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## **Service Learning Project**

**“Never doubt what a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can do to change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.” – Margaret Meade, Anthropologist**

### **The Requirement:**

The completion of a service learning project is required to graduate from the High Lakes Youth Leadership Program. A project can be completed individually, with a partner or can be completed on the Service Learning Day as part of the program.

### **The Purpose:**

A service learning project demonstrates one’s ability to hone, learn and implement leadership skills through project management and taking responsibility, while giving back to the community.

### **Choosing a Project:**

Your project must present an opportunity for planning, development and leadership. It may be for a school, a community organization, religious institution, or non-profit organization. You are responsible for raising necessary funds for the project (if funds are needed). A project must be a stand-alone project and not part of an ongoing project or community fundraiser. A project can include construction, remodeling, beautification, conservation, or a presentation of an event with a worthwhile purpose. The project must present a challenge that requires leadership, but also something that you can do with unskilled helpers, and within a reasonable period of time.

A project proposal must be submitted to the lead leadership coach for approval if the project will be completed outside of the Service Learning Day as part of the program.

### **Restrictions:**

- A project cannot be done for a commercial business.
- The project must be completed by November 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Dual credit will not be given for a project that is part of another organization the student is involved in.

## What is Service Learning?

“A method of teaching through which people learn and develop through active participation in thoughtfully organized service experiences.” - *Alliance for Service-Learning in Education*

According to the Search Institute, there are two basic components to service-learning:

“**Service** – Young people that engage in activities that meet the needs of others and the community...”

“**Learning** – The experiences of serving others are used as an opportunity for self-reflection and learning.”

**The Service Learning Process** – It includes important steps for project planning and implementation.

### When planning a project:

1. **Conduct a needs assessment.** Strive to identify projects that will satisfy community needs and meet educational goals.
2. **Detail goals and objectives.** Define in measurable terms; hours to be served, task to be completed, knowledge gained, values honed, etc...
3. **Plan for fun and fulfillment.** Plan ways for participants to benefit from and enjoy their contribution to the group and work.
4. **Identify collaborators and resources.** Identify experts, youth organizations, community service organizations, etc. who are interested in helping achieve project goals. Seek physical resources like meeting space, transportation, and tools required for project completion.

### When implementing a project:

1. **Encourage teamwork.** Engage all participants in activities that cultivate cooperation and group process skills.
2. **Build a focus mission.** Work with the group to define a strong sense of purpose for the service project.
3. **Gather background knowledge.** Connect with resource experts. Research the need and feasibility of potential service projects.
4. **Develop a plan of action.** Once a project is selected, engage the whole group in the development of the work plan and task lists that map its successful completion.
5. **Complete the service project.** Work as a group to complete service goals.
6. **Celebrate the success.** Commemorate and enjoy the lessons learned and community needs fulfilled.

1. Please Define the Problem – What needs to be done?
2. Who will this project affect? (children, elderly, homeless, people with disabilities, etc...)
3. Timeline – How long do you expect this project to take? (minimum of 3 hours)
4. Outcomes – What will be the end result?
5. Leadership skills – What leadership skills will you have used once the entire project is complete?