

BRICK BY BRICK
How to BUILD Service Learning Adventures into your club
A 4-H Leader's Guide to Service Learning Adventures

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS AND REFERENCES Adapted from IFAS Extensions Community Pride Program Content was adapted from The National 4-H Cooperative Curriculum System Inc.'s Service Learning Helper's Guide (2005), Agents of Change (2005), and Raise Your Voice (2005).

Learning to serve is an essential part of being an engaged citizen. The 4-H Program strives to teach youth to serve their communities. Why Service Learning Adventures? Service Learning is an important component of youth development because it allows youth to strengthen their critical thinking skills, leadership skills, and civic and social responsibility.

- Youth learn about their community and the impact the community has on their lives
- Youth understand how to relate to their community as individuals and through group cooperation, so they can effectively work in community activities, programs, and organizations
- Youth develop skills and knowledge in community leadership
- Youth develop an interest in and love for their community

Service learning is an experiential learning activity. (PUT MODEL RIGHT HERE)

There are five steps in the experiential learning process, but they can be boiled down to three stages: Do, Reflect, and Apply.

Do: Youth are engaged in doing an activity. This is a hands-on piece. In service learning adventures, you will participate in three main "Do" activities. They are performing a community needs assessment, creating a project plan, and implementing the project.

Reflect: Reflection allows youth to share about and process what they experienced in the "Do" section of the project. Reflection requires youth to think about how their actions affected project results, understanding what happened, and how they feel about the experience.

Apply: During the reflection process, additional application questions will spark understanding of how the skills and knowledge they have gained through the Service Learning Adventure and how they can be applied to other projects, programs, and situations.

BRICK #1

Step 1: Community Needs Assessment

Make a Large poster with the words **HANDS FOR LARGER SERVICE** across top

Print and cut out hand prints (enough for each club member to have 5)

Bring pens, pencils or markers

A Needs Assessment may sound complicated and scary, but it is simply a way for youth to learn about the needs and assets in their community. As club members arrive at your club today, give them each 5 hand prints that you have previously cut out. Introduce them to the recommendations below and have them write their ideas on the hands. Have them place them on the Hands for Larger Service Poster.

Needs Assessments Recommendations

1. Define “Needs” and “Assets.” A need is the gap in the community between how things are and how they should be. An asset is a valuable resource that your community has that can help improve a situation. Assets can be people, organizations, or natural resources.
2. Have youth dedicate some time exploring the community that you have decided to focus on. Youth should come up with a list of community needs and assets that they see.

Have your regular planned activities. Have club members practice looking for a need in your club and doing a small act of service sometime during your activity today.

Give club members homework: Have each club member talk to five different members of the community and ask these community members what needs their community is facing and what assets their community has.

Remind your club before the next meeting that you will be adding their new found ideas to your poster board next club meeting.

BRICK #2

Cut out enough hands for each club member to have 5 each (In a different color than before)

To begin this club meeting, hand out more hands

Have youth write the needs/assets that community members shared with them on the new hands and put them up with the other ideas.

Are there any similarities? Is there a pattern emerging?

As a group, have the youth select a community need that they want to focus on.

Go on to your regularly schedules club activity

Simple Homework for Next Club Meeting:

Youth should spend some time researching this need and thinking about solutions and bring those ideas to your next meeting.

Reflection After Completing the Needs Assessment:

- Which community problems do you feel the most strongly about, and why?
- What patterns did you recognize in the process that the group just completed?
- Why was completing a needs assessment for your community harder or easier than you expected?
- How did the group determine which ideas were the best?
- What other groups might use community needs assessments, and why?
- What are other situations where you may need to consider the needs of your community?

BRICK #3

Bring LARGE self stick wall pads to post around the room. Write the words “Plan” on the top of one, ‘Timeline’ on the top of another, “Supplies” on the top of another and “Roles” on top of the last one.

Bring markers

Use Service Learning Planning Form from 4H Service Learning Adventure webpage

Creating a Project Plan (This step takes the most time.)

Good planning determines the success of the service learning adventure. Consider the ultimate goals and who will be helped by the service. Use the research and other information gathered to develop a plan, a timeline, a list of supplies and roles and responsibilities for each club member.

Have the group look at the potential solutions they have brainstormed and make a plan. Have them determine a timeline/calendar and what supplies will be needed. What steps will they need to complete to make their solution a reality? (i.e. fundraising, purchasing supplies, finding community partners, scheduling workdays, etc.)

What are their project goals? How will they know that they have been successful?

Have them make a list of roles and responsibilities and determine who will take the lead on each of those things.

Once your group has completed a needs assessment and created a project plan, you are ready to implement your Service Learning Adventure! Make sure and “COACH” your youth as they prepare for the upcoming Service Learning Adventure and help out as needed.

Reflection After Creating the Project Plan :

- What was the most difficult part of planning the service project and why?
- How do you feel about the final plan?
- How did the group take everyone’s ideas into consideration?
- How were responsibilities divided?
- Has anything not been considered or discussed yet?
- Besides 4-H, when do you use a planning process to complete a project?
- What kinds of jobs require you to create a plan?

BRICK #4

Now it's time to see the plan unfold. This is the most rewarding and exciting part of the service learning adventure. Remember to have fun. Take lots of pictures and take the opportunity to teach when things don't go exactly as planned. Look for the good that happens and encourage youth with your praise throughout the adventure. Take notes along the way, so you can work on improving things in your future service learning adventures.

Reflection After Completing the Service Project For Seniors/Intermediates 4H members:

- How would you describe the service project that you completed to someone who was interested in learning about Community Pride?
- What was your favorite/least favorite part of the service project?
- What part of your plans changed or had to become flexible after you began to work on your project?
- What was your group's greatest struggle/success?
- What might your group do differently the next time that you complete a project together?
- Outside of 4-H, what are some situations where you have to be flexible and allow plans to change?
- In what other situations can you work with others to serve your community?

BRICK #5

Thank You cards

Pens

Fun Treat

Be sure to find a way to celebrate your service learning adventure success. This helps your youth feel appreciated and valued for their hard work and accomplishments. This is also a great time to thank supporters in the community. Use the thank you cards you brought and have club members thank all those outside your club who helped your adventure be a success.

- Throughout your service learning experience make sure that you are taking photos and video recordings
- Have youth create a press release about their project that you can send to local newspapers, your local 4H newsletter, your county 4H facebook page and insta gram.

Celebrate:

- Once you have completed your Service Learning Adventure, take time to celebrate your accomplishments
- Present your club members with certificates of accomplishment to recognize the work that they have done

Let the Next ADVENTURE begin

- Start planning for your next Service Learning Adventure!