



New Hampshire 4-H

Serving to Learn, Learning to Serve

Community Service Projects

All good community service projects start out the same way – by identifying a need. From there, one must decide what should be done and what part the group or individual can handle. At that point tasks can be assigned and carried out. Service learning takes place when a good service project is paired with opportunities for learning. This publication contains a list of suggested service projects and ideas for expanding the learning related to each. For simplicity, projects have been divided into “Items to Collect” and “Service to Provide”. Suggestions are also included for potential service partners and resources related to service learning.

Service Projects	Learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Collect pet food to go to the local animal shelter or humane society. Other items may include pet beds, leashes, collars, treats or toys.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have a tour of the shelter as a field trip or bring in a representative to talk about being a responsible pet owner and the issues around homeless animals.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Collect bird seed and feeders for a local park or community center.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have a bird watcher or city planner come in and talk about the benefits of having birds in our city parks. Take a field trip to a park and observe the birds.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Collect toiletry items for a Domestic Violence Shelter. Other items may include clothing, toys, books, magazines, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have a counselor or other representative of the shelter come in to educate members on Domestic Violence and the needs of victims.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Collect toys or stuffed animals for needy children or local law enforcement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have a law enforcement officer share background and real life stories related to “Project Teddy Bear”. Bring in a representative from DCYF to talk about the needs of youth in your area.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Collect suitcases, duffle bags, or other luggage to donate to children in Foster Care or to the Department of Children, Youth and Families.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have a representative from DCYF or a Foster Parent talk about the reasons children are put into Foster Care and how the system works.

Service Project	Learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect coats or jackets for adults or youth in need. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss with members what it is like to be cold and not be able to afford a coat.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect blankets for babies, senior citizens, or children's home. Baby blankets can be donated to local hospitals, pregnancy centers or through WIC. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a nurse come in to discuss how babies develop and the importance of warmth. A representative from the children's home or senior's group would also be a good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect children's books for Head Start or a local library. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach members about the literacy rate in your county or community – a teacher could share the importance of early reading for younger children.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect magazines, books, and puzzle books for the senior center, military troops or shelters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring in a representative from the military to talk about the conditions in military camps and what the troops miss when they are stationed overseas.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect baby items to donate to new mothers through the hospital, WIC or local churches. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a WIC (Women, Infants and Children) representative talk about the qualifications for WIC and items that
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect clothing for homeless or Domestic Violence Shelters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a social worker talk about statistics in your area.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect coupons for food or baby items. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take a field trip to the local grocery store and have youth do a cost comparison of food staples and standard baby items to understand the financial strain put on families.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect gift cards for groceries, meals or other items to be given to a family in need. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See the ideas listed under collecting coupons.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect school supplies for area schools or local children's home. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review list of school supplies and discuss the importance of having appropriate supplies.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect tools and building supplies for Habitat for Humanity or a local park. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit a building site to see how homes are built, then have a representative from Habitat for Humanity talk about how families qualify for their homes.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect non-perishable food items for a food pantry, soup kitchen or a family in need. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have members research and discuss hunger and food supply around the world.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect first aid supplies for the local Red Cross or other group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate a first aid class for members and their families.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spend time at the local animal shelter cleaning pens, making repairs and/or exercising/grooming animals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a tour of the shelter as a field trip or bring in a representative to talk about being a responsible pet owner and the issues around homeless animals.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help make repairs at a camp or other community facility. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a representative share what types of events are held at the location and why they are important.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shovel walks, rake leaves or do yard work for the elderly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a social worker, doctor or nurse talk about the changes our bodies go through as we age and why elderly people often need help with everyday tasks.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paint trash cans, repair playground equipment, and/or pick up trash at a local park or school yard. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss safety concerns and the idea of having a nice place to play.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver meals to families or individuals that cannot get out – partner with Meals on Wheels or area churches. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the life changes that lead to people being unable to get out of their homes – work with youth on things to discuss when on a visit.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set luminaries or holiday lights or assist with other preparation and clean-up for a community wide event. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research the history or tradition behind the event – discuss the importance of community.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct road cleanup or Adopt a Highway to pick up litter. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss issues related to biodegradability and the costs associated with disposing of waste.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plant flowers, trees, etc. as a beautification project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn about the importance of plants and trees related to soil erosion, wind blocks, etc.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean up a local cemetery – chop weeds/mow, put out flowers or flags for special holidays. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss respect for those that are no longer with us.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organize an event for the community, such as a Fall Carnival or Spring Easter Egg Hunt. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research the history or tradition behind the event – discuss the importance of community.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide babysitting on Election Day or for some other community event. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss child development and work to select age appropriate activities to conduct with the children in your care.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take pets to a local senior center or nursing home for pet therapy time. Spend time with the seniors–go caroling, have craft time, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research how animals can affect people’s dispositions – discuss statistics related to seniors and depression.

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• Read children's books into a recorder and then donate the tape and book to Head Start, a child care center or local library.	• Teach members about the literacy rate in your county or community – a teacher could share the importance of early reading for younger children.
• Stuff envelopes or bags for a major community event.	• Discuss the importance of community and the purpose of the event.
• Volunteer at a thrift store sorting, pricing and stocking items.	• Research the cause the store supports, including how the funds from sales and donations are used.
• Put together first aid kits or disaster preparedness kits for the local Red Cross.	• Have a representative from the Red Cross share information and pictures related to disasters.
• Sponsor an event for military families or National Guard members.	• Discuss the strain put on families by military service and the sacrifices they make for us.
• Assist a service group with their fundraiser or drive.	• Research the cause you are supporting, including how the funds are used.

Organizations to Partner with:

Operation Military Kids
 Children's Homes
 Department of Children, Youth & Families
 Domestic Violence Shelters
 Homeless Shelters
 Local Churches
 Local Hospitals
 Local Nursing Homes
 Local Schools/Universities
 Children's Miracle Network

The Red Cross
 Senior Center
 Soup Kitchens/Food Pantries
 WIC
 Humane Society/Animal Shelter
 United Way
 Relay for Life/Cancer Society
 American Heart Association
 March of Dimes

Anywhere you find people in need!!

References & Resources:

New Mexico Cooperative Extension Service and County 4-H Programs
 The Ohio State University Learning Ideas
 Michigan 4-H – Get Involved in Service Learning
 Louisiana 4-H Service Learning