

## Quick Tips on *Service Learning*

*Service Learning is a method of which students learn and develop through active participation in thoughtfully organized service experiences that meet actual community needs. It is integrated into the students' academic curriculum or provides structured time for students to think, talk, or write about the service activity. It enhances what is taught in school by extending student learning beyond the classroom and into the community and helps to foster the development of a sense of caring for others. Students are given the opportunity to use newly acquired skills and knowledge in real life situations.*

-National Community Service Act of 1990

### **PREPARATION:**

- Explore why it is important to perform service
- Receive specific skills needed to perform the service activity
- Service Learning is used to teach curricular objectives, so preparation activities could be tied to classroom lessons
- Learn about the community and how to identify needs
- Perform research about the issue the service relates to

### **ACTION** (performing one or more of the following activities)

- Direct Service-having face-to-face contact with service recipients (tutoring, serving meals at a homeless shelter, working with the elderly in a nursing home)
- Indirect Service-perform a service without face-to-face contact with a recipient, usually resources are channeled to help alleviate a problem (food & clothing drive, fund-raisers, environmental projects)
- Advocacy-educate others about a particular issue to eliminate the cause of a particular problem (writing letters to legislators or editors, preparing & displaying posters, plays, or other educational material)

### **REFLECTION:**

- Think about the service performed and how it impacted the community

- Consider what worked well and what could be changed or modified to make the project better
- This evaluation should occur throughout the service project, not just at the end
- Examples of ways to reflect are to use a journal, have a classroom discussion, prepare a skit or piece of artwork about the experience, videotape the project and review/discuss it afterwards

**\* Adopted from the Maryland Student Service Alliance 1998**

*Service learning appears to be an approach to experiential learning, an expression of values--service to others, which determines the purpose, nature and process of social and educational exchanges between learners (students) and the people they serve, and between experiential education programs and the community organizations with which they work.*

-Timothy Stanton

Remember: Service Learning is not the same as Volunteerism.



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