

# STEP ONE—WHAT'S A COMMUNITY?

## SUPERVISOR GUIDE

### OVERVIEW

In this activity, respondents discuss the meaning of community, the purpose of community service, and how they—and their community—will benefit from it.

### MATERIALS & PREPARATION

**Handout One—What's a Community?**—1 copy for each respondent

**Time Required**—2 hours (can be counted toward respondent dispositions)

### PROCEDURES

Tell respondents that they are going to participate in a project to achieve three goals:

- Complete their youth court assignment.
- Complete a community service-learning project.
- Learn valuable leadership and civic-action skills.

Tell them that in order to achieve these goals, they are going to use worksheets—called *handouts*. Each handout will include short readings, directions for activities, and questions they will need to answer.

**Important!** Each handout requires the signature of a supervisor to confirm that respondents have completed the activity. *Make sure respondents know who is acting as the project supervisor at each stage of a community service-learning project.* Completed and signed handouts should be turned in to a youth court coordinator or other responsible party.

### HANDOUT

Give each respondent a copy of **Handout One—What's a Community?** Have them review the **Youth Instructions**. Answer any questions they may have.

### READING

Have respondents complete the **Reading**. If respondents are working as a group, have them read aloud.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Hold a brief discussion using the following questions:

- What does the tale of the blind men and the elephant teach about community?
- What are the three basic parts of community?
- How does crime *take away* from a community?
- How can people *give back* to a community?

### CHECK POINT

Review the **Hours Completed** and sign off on each respondent's completed handout.

## WHAT'S A COMMUNITY?

### YOUTH INSTRUCTIONS

1. Complete the Reading.
2. Answer the Discussion Questions.
3. Write the total **Hours Completed**, the time you spent working on the project.
4. Have your supervisor sign the **Check Point**.



### READING

Five blind men wanted to find out what an elephant was. They had one brought to them. Surrounding the elephant, each blind man reached up to touch it. The first blind man grabbed the elephant's trunk. He said, "Aha! So an elephant is like a snake." The second blind man, holding one of the elephant's legs said, "Oh, no, it's like a tree trunk. The third grabbed the elephant's ear and said, "How can you say that? An elephant is clearly like a fan." The fourth, clutching the animal's tail, said, "Fools! The elephant is a like a rope." The fifth, climbing up the side of the elephant, said, "You're all wrong! The elephant resembles a small hill."

—Indian folk tale

What's a community? As with the blind men and the elephant, different people describe community in different ways. Community consists of *three basic parts*: places, organizations, and people.

- Places—your home, school, the mall, streets, rivers, hills are all part of a community.
- Organizations—stores, religious groups, the fire department, the local television station are all community organizations.
- People—people are a part of your community. Without people, you would live in a ghost town. You would have a tough time getting the things you need to survive—food, clothing, shelter, entertainment. Besides, it would be boring and lonely.

Homes, schools, streets, rivers, churches, the mall, the fire department, your family, friends—even people you don't know—are all part of a community. You need them—they need you. When people commit crimes, they *take away* from a community. When young people fight or threaten one another, they drive a wedge between community members. When they steal, they add to suspicions and fears that others may have about young people. When they vandalize or tag a neighborhood, they make the community less attractive.

Community service provides people with an opportunity to *give back*. Community service takes many forms. People can volunteer—to work at a local animal shelter, teach younger children how to read, or to help elderly citizens with tasks they can no longer do themselves. Or, they can make a plan to address a community problem they think is important. Young people are particularly good at community service.

**WHAT'S A COMMUNITY? (PAGE 2)**

Teenagers in Washington state wrote a book on how to protect their community's natural resources.

Young people in Oregon formed a theater group to talk about problems of dating violence and sexual assault.

Students in Massachusetts started a community garden and donated the vegetables to a local homeless shelter.

By working on a service project, you can use your energy, skills, talents, and interests to make life better—for yourself and the people around you. Most important—it's good to know that people can depend on you.

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

Hold a brief discussion using the following questions:

- What does the tale of the blind men and the elephant teach about community?
- What are the three basic parts of community?
- How does crime *take away* from a community?
- How can people *give back* to a community?

**CHECK POINT****HOURS COMPLETED** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
(Supervisor Signature)\_\_\_\_\_  
(date)

# STEP TWO—WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

## SUPERVISOR GUIDE

### OVERVIEW

In this activity, respondents read about crime as a community problem. Then, they look at the problem of crime in terms of causes and effects (consequences). Finally, they brainstorm a list of community problems they think are important.

### MATERIALS & PREPARATION

**Handout Two—What's the Problem?**—1 copy for each respondent

Collect **Brainstorm Lists** (see Handout Two) of community problems from respondents. They may use them in a later activity.

**Time Required**—2 hours (can be counted toward respondent dispositions)

### PROCEDURE

Tell respondents that before they start their service project, they are going to take a look at crime and other problems in their community.

### HANDOUT

Give each respondent a copy of **Handout Two—What's the Problem?** Have them review the **Youth Instructions**. Answer any questions respondents may have. *Make sure respondents know who is acting as the project supervisor at each stage of a community service-learning project.*

### READING

Allow time to read the handout. If they are working as a group, have them read aloud.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Hold a brief discussion using the following questions:

- How does crime impact people's lives?
- Has crime influenced your life? How?
- How does crime affect people who aren't victims or perpetrators?
- Do you think crime is a serious community problem? Why or why not?

### STOP AND THINK

Explain to respondents that this activity allows them to stop and think about what they are doing, why they are doing it, and how they feel about it. Review the **Stop and Think** questions and tell respondents that they are required to write answers to the Stop and Think questions in the space provided on the handout.

### BRAINSTORM LIST

Have respondents brainstorm a list of community problems they think are important. Review the **Brainstorm Tips** below before they begin.

### CHECK POINT

Review the **Hours Completed** and sign off on each respondent's completed handout.

### BRAINSTORM TIPS

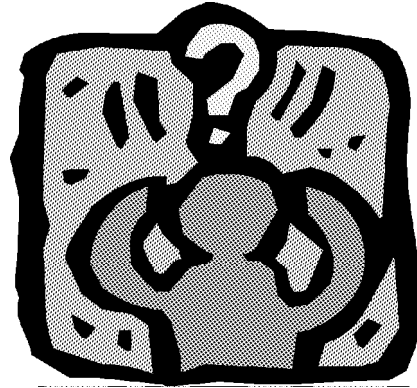
A brainstorm is a quick-and-easy method to explore what you know about a topic.

To do a brainstorm, follow these simple rules:

- Describe out loud any ideas that come to mind.
- Work as fast as possible to create a lot of ideas.
- Write down each idea.
- Don't reject ideas. There are no wrong answers in a brainstorm.
- If you are working with a group, build on each other's ideas.

**WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?****YOUTH INSTRUCTIONS**

1. Complete the **Reading**.
2. Answer the **Discussion Questions**.
3. Answer the **Stop and Think** questions.
4. Make a **Brainstorm List** of community problems.
5. Write the total **Hours Completed**, the time you spent working on the project.
6. Have your supervisor sign the **Check Point**.

**READING**

Crime has an impact on everybody. Students lose important books, papers, and prized possessions when backpacks are stolen from lockers. Elderly citizens fear being robbed or cheated. Innocent drivers and passengers of all ages are killed or injured in accidents caused by drunken drivers. When teenagers buy clothes at the mall, they pay extra to cover the store owner's losses to shoplifting. Victims of bullying, threats, and sexual assault say they never fully recover from the experience.

When people get caught, police records and prison terms leave a permanent mark on their lives. For most people, "getting away with it" doesn't work either. When people do something wrong, they know it. For most people, living outside the law makes life very difficult.

The consequences of crime don't stop with its victims or perpetrators. In the future, you will pay extra taxes to protect your community from crime, prevent it from happening in the first place, or repair the damage it does. As a voter, you will have to choose between candidates who may have different opinions about how to deal with crime. Some people think crime should be prevented with better education and more economic opportunities. Others believe that harsher punishment is the answer. People have different opinions about crime, but nearly everyone agrees that it is a serious community problem.

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

Hold a brief discussion using the following questions:

- How does crime impact people's lives?
- Has crime influenced your life? How?
- How does crime affect people who aren't victims or perpetrators?
- Do you think crime is a serious community problem? Why or why not?

**WHAT'S THE PROBLEM? (PAGE 2)**

**STOP AND THINK**

You have seen how crime is a community problem. Problems have causes and consequences. You can learn a lot about a problem by looking at its causes and consequences. Write answers to the questions in the space below:

- What are some common criminal offenses committed by young people?
- Why do you think young people commit crimes (causes of the problem)?
- How do offenses committed by youth affect the community (consequences of the problem)?
- If you were a community leader, how would you deal with the problem of crime?

**BRAINSTORM LIST**

Besides crime, what are some other community problems? Use the **Brainstorm Tips** (see page 12) to make a list of five community problems you think are important. Keep your list of community problems or give it to your supervisor. You will may use it later.

**FIVE COMMUNITY PROBLEMS**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

**CHECK POINT**

**HOURS COMPLETED** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Supervisor Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(date)

# STEP THREE—COMMUNITY SERVICE-LEARNING OPTIONS

## SUPERVISOR GUIDE

### OVERVIEW

This section provides three community service-learning options and methods for supervisors to choose among them.

#### Step Three (A)—Volunteering

Respondents volunteer at a community-service agency.

#### Step Three (B)—Building Your Own

Respondents plan and complete a project designed to deal with a community problem they think is important.

#### Step Three (C)—Done in a Day

Respondents complete a series of short, pre-planned projects.

## CHOOSING A COMMUNITY SERVICE-LEARNING OPTION

### PROCEDURE

Read the descriptions of community service-learning options on the following pages. Use the **Recommendations** to help you choose the option that is best for your respondents, supervisors, and youth court volunteers.

#### Step Three (A)—Volunteering

Respondents give their time, talents, and energy to a social-service or government agency that is already working to give back to the community.

#### Recommendations

Volunteering. . .

- Takes advantage of existing community-service organizations.
- Develops ongoing partnerships with community agencies. These partnerships can also improve youth court visibility in the community.

- Teaches about the purpose and methods of a community-service agency.
- Can be completed by individual respondents with minimum supervision.

**Important!** Youth court supervisors *must* compile a list of viable community-service agencies for respondents to choose from.

## STEP THREE (B)—BUILDING YOUR OWN

Respondents plan and complete an action project that deals with a community problem they think is important.

#### Recommendations

Action Projects. . .

- Have the highest potential to develop citizenship skills and reinforce restorative justice principles.
- Require more supervision and are best planned and implemented with small groups of respondents.
- Can focus on the specific needs of respondents and their community.
- Develops ongoing partnerships with community agencies. These partnerships can also improve youth court visibility in the community.

### **STEP THREE (C)—DONE IN A DAY**

Respondents complete their sentence hours by participating in a series of short “Done in a Day” service projects.

#### **Recommendations**

Done in a Day projects. . .

- Can be completed by small groups or individual respondents with minimum supervision.
- Allow flexibility of schedules, transportation, and supervision.
- Help develop ongoing partnerships with community agencies. These partnerships can also improve youth court visibility in the community.
- Depending on sentencing dispositions, respondents may have to complete more than one project.

# STEP THREE (A)—VOLUNTEERING

## SUPERVISOR GUIDE

### OVERVIEW

In this community service-learning option, respondents volunteer at a community service agency. First, respondents review a list of agencies *provided by the youth court*. Next, they choose and contact an agency where they can volunteer. Third, respondents complete the required number of service hours at the agency. In addition, respondents answer questions describing the agency's purpose and reflect on their volunteer experience.

### SKILLS AND OBJECTIVES

Respondents will be able to. . .

- Choose and contact a community-service agency where they can volunteer.
- Interact usefully and responsibly with a community-service agency.
- Learn useful job-site skills.
- Work cooperatively with others.
- Describe the purpose and methods of a community-service agency.
- Describe and evaluate the role of service for the good of the community and themselves.

### MATERIALS & PREPARATION

- **Handout Three (A)—Volunteering**—1 copy for each respondent
- You *must* provide respondents with a pre-selected list of community-service agencies.<sup>1</sup> In addition, ask the following questions of each agency:
  1. Does it use volunteers? Who is the contact person for volunteers?
  2. What is the agency's purpose?
  3. What tasks will volunteers perform? Are tasks related to the agency's purpose?

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<sup>1</sup> For assistance in forming partnerships with community-service agencies, see "Forming Interagency Partnerships," *Peer Justice and Youth Empowerment*, page 86, available through the National Youth Court Center.

4. Where is the agency located? How will respondents get there?
5. Insurance coverage: How will respondents be covered for injury and liability?

### PROCEDURE

Tell respondents that in order to complete their community-service requirement, they are going to volunteer at a community-service agency. Explain that they are responsible for choosing and contacting an agency.

### HANDOUT

Give each respondent a copy of **Handout Three (A)—Volunteering**. Have them review the **Youth Instructions**. Answer any questions respondents may have. *Make sure respondents know who is acting as the project supervisor at each stage of a community service-learning project.*

### READING

Allow time to read the handout. If they are working as a group, have them read aloud.

### VOLUNTEER QUESTIONS

Respondents who volunteer at a community-service agency are required to answer three sets of questions.

1. Contact Info
2. Agency Purpose
3. Stop and Think

Review the **Volunteer Questions** with respondents and answer any questions they may have. **Important!** Respondents must use the **Agency Check Point** to secure the signature and a notation of service hours from a **Contact Person** at the community-service agency.

### CHECK POINTS

Review the **Agency Check Point** and **Hours Completed** and sign off on each respondent's completed handout.

# VOLUNTEERING

## YOUTH INSTRUCTIONS

1. Complete the **Reading**.
2. Choose an agency from the youth court list.
3. Fill out the **Contact Info** on the handout.
4. Go to work at the agency.
5. Answer the **Agency Purpose** questions on the handout.
6. Have a **Contact Person** at the agency sign the **Agency Check Point** when you have finished your volunteer work. Have them write the total **Hours Completed**, the time you spent working at the agency.
7. Complete the **Stop and Think** activity.
8. Have your supervisor sign the **Check Point**.

## READING

As part of your youth court assignment, you are going to give back to the community by volunteering at a *community-service agency*.

Community-service agencies are different from other organizations. Their purpose is to improve the community. They do not make money. In order to keep running, most community-service agencies are supported by tax money, donations, or money from grants. Many depend on volunteers to help them with their goals. That's where you fit in—you are going to contribute your time, talent, and energy to the community by volunteering at a service agency.

Your supervisor has a list of community-service agencies where you can volunteer. Look over the list. To choose the agency that is best for you, answer these questions:

- What does this agency do?
- What are your interests? What are your talents?
- How can you use your interests and talents to help this agency?
- What can YOU learn by working at this agency?
- Where is this agency? Is it near your school or home?

(See other side)

**HANDOUT THREE (A)**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**VOLUNTEER (PAGE 2)****CONTACT INFO**

Agency name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact person (Who is in charge of volunteers?): \_\_\_\_\_

Transportation (How will you get there?): \_\_\_\_\_

Community service-learning hours (How many hours do you need?): \_\_\_\_\_

Dates and times for volunteering: \_\_\_\_\_

**AGENCY PURPOSE**

1. What problem or problems does the agency address?
2. How does the agency deal with these problems?
3. Do they do a good job? Why or why not?

**AGENCY CHECK POINT****HOURS COMPLETED** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
(Agency Contact Person Signature)\_\_\_\_\_  
(date)**STOP AND THINK**

1. What tasks did you do?
2. How did you to use your OWN interests and talents to help the agency?
3. What did you learn?
4. How did you feel about your community service-learning experience?

**SUPERVISOR CHECK POINT****HOURS COMPLETED** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
(Supervisor Signature)\_\_\_\_\_  
(date)

# STEP THREE (B)—BUILDING YOUR OWN SUPERVISOR GUIDE

## OVERVIEW

In this community service-learning option, respondents plan and complete an action project.

First, respondents choose a community problem they want to work on. Next, they complete an action plan and present it to other youth court participants. Then, respondents use the action plan as a guide to complete their community service-learning project. In addition, respondents are required to keep track of their hours and reflect on their community service-learning experience.

## SKILLS AND OBJECTIVES

Respondents will be able to . . .

- Choose a community problem that can be addressed with a service project.
- Work cooperatively as a group.
- Explore the community for resources (partners and materials).
- Make an action plan and use it to complete a project.
- Evaluate their project in terms of self and community improvement.

## MATERIALS & PREPARATION

- Handout Three (B)—Building Your Own—1 copy for each respondent
- Brainstorm Lists from Step Two—What's the Problem?
- This community service-learning option requires respondents to work in small, supervised groups.
- See the National Youth Court Center's 12-Month Public Awareness and Service Campaign on page 83 for guidance on how to plug-in to national service projects.

## PROCEDURE

Tell respondents that they are going to:

1. Choose a community problem they want to work on.
2. Plan a project to deal with a community problem they think is interesting and important.

## HANDOUT

Have respondents work in small groups. Give each group a copy of **Handout Three (B)—Building Your Own**. Have them review the **Youth Instructions**. Answer any questions respondents may have. *Make sure respondents know who is acting as the project supervisor at each stage of a community service-learning project.*

## READING

Have respondents work in small groups. Allow time to read the handout.

## CHOOSE A PROBLEM

Have respondents work together to make a list of community problems on a large sheet of paper. If possible, have respondents brainstorm additional problem areas and add them to the **Brainstorm List** of Five Community Problems they completed on **Handout Two—What’s the Problem?**

Have respondents consider each problem on the list by asking: Will working on this problem. . .

1. Use your skills, talents, and interests?
2. Help you learn something about yourself and your community?
3. Be fun and interesting?
4. Have a positive impact on the community?

Have respondents choose the problem they want to address with a community service-learning project.

**Important!** Don’t choose a problem that is too big or too little. For example, don’t choose a problem like crime. That would be too big and you could never solve the whole problem of crime. Don’t choose a problem that is too small to be important or interesting. To be successful, tackle a problem big enough to be important and interesting but small enough that you can *do something* about it!

## PLAN THE PROJECT

Explain that respondents are going to create a plan to build their own service project. Tell them to:

1. Work as a group.
2. Discuss each Action Plan step.
3. Write clear answers in the spaces provided.

**Optional:** Have respondents contact community groups and individuals. Learning how to reach out to the community builds civic-participation skills.

## REPORTING

Before they begin their project, have respondents report on their Action Plan to you and other youth court participants. Reporting helps respondents clarify problems, goals, and strategies.

## GO TO WORK!

Have respondents follow their Action Plans to complete their community service-learning projects. *Make sure respondents know who is acting as the project supervisor at each stage of a community service-learning project.*

## STOP AND THINK

After they have completed their projects, have respondents answer the Stop and Think questions.

## CHECK POINTS

- Sign off on the Action Plan Check Point before respondents begin their project.
- Review the Hours Completed and sign off on the Final Check Point.

# BUILDING YOUR OWN

## YOUTH INSTRUCTIONS

1. Complete the **Reading**.
2. **Choose a Problem**.
3. Make an **Action Plan** to address the problem.
4. Report to others on your **Action Plan**.
5. Have your supervisor sign the **Action Plan Check Point**.
6. Put your **Action Plan** to work.
7. Answer the **Stop and Think** questions.
8. Write the total **Hours Completed**, the time you spent working on the project.
9. Have your supervisor sign the **Final Check Point**.

## READING

You are going to **build your own** action project to deal with a community problem you think is important. To build your own action project you will:

1. Choose a problem.
2. Plan the project.

## CHOOSE A PROBLEM

To choose a problem write a list of community problems on a large sheet of paper. For each problem ask: Will working on this problem. . .

1. Use your skills, talents, and interests?
2. Help you learn something about yourself and your community?
3. Be fun and interesting?
4. Have a positive impact on the community?

**Important!** Don't choose a problem that is too big or too little. For example, don't choose a problem like crime. That would be too big and you could never solve the whole problem of crime. Don't choose a problem that is too small to be important or interesting. To be successful, tackle a problem big enough to be important and interesting but small enough that you can *do something* about it!

Choose the community problem you are going to work on.

## PLAN THE PROJECT

Take the time to make an Action Plan. You will save time and effort. Why? Because you will know where you're going and how to get there.

To make an Action Plan, follow the steps below. Discuss each step. Write a clear answer. Each step influences the others. Make sure they all fit together. Make sure your plan has a positive impact on the community.

**BUILDING YOUR OWN (PAGE 2)****ACTION PLAN**

**Step One. What's the Problem?** How does this problem influence your lives? How does it impact the lives of other people—your family, friends, people at school, and others in your community? What are some causes and consequences of the problem?

Problem:

Who does it impact?

Causes:

Consequences:

**Step Two. Goal.** What do you want to achieve? How will your goal help the community?

**Step Three. Name.** Have the name describe your project goal.

**Step Four. Tasks.** What do you have to do? Write down each task, how long it will take, and who will do it. Be specific! This is the road map for your action project.

Task:

Time Needed:

Who Does What?:

**Step Five. People and materials.** Who will support your project? List people who can help you. What materials do you need to complete your project? Where will you get them?

Partners:

Material:

(See other side)

