**

- Volunteer at the library to shelve books or tutor others in an area where you excel.
- Make colorful math, science, and/or reading flash cards for younger students.
- Hold a used book sale and donate the money to a literacy campaign.
- Donate time to teach computer skills to the adults in your community.
- Serve on a peer mediation task force to help reduce conflicts.

### **Education Category – Community Exploration**

- Start a literacy campaign in your town, identify needs; have classmates and school staff sign up to tutor community members at specific times.
- ☺ Interview senior citizens, veterans and older residents on town history, create a historical overview of the community to sell as a fundraiser and/or increase community pride and heritage.
- Intern with the school board.
- ☺ Contact your local PTA or PTSA to find out about needed services to help in fundraising, literacy, school planning and other countywide initiatives; organize a schedule and recruit your classmates and/or community members to help.
- ☺ Start a Friendship Club to make new students feel welcome; interview and highlight them in the school paper; create and distribute a “survival kit” containing everything they would want to know about your school and town.

### **Environmental Concerns Category – Community Service**

- Volunteer at local parks or recreation areas, Audubon Society, nature habitat, etc.
- Cleanup a streambed or riverbank.
- Create a recycling plan for your school; monitor the success in each homeroom.
- Help build a trail at a local park.
- Create or update an environmental wish list for your community.

☺ - Denotes a service idea that might be elevated to a community action project with problem identification, more commitment to and impact on the need area, a deeper interaction between provider and recipient(s), and a higher level of reflection.

# COMMUNITY PROBLEM SOLVING

## Example of Service and Problem Solving Ideas

### Environmental Concerns – Community Exploration

- ☺ Learn about water quality testing; test the local streams, rivers, lakes, and water storage facilities for the presence of pollutants; report findings in the school and/or community newspaper.
- Intern at a zoological garden, nature habitat, or environmental center.
- ☺ Identify local businesses that are dumping pollutants, create and collect signatures on a petition to stop the dumping, present petition to city officials, and notify the EPA.
- ☺ Survey the school to determine the use and disposal of environmentally unfriendly materials and investigate safer alternatives and present a plan to the principal, school board, or PTA.
- ☺ Study the impact of poor air quality on plants, animals and humans; conduct various air quality samplings throughout your community; create a plan to improve air quality.

### Health Concerns Category – Community Service

- Volunteer at the Cancer Society, Kidney Foundation, MADD, the county health center, etc.
- Collect pledges in your school for an anti-smoking campaign.
- Hand out a home safety checklist to all residents in your community.
- Encourage people to sign organ donor cards by manning an organ donor table at a shopping mall or fair.
- Canvas your school or neighborhood and make a list of dangerous health and safety hazards.
- Volunteer at churches or organizations that provide safe places for children and/or needed health training to members of the community.
- Man a hotline for those who need help finding available health resources.

### Health Concerns Category – Community Exploration

- Create first aid posters and coloring pages; teach simple first aid skills to younger students.
- ☺ Organize an anti-smoking campaign in your school and community; arrange for experts to present a workshop at your school; track the impact of the campaign on the students and staff.
- ☺ Create a puppet show or video on health issues such as the benefits of being physically fit or after-school safety tips for young children, and present it at primary schools and community centers.
- ☺ Interview the police, rescue squad, and firefighters about how to prevent the most common home accidents; create and distribute an informational flyer on how reduce these accidents.
- ☺ Start a campaign to fix health and safety hazards; recruit appropriate community members such as builders, inspectors, suppliers, etc.

### Human Services Category – Community Service

- Volunteer; use your talents in a nursing home, hospital, an animal shelter, the Red Cross, etc.
- Prepare and/or serve food in a homeless shelter or rescue mission.
- Participate in a drive to collect clothing or furniture for those in need.
- Sort clothes and/or work at a distribution center for those in need.
- Create and/or distribute flyers to increase awareness of a community health clinic and its services.

### Human Services Category – Community Exploration

- Design flyers or web pages for local non-profit agencies so more people are aware of the services.
- ☺ Contact grocery stores, schools, and local restaurants to find out what they do with their unused food; organize a Gleaning Project to distribute the food to the hungry in your community.
- ☺ Collect and document what life was like during recent historical periods by interviewing residents of nursing homes, veteran's hospitals, and rehabilitation centers.
- ☺ Help people in halfway houses or homeless shelters regain a sense of worth by tracing their roots.
- Intern at the Red Cross.
- ☺ Research the needs of people at the local shelter or mission; organize a drive to collect toiletries, school supplies, and other needed items; create "We Care Kits" to deliver to the residents.
- ☺ Organize a local foster grandparent program; create an "interests and needs survey" and connect students and senior citizens.
- Intern at a senior citizen center.

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