

Voices for Service-Learning

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“There’s a really big world at your fingertips, and you know you have the chance to change it.”
-Britt Nicole

The summer months are often busy; filled with activities, sports, and vacations. Most of us get so caught up in our own hectic schedules, that we forget about the world outside. This month, take advantage of every service-learning opportunity you come across. Project ideas are constantly available. The options within these pages are only a few of the endless possibilities. Use them as starting points and build on them from there.



Take the Initiative

Use some of these project ideas to bring service-learning into your community:

Idea: Have high school students organize and chaperone an elementary school dance.

Purpose: To create unity between students of all ages.

Idea: Have older students read to lower elementary and preschool students using voice animations to make the stories more engaging.

Purpose: To help older students become more outgoing and to allow younger students to enhance their reading skills.

Idea: Encourage people in your community to “share the love”. Possibly start a club that is committed to visiting elderly people in nursing homes.

Purpose: To form bonds between old and young members of your community and to teach younger individuals why they need to “respect their elders.”

Special points of interest:

- Find different service-learning projects that you can start in your community (p. 1)
- Discover school service-learning projects that have been done in Ionia County (p. 2-3)
- Learn how kids in your community are struggling and discover ways to help (p.4)



You're Not Alone

See what other schools in Ionia County have done to engage in service-learning

Belding Area Schools:

On May 3rd, several 5th grade classes spent the morning at the Belding Depot. They all participated in a ceremony, dedicating the town's Liberty Tree to past and present soldiers. Several students delivered speeches and a letter from Governor Granholm was read. The service men and women were also honored by the raising of the flag, a gun salute, the playing of taps, and much, much more.



Ionia's Heartlands is an opportunity for all juniors and seniors in the county.

Ionia Public Schools:

Ionia schools are all about community involvement and preparing students for the future. For example, Ionia students have the opportunity to help operate a restaurant and a dental clinic open to the public. They step outside their classrooms to cadet teach for younger children and serve as aides in offices and in classrooms.

From "Ionia Public Schools/Community"



Lakewood Public Schools:

The Lakewood School District is currently in the process of writing a grant. Their hope is to be given enough money to bring Dolly Parton's Imagination Library to their schools. Doing so would allow the district to give books to all the children in their district. For more information on this project, visit www.imaginationlibrary.com.



The Dolly Parton Imagination Library is currently funded by the Ionia County Youth Advisory Committee.

The Dedication of the Liberty Tree took place on May 3rd at the Belding Depot.

You're Not Alone (cont.)

Portland Area Schools:

Recently, Portland's elementary school organized a parent night. At this meeting, parents learned about the concept of 'bucket filling.' The basic idea of bucket filling is to lift someone's spirits by 'filling their bucket' with compliments and kind actions. To learn more about this philosophy, visit www.portlandki2.org.



Bucketfilling is to lift someone's spirits by compliments and kind actions.



Cross-Culture Competencies is very important when teaching students

Saranac Community Schools:

The goal of the International Travel Club is to give students the opportunity to travel internationally. It is the belief of the club that exposure to different cultures and seeing sites first hand that they have studied in school are invaluable experiences to the students. The club is open to all students grades 7-12 who would like to participate in these trips. For more information, visit

From "Welcome to the International Travel Club Home Page"



Threshold Academy:

Threshold has been working on getting men more involved in their children's lives and schools. They have started "Dad's Day" where men who are important in a child's life are invited to spend the day with that child. Threshold has also organized a Father's Advisory Council, weekly support newsletters, and father retreats. To learn more, visit www.eightcap.org.

From "Fatherhood/ Male Involvement"



Students are more likely to ask for help from their parents with homework if they have a strong relationship with their parents.

Helping Kids Handle Bullying

The Problem:

Many caregivers and bystanders don't act when they see a child getting bullied on the playground or in their neighborhood. Such inaction can mean misery for children who are subjected to bullying on a regular basis. Years after the bullying has come to an end, people who were bullied as teenagers have poorer self-esteem and higher levels of depression than other adults. Imagine working in an office where bullying is tolerated. A co-worker who is stronger than you may distract you from your job, spread vicious rumors about you, take your possessions, threaten you, or openly mock you with the intention of causing you pain. When you explain the abuse to your boss, the response is clear: "You need to stop complaining and work this out together." You are punished for being a "tattletale." Most adults wouldn't put up with this sort of treatment at work, yet victimized children are commonly expected to confront their abusers on their own and with no way to defend themselves.

Article by: Jamie Littlefield
"Children's Issues"
Charity Guide Website

What You Can Do to Help:

Learn how to recognize bullying: Educate yourself on how to recognize the signs of bullying and what you can do to prevent kids from being bullied.

Help educate others: Spread the word by talking to the people in your community who have the power to put an end to bullying. Raise awareness in:

Your family: If you have kids, teach them that bullying is wrong. Let them know that they can always come to you for help.

Your friends: Take a few minutes to share this bullying information with people in your neighborhood.

Your local schools: "Stop Bullying Now" has a wealth of free anti-bullying material aimed at helping teachers, school administrators, and students recognize and prevent school bullying.

Stop bullying when you see it: The next time you see an innocent child being victimized by a bully, don't let the abuse continue. Your actions to stop bullying will help victimized children have hope again.

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Resources

<http://www.charityguide.org/volunteer/fifteen/bullying.htm>
<http://www.bing.com/images/search?q=world+in+hands&go=&form=OBIR&qs=n#>
www.ioniaisd.org
www.bas-k12.org
<http://www.bing.com/images/search?q=haynor+school&FORM=BIFD#>
<http://www.ionia.k12.mi.us/>
<http://www.lakewood.k12.mi.us/>
<http://www.saranac.k12.mi.us/itc/itc.html>
<http://www.portlandk12.org/>
<http://www.eightcap.org/HeadStartEarlyHeadStart/Fatherhood/tabid/106/Default.aspx>