

Service-Learning Newsletter

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March of Dimes Prematurity Awareness Month

Prematurity is the leading killer of America's newborns. Those who survive often have life-long health problems, including cerebral palsy, mental retardation, chronic lung disease, blindness and hearing loss.

Prematurity has been escalating steadily and alarmingly over the past two decades. In 2006, nearly 543,000 infants were born prematurely. In 2005, the United States as a society paid at least \$26.2 billion in economic costs associated with preterm birth (medical and educational expenses, loss in productivity).

Preterm delivery can happen to any pregnant woman. In about four out of every 10 cases, the causes are unknown. The March of Dimes has taken on this devastating problem—to find out what causes it and how it can be stopped.

About the Prematurity Campaign

The March of Dimes Prematurity Campaign was launched on January 30, 2003. The Campaign has two goals: (1)

to raise public awareness of the problems of prematurity and (2) to decrease the rate of preterm birth in the U.S. The campaign:

- Funds research to find the causes of premature birth
- Encourages investment of public and private research dollars to identify causes and to identify and test promising interventions
- Educates women about risk-reduction strategies and the signs and symptoms of premature labor
- Provides information and emotional support to families affected by prematurity
- Advocates to expand access to health care coverage to improve maternity care and infant health outcomes
- Helps health care providers to improve risk detection and address risk factors
- Generates concern and action around the problem

Why the March of Dimes

For over 65 years, the

March of Dimes has saved millions of babies and children from death and disabilities through our life-saving research, innovative programs, and dedicated volunteers. The March of Dimes was founded in 1938 by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt to defeat polio, a dreaded disease that claimed the lives and limbs of America's children in record numbers. Within 17 years, the Salk vaccine was developed and polio was defeated.

The March of Dimes then turned its attention to an even greater challenge—fighting birth defects and other infant health problems. With a track record of success in bringing people together to solve complex health challenges, the March of Dimes is uniquely qualified to take on the problem of prematurity.

More Information at

www.marchofdimes.com

Thought of the Month



Caption describing picture or graphic.

“The future depends on what we do in the present.”

Give a Day of Service, Get a Day at Disneyland!

YES, it’s that simple — a free one-day ticket to a Disneyland or Walt Disney World theme park for guests who volunteer a day of service to a participating organization. We’re celebrating you and the good things you do for your communities.

Our program officially begins on January 1, 2010. When it’s live,

you’ll be able to visit www.DisneyParks.com or www.DisneyParks.ca and search for an eligible volunteer project. After completing the volunteer work, an e-mail will be sent from Disney with a link to print out a voucher to redeem at a theme park for a free one-day, one-park admission. And if you’re unable to use the ticket, it can be donated to a charity designated by Disney.

With this announcement, Disney is looking for 1 million people with a passion to make a difference. And their working with HandsOn Network to do it. They’re helping make sure you find the perfect volunteer work. And many of the program’s volunteer opportunities will be for the family.



Going Green

The Ionia County ISD is trying to become more eco-friendly and that means that the service learning newsletter is going to start being posted online at www.ioniaisd.org.

We will continue to print the service-learning newsletter, but we will also be posting the newsletter online. We encourage you to start reading the newsletter online, so we can be paper free by the end of the year! . Thank you for your support with our goal of becoming paper free!

Remember to check us out at www.ioniaisd.org under service-learning.



Caption describing picture or graphic.

Project Ignition = Energy for Change

What is Project Ignition?

You name it and *Project Ignition* teams find the inspiration, creativity, and community support to get it done. It's an inspired equation.

In the simplest of terms, *Project Ignition* is a service-learning grant program focused on teen driver safety — but the ripple effect the program creates is anything but simple.

Student campaign teams find their inspiration close to home — sometimes from personal tragedy — but their powerful messages reach across towns, counties, and state lines. Students find amazing and creative ways to bring their messages to life:

- They organize community fairs and produce public service announcements. Students design advertising and stage mock crashes. They

write music and poetry.

- They meet with city councils and local legislators to encourage stronger public policy surrounding teen driver safety.

They build Web sites and memory walls. Students galvanize schools and families — even entire communities — around their efforts to keep teen drivers and passengers safe.

Recently, the Ionia County Youth Advisory Council received the first round grant of \$2,000 to implement a teen drivers safety service-learning project. Receiving the first round grant means that the Youth Advisory Council (YAC) was placed in the top 25 grant proposals. The next round the YAC is eligible for is the top ten projects from the top 25. If the YAC receives the top 10 they will receive \$5,000 and be able to go to San Jose for the National Service-Learning Con-

ference, where the top project will receive \$10,000 to continue their project.

The YAC has many plans to try to make the top ten. They are having a teen driver's safety summit on December 11th at the Ionia County ISD. They are also in the process of creating a PSA to be played on local TV stations and hopefully be played state wide. They are also in the planning stages to meet with State Legislators to create a law about talking and texting on the phone while driving.



K-12 Service-Learning Units

High Quality service-learning with careful identification and analysis of learning goals. Students should participate in engaging, challenging, curriculum that is congruent with state standards or in our case grade level content expectations.

The service-learning units were created by K-12 teachers during

a summer workshop that examined the K-12 Quality Standards for Service-Learning, standard-based curriculum, instruction and formative and summative assessment in the service-learning experience.

Each unit has examples of quality service-learning projects ready to be completed by a classroom. The

units are arranged by grade level and subject area. The lesson plan templates were adapted from the work of Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe in *Backward by Design*.

Units are available at

www.ioniaisd.org

2009-2010 Seasons of Service

November 2009

November 15-21
National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week

<http://www.nationalhomeless.org/getinvolved/projects/awareness/>

November 15-21
American Education Week
<http://www.nea.org/aew>

November 21
Family Volunteer Day
www.disney.go.com/disneyhand/familyvolunteers/

November 22-28
National Family Week
www.nationalfamilyweek.org

December 2009

December (month)
National Drunk and Drugged Driving (3D) Prevention Month

www.sadd.org/national3d.htm

December 1
World AIDS Day
<http://www.worldaidscampaign.org/en/Key-events/World-AIDS-Day>

December 3
International Day of Persons with Disabilities
<http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=109>

December 10
Human Rights Day
www.un.org/events/humanrights/

Appreciating Difference Through Service-Learning

Service-learning has the power to reduce stereotypes, uncover unfair assumptions and increase understanding among diverse groups of students and community members. Even in homogenous areas, carefully structured reflection activities and pre-service preparation can help students examine unfounded biases.

The first and most tangible way service-learning reduces stereotyping is by bringing diverse groups together in pursuit of common goals. Students and seniors, for example, regularly report an enhanced appreciation of one another's generation after students interview seniors as part of a history project.

In service-learning efforts that involve urban and suburban or rural schools, the students involved gain an improved understanding of each other's point of view. Often, this occurs naturally, as students and community members have genuine opportunities to interact for the first time. Still, careful planning can maximize the insight that stems from serving alongside or interacting with people from another background.

Teachers should ensure that students are prepared to interact with a population with which they may be unfamiliar. A visit from an agency or community representative is often a good way to famil-

iarize students with what to expect. A group of students planning an event for seniors, for example, learned from an agency representative that seniors have lived long and productive lives and, therefore, should not be reduced to being 'cute'. The senior center representative also mentioned that some, but not all, of the seniors were hard of hearing but otherwise mentally astute. Even before interacting with seniors, then, students heard from a local authority about some popular misconceptions of older citizens