

# disaster relief & preparedness through service-learning



## what is service-learning?

Service-learning is a teaching and learning strategy integrating meaningful service with academic study and reflective practice to enrich learning, build civic engagement, and strengthen communities. Engaging young people in activities they find especially relevant, service-learning supports student learning, achievement, and workforce readiness, as youth work to improve communities.

## what does service-learning look like?

Service-learning projects can involve direct action, indirect action, or advocacy:

**Direct Service:** students respond to a community need by interacting with and impacting the service recipient or site (for example, students prepare food for people in need during an emergency).

**Indirect Service:** youth build infrastructure or capacity to respond to the community need (for example, youth create emergency preparedness kits).

**Research and Advocacy:** youth find, gather and report on information to raise awareness of a problem and/or advocate for change in the condition underlying the community need (for example, youth analyze a community's emergency preparedness plan and offer suggestions for how to improve the plan).

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## five stages in the service-learning process

### Investigation

Identify a local, national, or global need you would like to address.

### Preparation and Planning

Develop a strategy for change and a common vision for success.

### Action

Implement the service activity to make a difference.

### Reflection

Think about how your service and learning relate to you, your community and your future.

### Demonstration/Celebration

Share what you have done and what you have learned.

### Visit Our Websites

[www.YSA.org](http://www.YSA.org)

[www.GYSD.org](http://www.GYSD.org)

[www.GetUrGoodOn.org](http://www.GetUrGoodOn.org)

[www.GoToServiceLearning.org](http://www.GoToServiceLearning.org)

[www.Servenet.org](http://www.Servenet.org)

Learn more about youth development and the youth service movement by subscribing to the **National Service Briefing & YSA Quarterly** at [www.YSA.org](http://www.YSA.org).



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## disaster relief & preparedness through service-learning

# investigation

### Assess the community need:

- Use various sources of media to gather information about natural and manmade disasters (causes, impacts and responses to these disasters).
- Design and administer a survey of your peers or community members to determine levels of interest, knowledge and need.
- Observe and assess your home's, school's, organization's or community's level of disaster preparedness.
- Interview staff at community organizations that focus on disaster preparedness to learn more about the identified community's needs.

### Identify possible partners:

- Visit community organizations or agencies to determine how you can work together on the project. What needs can you help them address? What service can they add to your project?
- Organizations to consider: local fire and police departments, emergency services offices and hospitals, American Red Cross, America's Second Harvest.

### Establish baseline data:

- Collect evidence of baseline data via photographs, pre-surveys or measurements.
- Evidence to consider: quality of emergency plans, quantity and quality of emergency preparedness kits, public knowledge of emergency preparedness plans, number of community members trained to respond to disasters, number of blood drives and/or blood donors.



# preparation and planning

### Identify service & learning goals:

- Decide what impact you want to make on the community need through your service-learning project.
- Create short and long term learning and service goals that span the semester.
- Investigate your learning goals and how they connect to your service activity.
- Develop a method to measure the impact of your service-learning project. How will you know if your project is successful?

### Create your action plan:

- Develop a timeline for your project.
- Create a progress monitoring system to evaluate your efforts towards accomplishing your goals.
- Determine roles and responsibilities for individuals and partner organizations.
- Plan your outreach to a diverse group of participants.

# action

### Document your activity:

- Take photographs of your actions and record quotes or testimonies throughout the project.
- Track progress and record what you are doing to develop the story for your project.
- Invite the media and public officials to your activity.
- Media to consider: weather channels and stations.
- Officials to consider; local fire and police departments and emergency services offices, Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

## reflection

### Reflect before, during and after your service:

- Have frequent check-in meetings with your partner organizations.
- Keep a public blog or submit articles to your school newspaper.
- Talk with the recipients of your service to understand the impact of your work.
- Write an essay, journal entry or play explaining how you and your community are now more prepared to respond to disasters.

## demonstration and celebration

### Share what you have done and what you have learned:

- Host a Disaster Preparedness Fair for your community members.
- Write a report with your partner organizations about your outcomes.
- Present your learning and community impact to elected and public officials. Write letters to elected and public officials and invite them to your events.

### Make plans to continue your project:

- Contact additional community organizations, share with them the results of your project and discuss ways that they can get involved.



## help haiti lesson plan\*

### The Purpose and Essential Questions:

How can we best help Haiti? How can we get every aspect of our town involved in the process? How can we teach others about Haiti?

### Academic Subjects and Skills introduced or developed:

English Language Arts and Reading: reading, writing, listening, speaking as well as persuasive writing and speaking

### Investigation:

Students used a wide variety of websites ([www.yele.org](http://www.yele.org); [www.studentsagainsthunger.org](http://www.studentsagainsthunger.org), [www.oxfam.org](http://www.oxfam.org)) to build understanding of the disaster. Students reflected on research through discussion, mainly pair discussions.

### Preparation and Planning:

Students sent a representative from each classroom to talk to their classmates about their plan of action. With the guidance from their teacher, they solicited help from key people in the district as well as a parent who served in Haiti as a member of the US Marine Corps. Students wrote journal entries throughout this process and wrote letters and cards to those serving on the ground in Haiti.

### Action:

At basketball games, bake sales, churches, and other community function, the students raised the community's awareness and raised money for the relief effort in Haiti. One student talked to the local radio station to set up a PSA about the fundraising drive. Journaling was the most frequent form of reflection, although one group of students created a video and another created a comic book about the experience.

### Reflection:

At the conclusion of the project, students came together as an entire class and shared what they had accomplished. A video presentation was played, showing them at work throughout the week.

### Demonstration/Celebration:

Students presented their service-learning experience to the local school board.

# disaster relief and preparedness resource organizations

name	what they can provide	web site
<b>American Red Cross</b>	disaster relief (food, shelter, financial assistance), preparedness, mitigation projects locally	www.redcross.org
<b>America's Second Harvest</b>	food banks and food rescue	www.secondharvest.org
<b>Corporation for National and Community Service</b>	national service volunteers	www.nationalservice.gov
<b>Department of Homeland Security</b>	preparedness	www.dhs.gov
<b>Federal Emergency Management Agency</b>	preparedness	www.fema.gov www.ready.gov
<b>Habitat for Humanity</b>	building homes for affected areas	www.habitat.org
<b>Office of Emergency Services (local)</b>	mitigation projects	varies based on your city
<b>Salvation Army</b>	disaster relief (food, shelter, financial assistance)	www.salvationarmyusa.org
<b>United Way</b>	grants to local groups and organizations	www.unitedway.org



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www.YSA.org  
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**YOUTH SERVICE AMERICA (YSA)** improves communities by increasing the number and the diversity of young people, ages 5-25, serving in substantive roles. Founded in 1986, YSA supports a global culture of engaged youth committed to a lifetime of service, learning, leadership, and achievement. The impact of YSA's work through service and service-learning is measured in student achievement, workplace readiness, and healthy communities. We do this in four primary ways:

**Our goals are to:**

- **Engage** children and youth as volunteers, as academic achievers, and as community leaders.
- **Educate** young people, teachers, community organizations, media, and public officials in the power of youth as problem solvers.

**We do this through:**

- **Public Mobilization Campaigns** such as Global Youth Service Day, Semester of Service, and advocacy to media and public officials;
- **Funding and Recognition** through grants and awards geared toward youth, educators, service-learning coordinators, and program partners.
- **Resources and Trainings** that include the GYSD Planning Tool Kit, the Semester of Service Strategy Guide, the National Service Briefing, the Youth Service Institute, webinars, and individual support.