



Engaging Children in Service

The goal of McGruff the Crime Dog® is to make communities safer by showing individuals how they can help “Take A Bite Out Of Crime.®” *How To Help McGruff* is a guide for engaging children (ages 6 to 12) in service projects that will make their communities safer and better and, at the same time, help them develop the life skills they need to stay safe and make healthy choices and to develop an ethic of responsibility for self and others.

The topic of community service is particularly relevant today. After the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, President George W. Bush asked each American to devote time to serving his or her community. This call seeks to create a habit of service that can be fostered even in children. President Bush led the formation of the USA Freedom Corps to provide motivation and support to individuals as they engaged in service opportunities. The USA Freedom Corps supports the work of AmeriCorps and the Peace Corps, which have been promoting service for decades. Other organizations coordinate a variety of annual events that focus national attention on service, including Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service; National Youth Service Day; National Volunteer Week; Join Hands Day;

United Day of Service; Make A Difference Day; National Kids Care Week; and National Family Volunteer Day. We hope that the projects outlined in this guide will inspire you and the children with whom you work to participate in some of these national events.

This guide includes several project ideas. For additional ideas and information, visit our website, McGruff.org’s Milstein Child Safety Center at www.mcgruff.org. You can search for projects based on topic of interest or children’s ages, and you can link to sites that contain more information on the crime prevention topics addressed through the projects. Materials, such as project planning sheets, will be available for downloading from the site. You can also contribute to the collection of projects on the website by submitting information on any service projects you organize with children. (For further details, please visit www.mcgruff.org)

McGruff the Crime Dog has spent nearly 25 years encouraging people to “Take A Bite Out Of Crime.” Everyone has the ability to make her or his community safer; this guide will show you how even young children can make a positive contribution to their schools and neighborhoods.





What Does Service Have To Do With Crime Prevention?

At Throop Elementary School in Paoli, Indiana, 15 sixth-grade students decided to take action against child abuse. With help from their teachers and the Orange County Child Abuse Prevention Council, they decided to write public service announcements for the local radio station. (A public service announcement is a commercial that educates people on an important issue, rather than selling them a product.) To prepare, the children read brochures to learn about parenting and abuse prevention. Then they wrote scripts for the radio ads urging parents to treat their children with love and respect. The students visited the local radio station to record the announcements, and they made posters with the prevention message for local businesses to display. As a result of this service project, the children learned how to keep themselves safe from abuse, and they educated the community about this important issue.

This is an example of children's ability to take action in their community and improve their ability to stay safe.¹ Community service has a strong link to crime prevention and contributes to it in two key ways. First, a service project can address a crime prevention issue. In the example above, the children wanted to address the problem of child abuse. They worked to educate parents on the issue and to encourage parents to make their homes safe and loving places for their children.

Second, by engaging in a service project, children can develop many positive skills. These skills will help children as they face dangers such as drugs, guns, and violence. The sixth graders in the example learned cooperation by working together to produce the ads, and they developed empathy for children who suffer from abuse. They learned that their teachers could help them address a serious problem. Perhaps most important, they learned that they had the power to keep themselves safe and improve their community. One student who participated in the project noted, "I found out how important it is for kids to talk to someone if they are being abused. There is a number they can call for help."

1. This project, conducted by students participating in the Youth as Resources program, is featured in *A Step-by-Step Guide to Community Service*, Youth Resources of Southwestern Indiana, 1996.



The examples of service projects included in this printed guide and on our website address a variety of issues that face children today.² These include

- alcohol and drugs
- bullying
- conflict management
- diversity
- gun violence
- home safety
- Internet safety
- media violence
- neighborhood safety
- stranger awareness.

There are certain skills or assets that will help children avoid becoming involved in dangerous behaviors. Service projects give students the opportunity to develop a number of these skills, including the following:

- Understanding consequences. By examining a situation to identify the problem and a desired outcome, children will gain an understanding of the factors that cause problems and the behaviors that can remedy them. This skill can help them assess the risks associated with dangerous behaviors and determine what actions will enable them to stay safe.
- Problem solving and conflict resolution. By working with others to achieve a goal, students will learn how to make decisions together. They will learn how to lead, how to follow, and how to compromise.
- Building relationships with adults. Children who work with adults on a

project are likely to develop trust in those adults. As individuals who can help solve problems, the adults will serve as positive role models. These adults can provide a caring connection to children that will help keep children from engaging in dangerous behaviors.

- Strengthening bonds to the community. By contributing to the community, children will see themselves as valuable members of that community. This will make them less likely to harm or vandalize the community. Adults who observe the positive activities of the children will be more likely to view the young people as assets rather than potential troublemakers.

Children who participate in service projects can also develop the following skills and capacities:

- cooperation
- empathy
- empowerment
- creativity
- responsibility
- decision making
- respect
- a sense of purpose.

For more information on skills and assets that help children avoid dangerous behaviors, visit the Search Institute at www.search-institute.org.

While many think of community service as something for teenagers or adults, children also have the ability to engage in service projects in age-appropriate ways. This guide will provide insight into what children can do and how you can guide them in planning and carrying out a project.

2. For more information on how to help children with the issues addressed in this guide, visit McGruff.org's Milstein Child Safety Center at www.mcgruff.org.





Understanding Service Projects

The idea of “community service” or “volunteering” is familiar to most people. Dedicated individuals give their time and energy to help make the community better. People engaged in this type of service contribute greatly to their communities’ well-being, as well as gain new knowledge and build personal skills. When acts of service are approached from a service-learning perspective, they can have an even deeper impact. The service-learning approach developed recently is often connected to a school’s curriculum. However, the service-learning approach need not be confined to school settings. It can be used by any adult facilitating a service project with children. The service-learning approach can lead to deeper, richer experiences for children. We would recommend this approach to anyone designing a service project for children.

The service-learning approach contains three components:

- Background research that helps children understand the nature of the problem, its possible causes, and its effect on people in the community.
- Execution of a project that addresses a specific community need.
- Reflection and evaluation that enable children to examine what they learned from the service experience

and the impact the project had on the community.

Compared to traditional volunteer activities, service-learning involves more structured exploration and reflection on the meaning and impact of the service, and it is often connected to a teacher’s curriculum.

The projects contained in this guide are outlined with the service-learning approach. We offer questions to help children gain a deeper understanding of the issue their project addresses, as well as a variety of suggestions to help them reflect on their service experience. Our website provides links to help children explore further the issues addressed through the service projects.

Different Types of Service Projects

Service projects usually fall into one of the following categories:

Direct service enables children to work directly with the people who will benefit from their project. The impact of their work on the project is clearly visible. Direct service projects include cleaning up a park or playground, reading books with senior citizens, and feeding homeless people at a soup kitchen.

In *indirect service* projects, children may not work directly with the people who will benefit from the project. Fundraising proj-



ects are often indirect because the money raised is sent to an organization that serves others. Indirect projects include raising money to buy flowers to plant in a park, writing cards and mailing them to senior citizens, and collecting food for a food pantry.

Through *advocacy* projects, children learn to write to newspaper editors and government officials to support a cause. While it may be difficult to see tangible results from these

types of projects, they teach children valuable lessons about how individuals can participate in a democracy, how laws are enacted, and how advocates can raise awareness of an issue. Advocacy projects include petitioning the city to beautify a park, writing letters to a member of Congress to advocate more funding for senior health programs, and writing a letter to a local newspaper encouraging readers to donate money or time to a food pantry. A letter from a child can be a powerful testimony!





Service-learning and Educational Goals

In this age of standardized tests, educators face increasing pressure to make sure students meet academic expectations. At first glance, service projects may appear to be an unnecessary burden on an already packed curriculum. However, service projects can advance academic objectives, helping students meet standards of learning and improve their performance in school.

Improving Academic Performance

Studies have found that the most effective way to ensure that students understand and remember what they learn is to give them the opportunity to practice by doing. Service-learning aims to address a real community need by enabling children to use skills learned in the classroom. Students not only build skills but also see the practical significance of what they are learning. In addition, students who engage in service-learning tend to improve their scores on standardized tests, complete their homework more often, and earn better grades.³

Increasing Student Engagement

Service-learning seeks to include students as much as possible in the planning and exe-

cution of a project. Students gain a degree of control over what they learn, and they can choose projects they are interested in. Working together on projects also increases students' connections to each other and to their school. Studies have found that when students work together on projects, they are less likely to feel alienated from their peers; they have better attendance records; and they are less likely to drop out of school.⁴

Reinforcing Character Education Principles

Most people agree that schools should not only teach students reading and math but also help them become responsible citizens. To this end, many schools have character education programs. One such program, Character Counts!, focuses on the "Six Pillars of Character": trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship. Service-learning touches on all of these qualities and on citizenship in particular. Citizenship is a pivotal element in a democratic society because democracy functions best when every individual is involved in the community. Students who learn community engagement through service are likely to



3. National Commission on Service-Learning. *Learning in Deed: The Power of Service-Learning for*

American Schools, final report, at www.learningindeed.org/slcommission/learningindeed.pdf.

4. Ibid.

grow into adults who continue their engagement by voting and being active in their neighborhood and community.

State Service-learning Policies

All 50 states and the District of Columbia receive funding for service-learning programs from the Corporation for National and Community Service. These funds go to the state departments of education for distribution. However, states vary greatly in terms of their service-learning policies.

Many states make no mention of service-learning in their education policies; in contrast, the state of Maryland makes community service a mandatory requirement for high school graduation. Some states promote the use of service-learning as a teaching tool, while others are moving to include service-learning opportunities as a regular part of the classroom curriculum. To learn more about your state's service-learning policies and how it distributes funds for service-learning projects, contact the state department of education.





How To Plan a Service Project With Children

Projects for children ages 6 to 12 should be appropriate for the children's concerns, skills, and levels of development. The steps below will help you organize an appropriate project. For additional information and forms, please visit our website, McGruff.org's Milstein Child Safety Center at www.mcgruff.org.

Step One: Identify the Need

Service projects should respond to a need in the community that the children feel is important. Get as much input from the children as possible when you select a project so that the children will be enthusiastic and motivated as you begin to plan.

- Brainstorm ideas—What topics are the children interested in? How could their interests or hobbies be used to help someone else? Is there a problem in their school or community that they would like to address?
- Research the issue—What is the nature of the problem? What causes it? How does it affect people in the community? Educators may wish to infuse the service project into their class curriculum.
- Decide on a project—How do the children want to address the issue? What impact do they want to make through their project?

At this stage, consider the developmental level of the children you work with to ensure that the project is meaningful for them.

Younger children (ages 6 to 8) tend to focus on the present, as opposed to the long-term. They best understand their immediate environment—their classroom and their family. As children grow, they become better able to understand abstract concepts, such as the future, and to consider people and places they have not seen. Long-term projects and those that help people from a different town, state, or country may be more appropriate for children ages 9 to 12 than for younger children.

Step Two: Plan the Project

Guide the children through the planning phase. Help them take responsibility for the project by assigning them appropriate tasks. You can assign tasks to the whole group, a small group, pairs, or an individual.

- Assess your resources—How many people will help with the project? How much time can you devote to it? What materials will you need?
- Decide when and where—When do you plan to do the project? Where will it take place? Will you need to arrange transportation to the service site? Will you need to obtain permission from parents for the children to participate?
- Build partnerships—Who else needs to be involved? Will you be working with a community organization? Is there a person or group that would be willing to advise you? Can the children work with senior citizens or high school students to plan and execute the project?



- **Raise funds**—How much will the project cost? Will you need to hold a fundraiser? Can local businesses provide their services (e.g., making copies of a flier) free or at a reduced cost? Can you apply for a grant to acquire resources?
- **Promote**—Who should know about your project? Can you post fliers in local businesses or public buildings? Would a school or community newspaper do a story on your project?

Step Three: Carry Out the Project

When the day of the service project arrives, be sure to have supplies ready and set aside enough time to complete the project. Have enough adults present to give children direction and answer questions. Make sure all participants understand their roles and responsibilities. You may want to write a schedule so that everyone is aware of arrival and start times, breaks, setup and cleanup times, etc. You may want to take pictures of the children as they work on the project.

Step Four: Reflect and Evaluate the Project

This important step helps children process what they have learned from their project.

Reflection focuses on personal growth, while evaluation looks at the impact of the project on the community. Here are some questions that may help the children organize their thoughts:

- **Reflection**—What did you learn from the experience? What were your expectations at the beginning of the project? Did the results meet those expectations? Did you discover or develop any personal skills? How did it feel to provide service to the community?
- **Evaluation**—What were the reactions of the people your project served? Did your project change the community? If so, how? What obstacles did you face as you planned your project, and how did you overcome them? What worked well? What would you do differently in the future?

Step Five: Celebrate!

Don't forget to celebrate the work the children did for the project. You may decide to have a party or present the children with certificates for their achievement. After all the work has been done, a celebration is a good way to conclude the experience.





Some Project Ideas To Get You Started

Here are a few ideas for projects children can do to help make their communities safer. For more project ideas and more information on these projects, visit McGruff.org's Milstein Child Safety Center at www.mcgruff.org. The website contains the information in this printed guide and supporting materials, such as a project planning checklist, fundraising ideas, and certificates of participation for children.

For each project entry, we have suggested ages for which the project is most appropriate. A project may be listed as suitable for children ages 6 to 8 or 9 to 12. Some projects can be done by children of any age and fall into both categories, and many project ideas can be adapted to different ages and

abilities, so we recommend that you explore the range of projects on the site. In addition to a step-by-step guide for organizing the service project, each project entry includes an "Exploring the Issue" section, which contains discussion questions for children, ideas on how the project can be integrated into classroom lessons and reinforce standards of learning,⁵ and resources for additional information on the issue. We also offer suggestions for reflecting on and evaluating each project.

5. We have used the standards of learning defined by the Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning. For more information on these standards, visit www.mcrel.com/standards-benchmarks.



1 Neighborhood Beautification

(Recommended ages: 6 to 8, 9 to 12)

Beautifying and maintaining an area is part of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED). CPTED is based on the idea that the way an area is designed and maintained affects the likelihood of crime and violence taking place in that area. In this project, children will identify an area they want to improve, take steps to beautify it, and continue to maintain it. By caring for this area, the children will deepen their connection to their community.



Project Description

1. With the children, take a walk around the grounds of the school, community center, or library. Ask the children which places make them feel safe and happy and which areas don't make them feel that way, and why.
2. Select one of the areas children felt could be improved to be the focus of the project.

3. Have children draw a picture of what they would like the area to look like when they finish the project. As a group, decide on a plan for improving the area.
4. Use the plan to determine what types of plants and flowers you need. Purchase plants, or ask local nurseries or community members to donate them.
5. You may ask someone from the community to talk to the children about how to plant and maintain a garden.
6. On the day of the project, help children clear away litter (everyone should wear gloves and be careful of broken glass), prepare the soil, and then plant flowers or small shrubs.
7. Continue to maintain the site by watering the plants and keeping the area clean and litter free.

Exploring the Issue

Discussion Questions: Have children think about a place where they would feel safe and a place where they would not feel safe. Have them write a description of these places. What do these places look like? What are the characteristics of these places that make them feel safe or unsafe? Have children draw a picture of a place that feels safe or that doesn't feel safe.



Curriculum Integration: Infuse this project into a lesson on plants and the environment. This project can help meet standards of learning for geography (environment and society), science (life science), language arts (writing), life work, and visual arts.

Resources

National Crime Prevention Council
www.ncpc.org

International CPTED Association
www.cpted.net

Community Policing Consortium
www.communitypolicing.org

Reflection and Evaluation

Reflecting on the experience: Have children take pictures of their work at all stages of the project. Use the pictures to design a scrapbook of the experience. Ask the children to think about how the area looked before and after the experience and then write reflections on what they learned and how it felt to participate in the project. They can write these reflections around the pictures in the scrapbook.

Evaluation: Ask other community members what they think of the beautified area. You may choose to include their reactions in the scrapbook as well.

Kids Taking Action

Students at Blackham Middle School in Bridgeport, CT, under the supervision of Chris Kinsley and Kathy Conroy, have maintained a garden at their school for the past five years. It started with students volunteering after school to plant a garden in a little patch of land outside the cafeteria. Over the years the project grew, becoming tied to the students' curriculum. The students helped add an eco-habitat and a large pond, complete with waterfall. Plans for future development include adding aquatic plants and fish to the pond and building a greenhouse where students can grow plants and trees to take home or contribute to community parks. The garden has helped students build a relationship with their neighbors, who have commented on how the garden has improved the appearance and quality of the neighborhood.

Blackham Middle School raised funds for its project through contributions from private donors, as well as from the local Home Depot and area nurseries (including Young's Nurseries and Tree-land). The school also applied for a grant through the Bridgeport Education Fund. Blackham Middle School is the site of a Youth as Resources program, hosted through Bridgeport's Regional Youth/Adult Substance Abuse Project.



2 Multicultural Library (Recommended ages: 6 to 8)

Most communities include people of different races and ethnicities. Sometimes these differences can lead to prejudices and biases. However, learning about differences and how they can benefit the community can increase children's appreciation of diversity. In this project, children will learn about different cultures through stories as they collect books for a multicultural library display.



Project Description

1. Select a site for the display at a school, local library, or community center.
2. Schedule a visit with a librarian so that he or she can share with the children some ideas for multicultural books to include in the display.
3. Arrange a place where people can

drop off books, and have children design posters promoting the book drive.

4. Encourage children to donate multicultural books, and ask community members or local bookstores to donate books about diverse cultures.
5. Consider organizing a fundraiser and allowing the children to pick out new books to purchase with the money collected.
6. Ask the children to help organize the books collected and assemble the display. You may choose to organize the books alphabetically by the author's last name or according to the culture they describe.
7. Have children design a sign for the multicultural library. You might ask the children to read one of the books, draw a picture of a scene from the story, and then hang the pictures around the sign.
8. Consider having the children write a list of rules for borrowing the books; the list could be posted next to the children's pictures.

Exploring the Issue

Discussion Questions: Define "culture." Culture is a set of traditions, values, and beliefs shared by a group of people. Have the children identify elements of their culture. What countries did their ancestors come from? Do their families



carry on any traditions from those countries? Have children study another country. What kinds of holidays do children in that country celebrate? What kinds of food do they eat? How are the traditions of the children similar to those of the children from the other country? How are they different?

Curriculum Integration: Infuse this lesson into a social studies lesson on different cultures. This project can help meet standards of learning for behavioral/social studies, language arts (reading, writing), mathematics, thinking and reasoning, and visual arts.

Resources

McGruff.org's Milstein Child Safety Center
www.ncpc.org

Planet Tolerance, Southern Poverty Law Center
www.tolerance.org/pt/index.html

Celebrating Cultural Diversity Through Children's Literature
www.multiculturalchildrenslit.com

Anti-Defamation League, www.adl.org
National Center for Hate Crime Prevention

Education Development Center, Inc.
www.edc.org/HHD/hatecrime/id1.htm

Reflection and Evaluation

Reflection: Have children write story-books about doing this project. Their stories should mention how they collected the books, what they learned about other cultures, and how they felt when they were setting up the multicultural library display. Have children illustrate their stories and bind the pages together to make a book. You may choose to showcase the children's books in the multicultural library.

Evaluation: Count how many books were collected. Have the children draw a graph showing how many books were collected about a particular culture. Have children keep track of how many times the books are checked out. Which books are the most popular?



3

Toy Gun Trade-in (Recommended ages: 9 to 12)

Gun violence can devastate a community, yet often children are given toy guns to play with. This can send a confusing message about the dangers of real guns. Help children learn about the dangers of guns and other weapons by discouraging play with these types of toys.



Project Description

1. Help children organize a toy gun trade-in where children can bring in toy weapons to be thrown away.
2. Consider asking local bookstores or businesses to donate nonviolent toys (such as coloring books or block sets), and offer them to children who trade-in violent toys.
3. Arrange a date, time, and location for the trade-in, and have the children design posters to promote their

event in schools, libraries, and community centers.

4. On the day of the trade-in, have children greet participants and explain the purpose of the trade-in.
5. Hold a party to celebrate the children's participation.

Exploring the Issue

Discussion Questions: Real guns and weapons can cause a great deal of harm. What are some of the consequences of using a real gun or weapon? How can the victim be hurt? What can happen to the person who used the gun? How are families affected? How can bystanders be hurt? What should a person do if she or he sees a gun or weapon?

Curriculum Integration: Infuse this project into a social studies lesson on an individual, such as Abraham Lincoln or Martin Luther King, Jr., who was fatally shot. This project can help meet standards of learning for health, mathematics, self-regulation, and technology.

Resources

McGruff.org's Milstein Child Safety Center

www.mcgruff.org

The Lion and Lamb Project

www.lionlamb.org

Johns Hopkins Center for Gun Policy and Research

www.jhsph.edu/gunpolicy



Reflection and Evaluation

Reflection: Have children work in small groups to design nonviolent games that do not involve guns or other weapons. Have them write rules, draw the game boards and game pieces, etc. Use the games for indoor play sessions.

Evaluation: Tally how many children participated in the event and how many violent toys were collected. You may choose to have the children design graphs showing the age and gender of the participating children and what types of toys they turned in.

Here are some additional ideas for you to try. Complete entries for these four projects appear on our website at www.mcgruff.org.

Body Tracing

(Recommended ages: 6 to 8)

Using alcohol, tobacco, and drugs damages a person's body and can lead to trouble with the law. This project helps children educate others on the ways that alcohol and drugs can harm the body. Find a location for the educational display in a school, library, or community center. Invite an adult who works in the place where the display will be to visit the children and talk about how the children will be helping out by creating the display. Assign the children to groups of four or five. Give each group a large sheet of paper and have one person from the group lie on the paper while the other group members trace around his or her body. Have children think about how alcohol, tobacco, and drugs can harm someone's body, inside and out. Ask the children what they think it looks like when a body is hurt by alcohol, tobacco, or drugs. Inside the body outlines, have the children draw pictures showing how alcohol, tobacco, and drugs can hurt someone. Consider having one group draw pictures of what a healthy body looks like. In addition to the body tracings, you may have children write on posterboard different ways kids can say no to drugs and some of the things that a healthy body can do. Have the children visit the place you have selected for the display. Help the children hang the body outlines and posters.

Bully Bookmarks

(Recommended ages: 9 to 12)

Bullying is one of the toughest problems children face, and many don't know what to do about it. This project will help children learn what they can do to stop bullying and to teach younger children about the issue. Have children select a book about bullying that is appropriate to read to younger children. (A list of recommended books appears on our website.) Arrange for the children to read the book to younger children. The reading may be held in a classroom, afterschool center, or library. Cut a sheet of posterboard or sturdy paper into strips the size of bookmarks. On one side, have children draw a picture of a bullying incident. On the other side, have children write one way that someone can deal with a bully (such as walk away, say "stop picking on me," tell an adult). Consider decorating the bookmark with a ribbon or yarn tassel. Have the children read the book about bullying and give the bookmarks to the younger children they read to. After reading the book and distributing the bookmarks, the older children can share some things they learned about bullying.

Costumed Storytelling

(Recommended ages: 9 to 12)

To make communities safe, children need to learn how to resolve their conflicts without



resorting to violence. Learning about conflict in history or in stories can help children identify different ways of resolving problems. Have children choose a historical event or a favorite story and identify the people involved, the conflict, and the resolution. Ask the children to write a skit about the conflict and how it was resolved. Can they think of other ways the conflict could have been resolved? Ask them to write an alternate ending showing what might have happened if the people had resolved the conflict in a different way. Have the children work together as a group to assign roles in putting on the skit—who will act, who will draw the set, etc. Help the children assemble the props and costumes they need for the skit. They may choose to paint a backdrop on a large sheet of paper or cloth. Arrange a date and time for the children to perform the skit for younger children. The skit could be performed for a group of children in a school, community center, or local library.

Fun Kits (Recommended ages: 6 to 8)

Children who lack positive activities after school are at risk for engaging in dangerous

behaviors. This project will help children develop their ability to identify and engage in positive activities after school. Collect donations of toys, games, books, puzzles, crafts, etc., that are appropriate for children. Encourage children to contribute one of their toys, and ask local stores and community members for donations. At the end of the collection, have children sort the items (books, games, puzzles, etc.). Make sure the toys have all necessary pieces, and discard violent toys (such as toy guns). Have children help arrange the items into fun kits. Put an assortment of the items into canvas bags or boxes. You may choose to have the children decorate the bags with felt or color on the boxes with markers. Include with each kit a list of the items in the kit. Keep the fun kits in a safe location and allow children to borrow them so that they have a variety of safe activities to do after school. Instruct children in how to take care of the kits so that the items are not lost or damaged. You may choose to have children help design a list of rules for using the kits; post the list where the kits are displayed. Be sure to check the kits when they are returned and repair or remove any damaged items.





Service Events Throughout the Year

Several national organizations promote service opportunities for youth and children, and many coordinate events that highlight the spirit of serving others. You may wish to participate in one of these events by planning a service project for that time. For more information on these events, contact the coordinating organization.

January

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service
Corporation for National and Community Service
Points of Light Foundation
www.mlkday.org
202-606-5000

April

National Youth Service Day
Youth Service America
National Youth Leadership Council
Parade Magazine
Numerous national partner organizations and sponsors
www.ysa.org/nysd/index.cfm
202-296-2992

National Volunteer Week
Points of Light Foundation
www.pointsoflight.org/programs/programs.cfm
800-750-7653

May

Join Hands Day
America's Fraternal Benefit Societies
Points of Light Foundation
www.joinhandsday.org
877-OUR-1DAY (877-687-1329)

September

United Day of Service
Champions of Hope
Weekly Reader Magazine
www.championsofhopec.org
202-345-7293

October

Crime Prevention Month
National Crime Prevention Council
www.ncpc.org
202-466-6272

Make A Difference Day
USA WEEKEND Magazine
Points of Light Foundation
www.usaweekend.com/diffday/
800-416-3824

National Kids Care Week
Kids Care Clubs, Points of Light Foundation
www.kidscare.org
203-656-8052

November

National Family Volunteer Day
Points of Light Foundation
Alliance for Children and Families
www.pointsoflight.org/programs/programs.cfm
800-750-7653





Additional Resources

Materials

Lewis, Barbara. *The Kid's Guide to Service Projects: Over 500 Service Ideas for Young People Who Want To Make a Difference*. Minneapolis, MN: Free Spirit Publishing, 1995.

Pearson, Sarah. *Finding Common Ground: Service-Learning and Education Reform—A Survey of 28 Leading School Reform Models*. Washington, DC: American Youth Policy Forum, 2002.

Roberts, Pamela. *Kids Taking Action: Community Service-learning Projects, K–8*. Greenfield, MA: Northeast Foundation for Children, 2002.

Organizations

Center for Youth as Resources
National Crime Prevention Council

This program brings youth and adults together to engage in community service projects. It coordinates a network of Youth as Resources sites nationwide.

www.cyar.org

Champions of Hope

This organization offers ideas for service projects and information on United Day of Service.

www.championsofhope.org

Corporation for National and Community Service

This organization coordinates AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, and Learn and Serve. It offers information on service and available grants and helps individuals find service opportunities in their communities.

www.nationalservice.org

Family, Career and Community Leaders of America, Community Service Program

This organization offers a community service action guide to help individuals plan, carry out, and evaluate service projects.

www.fcclainc.org

Idealist.org: Kids and Teens

This website for children offers information on volunteering and a searchable database that helps children find volunteer opportunities in their community.

www.idealists.org/kat/



Kids Care Clubs, Points of Light Foundation

This website for children motivates them to form community service clubs, offers ideas for service projects, and shares information from other Kids Care Clubs nationwide.

www.kidscare.org

Learn and Serve: Corporation for National and Community Service

Learn and Serve offers information to teachers, school administrators, and other program directors on service-learning, including state service-learning policies and funds available for projects.

www.learnandserve.org

www.nationalservice.org

Lion and Lamb Project

This organization, which speaks out against media violence aimed at children, provides a calendar of service activities that promote nonviolence.

www.lionlamb.org

National Peer Helpers Association

This association helps adults coordinate peer helping programs in schools, community centers, etc. Peer helpers are trained in how to get help when friends engage in dangerous behaviors.

www.peerhelping.org

Points of Light Foundation and Volunteer Center National Network

This organization coordinates a number of volunteer events throughout the year, offers ideas for service projects, and helps individuals find volunteer opportunities in their local communities.

www.pointsoflight.org

Teens, Crime, and the Community National Crime Prevention Council

This program combines a curriculum with service learning to help teens protect themselves from crime.

www.nationaltcc.org

USA Freedom Corps

This site provides a database of volunteer opportunities and information on other volunteer programs (such as AmeriCorps).

www.usafreedomcorps.gov

Youth Service America

This organization offers ideas for service projects and information on available funding; YSA also coordinates National Youth Service Day.

www.ysa.org/index.cfm

