Service...
Together we can make a difference!

The Washington Times
The United States depends on volunteer service. According to a document prepared for a meeting of the National Commission on Philanthropy and Civic Renewal, Americans gave 20.3 billion hours of service in 1995. If we had to pay people to perform these services, it could cost over $201.5 billion dollars per year.

There is a far more important reason our communities need service volunteers than saving money. When we serve each other, we learn about each other and care about each other. In a real way, service is the glue that keeps our communities together. Many people believe that the best way to save our communities — and especially our young people — is through service. Service helps the people who receive. But the ways service helps the giver may be even more important. Try it and see for yourself.

Dear Teacher:

The Washington Times is a great tool to motivate your students. Language arts, math, social studies and science are just a few of the subjects that can be taught with the newspaper. To make your Newspaper in Education experience a fun one, please consider the following suggestions:

- Before you introduce the newspaper and this section, read it through. Make note of activities that need planning. Make note of which activities can be done quickly and which will take more time.
- Give students plenty of room to work. If desks are not big enough to allow students to use the newspaper, use tables or let students work on the floor.
- When necessary, separate sections of the newspaper and give students only the parts they are going to use.
- Consider stapling the folded edge of the newspaper to help students keep the pages in order — like a book.
- Have scissors, glue and other items available for activities.
- Have fun!

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References & Credits:
- 50 Simple Things Kids Can Do to Save the Earth. The Earthworks Group.
- Service Learning Presentation. Eileen M. Nicholas, Barbara Norris Teigeler.
Sometimes stories are used to illustrate an idea. Read this story and see if you get the idea.

This is a story about four people named Everybody, Somebody, Anybody, and Nobody.

There was an important job to be done and Everybody was asked to do it. Everybody was sure that Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done this job, but Nobody did it.

Somebody got angry about that because it was Everybody's job. Everybody thought that Anybody could have done it, but Nobody realized that Everybody wouldn't do the job.

In the end Everybody blamed Somebody, when Nobody did what Anybody could have done.

It's a confusing story, but life can be pretty confusing, too. The answer is everybody—kids, teens, adults, seniors—everybody.

Think about how great the world would be if everybody was willing to help. Think about how the world would be if nobody helped—if everybody thought somebody else should help.

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**Activities:**

Service is helping. When you give service, you help someone.

Volunteering is doing something of your own free will. Nobody can make you volunteer. It's your own choice. Volunteers are not paid (at least not with money or things). Sometimes people volunteer to do a service they don't really want to do because it needs to be done. But most people volunteer to serve because they want to serve.

- Find a story about someone who is giving a service as a volunteer.
- Find a story about someone who is being paid to serve.
- Find a story about someone who is doing a service because they have to.
- What was the last thing you did for someone else? Did you volunteer?
- Do you know anyone who volunteers to do service? What do they do?
- Invite a “good news” maker to visit your class. Ask them to talk about what they are doing for others and why.
- Find and collect newspaper photos of good deeds.
- Turn your collection into a collage or poster.

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**Good news**

“I hate bad news—it’s so depressing.”

Newspaper workers hear this a lot. Really, most of what is printed in newspapers is good news or neutral news (news that’s not good or bad). Of course, there is some bad news in newspapers. It seems there is more bad news than there really is because it upsets us. But newspapers don’t print bad news to make you feel bad. Newspapers print bad news to give you the chance to make things better. You can make good news.

Have you ever read about something bad—like a fire? You felt sad for the people whose house was burned. But then a few days later you read about the same family. In a picture, they are smiling. Why? Because good people came to help them out. The Red Cross found them a place to stay until their home could be fixed. People gave them money and clothes to replace some of the things they lost. Other people gave their time to help clean and repair the house. Some of the helpers were friends, but others were strangers. They made things better. They made good news. You have the power to make good news, too.
Activities:

- People use their talents and skills to help others in many ways. Look at the ads in the newspaper. Find a product that was invented to help people. What talents and skills did the inventor need to come up with this product?

- Cut a picture of your favorite comic strip character from the newspaper. Paste it on a sheet of paper. List any talents and skills your character has—no matter how wacky. What issue would be interesting to your character? List ways your character could use his/her or its talents to work on the issue.

- Sometimes we want to help, but we are afraid. That can be okay. You should be afraid in a dangerous situation. Think of some situations where you might want to help, but it could be dangerous. Are there ways you could help in these situations without putting yourself in danger?

- Sometimes we are afraid to help even when it is not dangerous. We are afraid we will hurt someone’s feelings if we try to help them. Or they might hurt ours. How can we overcome these fears?

- “Please” and “thank you” are very important words. Learn how to say please and thank you in as many languages as you can. Make a list of ways you can say thank you without speaking.

- Think about the last time you did something for someone else. How did you feel? Did you get any of the benefits listed on this page? Did you get any other benefits? Did you learn anything new from the experience?

What’s in it for me

Service is good for your head and heart
- Builds self-respect, self esteem and confidence
- Happy, “up” feeling
- Calm, peaceful feeling
- Hopefulness

Service helps you get ahead in life
- Become a good leader
- Build various talents
- Explore career paths
- Improve academic and citizenship skills
- Become more appealing to colleges and employers
- Expand your horizons

A great deal Most people who volunteer say that they get far more than they give. Here are a few of the good things that volunteers get from giving service:

Service makes your body feel better
- More energy
- Better weight control
- Fewer colds and other illnesses

Service gives you a chance to make friends
- Meet people with the same or different interests
- Understand others
- Decreases discrimination
- Increases fair play and equality for all

The satisfaction of making a difference in someone else’s life.
Little things

Little things make a big difference. Every day you have many chances to make a big difference by doing little things. If you see someone who looks sad, you smile at them. If someone has their hands full, you open the door for them. These things don’t seem like a big deal to you, but they are to the person you help.

You do these little things for the people you see everyday: Your family, your friends, your neighbors and the people in your school class. They do things for you.

Sometimes you do little things to make a stranger’s day better.

Little things make a big difference by being “catchy.” If you do a small act of kindness for someone, they are more likely to do an act of kindness—it’s contagious like a cold, but it makes people feel good instead.

Activities:

- Keep a service diary. Write down the little things you do for others. Write down the little things people do for you.
- When you notice someone doing something nice for someone else, let them know that you noticed and tell them thanks.
- Make a list of little things that make a big difference to you. Set a goal to do a least one little thing every day.
- Little things can make a big difference to people with special challenges. Find out about little things you can do to make things better for people with handicaps. For example, when you talk to someone in a wheelchair, do you always stand? Do you get to a level where it is easier for you to look each other in the eye?
- Little things spread, like ripples in a pond. If you do little things for two people today, and each of those people do little things for two people tomorrow, and the good keeps growing, how many little things will have made a difference in 10 days? In 30 days?
- Sometimes family members have a hard time getting along with each other. Serving each other can help us love each other. Try this. Make a small heart-shaped bean bag. When you see something that you can do for your family, quietly do it and leave the heart where you made a difference. The next person to find the heart has to figure out what was done, find something they can do to make a difference and leave the heart. Keep spreading the love.
- The next time you are in a business and an employee does a little service that makes a difference to you, write a letter to the business to say thanks.
- If you have a job, try to remember the little things that will make your customers want to come back.

The ABC’s of Service

For each letter of the alphabet, think of at least one little thing you can do to make a difference. Use your imagination. (You may have to be really creative for some letters!)

| A | Ask if I can help. |
| B | Bake and share treats. |
| C | |
| D | |
| E | |
| F | |
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The letters of the alphabet are small by themselves, but they can be put together and used in great ways—just like little acts of kindness.

Bonus Activity: Turn this chart into an alphabet picture book to share with younger or older students.
**Activities:**

- Some problems affect many people. Other problems only affect a few. Look in the newspaper and find a story about a problem that only affects a few people and a story about a problem affecting many.

- The “A” section of the Washington Times has a lot of world news. Can you find an important issue people are working on in another part of the world? Make a list of ways people (including you) who could help with this faraway problem.

- What do you think is a big problem in your community? __________________________ __________________________ __________________________ __________________________

- Why do you think this is an important problem? __________________________ __________________________ __________________________ __________________________

- Draw a picture of a problem you can see in your community.

- **Extra Challenge:** Draw an editorial cartoon about the issue.

**Bigger things**

Sometimes you want to do something bigger. That’s great. But where do you start?

Start by finding an issue or problem on which to focus. Usually service is given in one of the following areas:

- **religion:** churches
- **education:** schools, libraries, research, adult education, tutoring
- **youth:** Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, 4-H, Little League, etc.
- **health:** mental health, disabled, drug abuse, hospitals, nursing homes, clinics, hot-lines
- **work-related:** career training and jobs
- **environment:** clean-up and preservation
- **recreation:** clubs, athletics, hobbies
- **human services:** day care, crime prevention, homelessness, food, housing/shelter, safety, emergency preparedness and help
- **public/society benefit:** civil rights, (women and minorities), community improvement, science, technology, consumer groups
- **arts and culture:** museums, concerts, plays, etc.
- **political:** political parties and community groups

The newspaper is filled with stories about issues and problems. It is also filled with ideas and opportunities to help. Take some time to read the newspaper and see what is happening anywhere.

**Just one thing**

There are many issues and problems in the world that need to be improved. Don’t be discouraged. Just pick one thing. If you help make even one thing a little better, you have made a difference.

Is there an issue that interests you? Choose something you find interesting and that you would like to tackle.

Decide where you want to make a difference. You can help in your own home, neighborhood, school, city, state or the world. You can choose where you will serve—narrowing it down to one community will make it easier.

Get a group of your friends together to plan a “Super Project”.
Problem solving

After you choose a problem to work on, you need to do more research. Find out what really is the problem. What causes it? Who is affected by it?

Talk to people who have to deal with the problem—those with the problem, government workers who are paid to work with the problem and volunteers who try to help. They will be able to tell you much more. Find out about laws and policies that affect the problem and people.

One way to make sure you have done good research is to use the SWs and H. The five Ws and H are questions that reporters ask: Who, What, Where, When, Why and How. When you know the answers to these questions, you know a lot.

There are a lot of W and H questions you can ask. Here are a few to help you get started:

**Issue or problem:**

What is the problem? ____________

Why does this happen? ____________

Where is this a problem? ____________

Who is affected by the problem? ____________

When is this a problem? ____________

How have people tried to help? ____________

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**Ideas! Ideas! Ideas!**

Most problems don't have just one answer. There may be a lot of ways you can help. Brainstorming is a great way to start looking.

When you brainstorm, you come up with as many ideas as you can think of—old, new, practical, wild—don't stop to think about whether they are good ideas or not. If you brainstorm with a group of people you'll have even more ideas.

Write down all of the ideas as they are said, or you might forget about some.

Some people have good ideas but they are too shy to say their ideas out loud. Another way to brainstorm is to give everyone a few pieces of paper. Ask them to write their ideas down, but don't ask people to write their names on their ideas. Collect all of the ideas in a box. Mix them up and then read the ideas out loud. Assign someone else to write the ideas on the chalkboard or a big chart. If anyone has another idea, they can add it to the list.

After you have thought of all the ideas you can, talk about the pros (good things) and cons (problems) for each idea. Concentrate on the ideas you feel good about. It is okay to change an idea to make it better.

All of the ideas may not be possible because of safety, money or other concerns. Group members need to be willing to compromise and work with an adult to choose a workable idea.

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**Involve the community**

Talk about your ideas with the people you will be helping. This is very important. You want to make sure that your idea will work and your service will really make a difference.

If your idea is to serve dinner at a homeless shelter, talk to the people who run the shelter. They may have another group helping on the day you planned to help. They may have special rules and equipment you need to know about. If you are planting trees around the school, talk to the principal first. You may be planning to plant a tree where there is a water line.

Chances are your ideas are great and the community will be happy about your help. Just make sure you check first.
Big plans

You’ve done your research and have an idea. Now you need to make a plan. Here are some things you need to plan. (You might do these in a different order, depending on your project.)

Put your goals in writing
Write down what you want to do.

Get approval
You will need approval from the people you are helping. If you are working as a group, get approval from your group leader (principal, teacher, scout leader, etc.). Make a presentation to them. Share your research and your idea. Let the leader know how the project will help the community and help the people giving service.

Find volunteers
You are probably going to need help. You might need a lot of people or just a few. You may need help from young people or adults. Ask people to help you. Research shows that most people will help if they are asked. Here are a few ways you can ask people to volunteer:
- Ask your friends in person or over the phone.
- Make posters and flyers asking for volunteers. Put the posters and flyers where the people you need will see them—school, church, places where kids hang out.
- Make announcements in newsletters.

Make a “to do” list
Make a list of the things you need to do to accomplish your goal. Be sure to include training volunteers to make sure they understand what they are to do and how to do it.

Make a list of the things you will need
Will you need transportation? Will you need special tools? Do you need a place to work? If you are doing a food or clothing drive, make a list of items people can donate.

Make assignments
Make sure everyone has something to do and knows when they have to have it done. Write it down where everyone can see. Include everyone. Usually if someone does not enjoy giving service, it’s because they did not have enough to do and did not feel needed.

Activities:

- You and your group may need to learn many things to reach your service goal. Involve the community by inviting “experts” to help with the training. If you are going to plant flowers, invite a member of the garden club or someone who works at a nursery. If you are going to visit a rest home, invite a nurse to teach about senior needs. Ask someone who is good at making friends to talk about talking to people.

- Your parents and grandparents are good resources. In fact, the best projects involve people of all ages.

- The weather can ruin plans for an outdoor project. Use the weather information in the newspaper to help plan your activities. Let people know what they are supposed to do and where to go if the weather is bad.

- Have an alternative plan or project for bad weather.

Selling lemonade is a great way to raise money for your community service projects.
Here are some reflections about service from students.

- I thought the field trip (to the care center) was cool. I felt like a nice person when we read to them. I liked that feeling.
- Going to the mall to pack food was fun. But now I want to go again. Not because it takes time out of school, but because I'm helping people who need the food. I really want to ask you if we can go again.
- I think it was really good for me. I learned that it (bell-ringing for the Salvation Army) is a really hard thing to do — stand out there with the bell and a big smile, and everybody was trying to ignore you. Now when I see the people in the front door of the market I try to give them as much as I can.
- Going to the care center was fun. I noticed that just saying “Hi” to somebody made them smile. I felt great going in and meeting smile after smile. I think it was awesome. I would love to do it again. When I walked in, I was shy. But once I started to talk, it all flowed out.
- I felt like I did something real nice and I feel good about myself and the rest of the class.
- Helping made me feel light. It took off all the pressures in life.

Stop at different times in your project and think about the challenges and impact of what you are doing. It’s an important part of service.

What—What did I do? What did I feel? What worked and what didn’t?
So what—Why did I do that?
Now what—What did I learn? What do I do now?

Reflect

Celebrating is another important part of service. Take the time to feel good about your service. Even if things didn’t go the way you planned, celebrate. You tried your best and you are a better person.

If you worked with a group, plan a celebration together:
Some service celebrations are big and some are small—it doesn’t matter:

Have a party, eat pizza together and laugh.
Read a thank you note from people you helped.
Watch a video of your project.

Activities:

Art and writing are great ways to reflect and celebrate. Thinking about your service experience, design a Public Service Ad to tell people about service and volunteering.

Assign a group member to video or take photos of each step of the project. Enjoy the video or photo album later.

It’s never too late to reflect on the last time you did something for someone else — a big or little service. Write a journal or diary about what you thought and how you felt about it. How do you feel about it now?

Another way to reflect on your service is to talk about it with others. Make a presentation about your service to people who might be interested — your class, the principal, people who donated to your cause.
Activities:

- Your service group is a team. Teams must work together and be organized. In the newspaper, find a photo or story about a team that is working together. Are they reaching their goals?

- When you volunteer to help, be professional. Even though you are not getting paid, people are counting on you. If you promise to be there at a certain time, be there.

- Create a “Service Hall of Fame.” Make a list of people who have done a lot to help others. Draw pictures of the people on your list. Write a sentence or two about what they have done. Hang the pictures and descriptions in a hall so that people can learn about them as they walk through. Include famous people from all over the world. Remember to include local people, too.

- People can help with local issues, national issues or world issues. Find a news story about someone who serves locally. Find news articles about people working on national or world problems.

### Community Service

A great way to volunteer is to work with a group of volunteers. You can meet new people and work in great programs that are already set up. Volunteering is a great way to explore careers. Many volunteer jobs turn into paid jobs.

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**Get your act together**

Service projects work better if they are organized. Here is a worksheet to help you organize your next service project.

<table>
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<th>Issue/Problem:</th>
<th>Goals:</th>
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<td>Volunteering Names:</td>
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<th>Research</th>
<th>What is needed?</th>
<th>Whose job is it?</th>
<th>When will it be done?</th>
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<td>(How will we educate volunteers and sponsors about the issue?)</td>
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<td>(What things will we need to complete our project?)</td>
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<th>Celebration</th>
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<td>(What will we do?)</td>
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Approval of Community Leader __________________________
Approval of Volunteer Group Leader ______________________

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Direct Service

Direct service means that you are working with the people you are helping. You are right there with them. Direct service includes activities like tutoring, visiting the elderly, serving food to the homeless and baby-sitting.

Indirect Service

When you give indirect service, you do work that will help people, but you don’t work with the people. Examples of indirect service include fund-raisers, cleanups, construction work and collections.

Advocacy

In advocacy, you don’t do the actual job yourself — you work to convince people to do something. Advocates write letters, speak and perform. As an advocate, you might try to get the government to change a law. You might make presentations to get people to wear bike helmets or use crosswalks.

For more information about Service-Learning contact:

Luke Frazier Executive Director
Maryland Student Service Alliance

410-767-0356

or visit the Service-Learning website:
http://Sailor.lib.md.us/mssa/

How does Service-Learning Work?

An issue that is important to the community is chosen. Teachers and students work together to learn more about the issue. Students use the issue to learn and practice the skills in social studies, math, science, art and other classes. For example, if your community is trying to build a new park, you could learn about research and communication skills by interviewing community members about what they would like to have in the park. In math class, you could make graphs of your research. You could learn about government by finding out who is in charge of city parks and presenting your research to the parks director or city council. In science class, you could study different kinds of grasses and trees and make recommendations about which trees and grasses should be planted in the park. You could use your art and critical thinking skills to make landscape plans for the park. You could work on career skills by raising funds for park equipment.

A good Service-Learning project:

- meets community needs
- has schools and communities working together
- is part of the students’ academic learning
- gives young people a chance to use new skills and knowledge in real-life situations
- makes what is taught in school better by taking it beyond the school
- has time for young people to think, talk and write about the service experience
- helps students grow in caring for others.

There are many kinds of service you can do with your school or by yourself. Different people like to serve in different ways.

Direct Service

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Learn to serve: serve to learn

Teachers, students and community members can use a chart like the one at the bottom of this page to make sure they plan activities that will help the community and teach students at the same time.

This smaller version chart shows how it can be filled out:

**Issue/Goal**
Working to build a new park

**Science**
Survey people to find out what the community would like to have in the park.

**Language Arts**
Write letters to the city parks and recreation department. Let them know about your park research.

**Math**
Turn the results of the park survey into a graph.

**Health/PE**
Learn about playground equipment. Help choose safe, yet fun, equipment.

Use this chart to plan a Service-Learning program. If you are not on the planning committee, fill this chart out backwards. Instead of thinking of service activities that will help you learn in each class, think of how what you are learning in each class can help you serve and live a happy life.

**Activities:**

- Read the Washington Times. Make a list of issues in your community with your school might want to help.
- Think about the neighborhood around your school. Is there a problem in your school neighborhood that students could help with?
- If your class would like to be involved in Service-Learning, plan a presentation to give to the faculty and parents at your school.

**Service-Learning — Learning about everything**
(Integrating Curriculum)

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Math | Language Arts/English | Social Studies | Foreign Language
---   |----------------------|---------------|---------------------
Health/PE |                   |               | School to Careers
Science | Art/Music/Drama       | Family Science| Technology Ed
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Adapted from Maryland Student Service Alliance Fellows