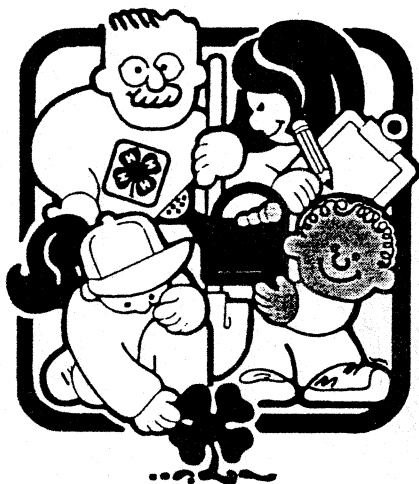


Let's Do A Service Project - Teens Take the Lead



This piece is a quick tool to help you lead your 4-H club or other youth group through the steps to create a successful service project in your community.

What is success?

- Youth feel they have made a difference.
- A community, agency or individual is better because of the project.
- Youth and agencies have developed a sense of value that each has to offer to the community.
- Youth and adults have worked together to serve the community.
- Everyone had fun.

Where to Start???????????

- ① Talk with the members of the group to determine what types of things they would like to do. Examples:
 - Physical labor - painting, raking, planting, picking up trash
 - Interacting with people - elderly, youth, special needs
 - Supporting a cause - cancer society drive, raising money for flood relief, food drive
- ② How often do they want to do service? once a month, once a year. Should it be a single event or develop a long term relationship with an agency or individual?
- ③ Appoint a committee of group members and adults to explore project opportunities that meet the interests of the group. Have them report back.
- ④ After the group has narrowed the options, have a committee contact the appropriate agencies or individuals to explore what types of needs they have and what the youth could do to help. Does your idea of what the club would like to do fit with what the agency or individual really needs done? If not you may need to look to another agency or present new project ideas to your group.
- ⑤ Your group decides which agency or individual best fits what you want to do.

What Next???????????

- X Have the planning committee meet with agency staff or individual to learn more about what they need and what the members of your club could do.
- X You may need to create additional work committees, depending on the project. Ex. fund raising, scheduling of workers, recruiting additional community members, promotion, etc.
- X Set a time table for the service project. This will vary. The project could take the whole year, or maybe one or two months.
- X Invite the media, if appropriate for the project.

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Prepare the group to do the project

- Have someone from the agency or a volunteer talk about those who will benefit from the project. Provide orientation to the agency, their rules, guidelines and expectations of the project.
- Be sure the group understands the agency is depending on them. Showing up for this project is just as important as showing up for a job. If they are expecting 15 people to show up to play games with kids and only 5 show up, it causes a safety problem for the agency.
- Be punctual, have a positive attitude, and be courteous to everyone.
- Have youth determine the time commitment and schedule their time.
- What is appropriate clothing for the job? Wear a 4-H T-shirt or emblem so they know who you represent.
- Ask for help if you are unclear about what you are supposed to do.
- Enjoy yourself and others in your group while you are doing the project.

Just Do It !!!!!!!!!!!!!

- ✓ Show up on time, ready to go. This is a great time for members and parents to work together on a community activity.
- ✓ Be sure someone is taking pictures for the club scrapbook, newspaper or personal use. The elderly love to have their picture taken with new young friends. Make duplicate prints and give them to the elderly. Be sure you get permission from the agency ahead of time to take pictures.
- ✓ Be sure to do the project to completion. Always plan the project will take more time than you thought. Keep enthusiastic to the very end!
- ✓ Be sure to clean up and put away all the supplies needed for the project. It is not fair to the agency to come in, do a fun project, and leave them the mess to clean up.
- ✓ Make it clear to those involved whether you will be back or not. It is especially important when working with youth or elderly that they aren't counting on you returning if you know you are not.
- ✓ Plan some time before you leave to talk with the staff or the individual about the experience. What difference did your participation make?
- ✓ Celebrate. Write a story for the local newspaper or your county newsletter.

What? So What? Now What? - Discuss in this order

Take some time with the planning committee and the total group to think about the project. Your discussion could be around :

- ↳ **What** you did and how you did it. Would you do it differently the next time? Did you accomplish what you hoped you would?
- ↳ **So what difference did your project make?** Have the group talk about what they felt about the experience. What did they learn about others and about themselves by doing the project? Did you learn about the agency and how it contributes to the community?
- ↳ **Now what?** What should we do next? Is this something the club wants to continue or maybe individuals in the club might continue. Do we decide to do another service project with the same agency or do something very different?