



HOW TO...

Enhance Community Service Activities

Incorporate elements of service learning into the activity:

- ★ Identify genuine community needs and how to address them.
- ★ Give youth active leadership roles in choosing and planning the activity.
- ★ Take the time to teach the youth something about activity: why it is important; how it will impact the community; what they can learn from participating.
- ★ Plan time for reflection during and after the activity.

Utilize reflection as a means to increase learning:

- ★ Verbal reflection methods include group discussions about the activity, pairing up for discussions; giving a speech about the activity.
- ★ Written reflection methods include keeping journals; using a “suggestion box” or graffiti wall; writing stories or poems about the activity.
- ★ Active reflection methods include opinion lines; drawing pictures or taking photographs; making collages or scrapbooks.
- ★ Refer to “Reflection Activity Ideas For Community Service and Service-Learning Projects” at <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/4h/pubs/pubdetails.cfm?publicationid=22660>; click on the pdf file to access the publication.

Use some of these questions to guide reflection activities:

- ★ What did you do as part of this community service activity?
- ★ What was most enjoyable/most frustrating about this activity?
- ★ How will your efforts make a difference in the community?
- ★ How do you feel about being part of the community service activity?
- ★ What did you learn from this experience?

THE BOTTOM LINE

All community service activities are valuable experiences for youth.

Incorporating learning and reflection in simple ways can increase that value.

Simply facilitating discussions during and after the activity can help youth learn about themselves and the value of service.