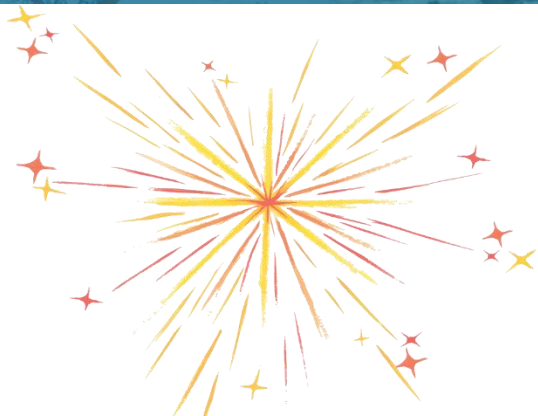




Camp Fire

Teens in Action

Facilitator Guide



Light the fire within

Teens in Action

Teens in Action (TA) challenges teens to improve their communities and to learn new skills and provide leadership in areas they never thought possible. The Teens in Action (TIA) curriculum guides youth through designing and completing a service project to hone their leadership talents and make improvements in their community. TIA is built on Camp Fire's long tradition of recognizing youth as part of the solution to – not the problem with – today's social challenges.



The Purpose of TIA

The primary purpose of TIA is to support youth in making a positive impact on their schools and communities through service. This curriculum looks to build strong ties between teens and their families, schools, and communities and to put a spotlight on issues of concern to youth. TIA also gives youth a chance to learn firsthand about leadership and service projects—which is why they will be in charge of the program, not you as the facilitator.

Their job is to make it happen. Your job is to help.

From the beginning, it's important to encourage youth to lead the group. The Teen Leader Guide provides participants the tools they need to plan, execute and reflect on the service-learning project of their choosing. This may require some coaching on your part, especially in the very beginning, but they need to learn by doing.

Try to avoid taking over and designing a plan that steers the group in a certain direction. This makes it harder to trust the group's process and doesn't help them develop their own skills and interests.

Facilitators serve as mentors as the teens experience and learn about leadership, communication, planning, and the political process. Youth develop confidence and leadership skills as they plan and implement community service projects and challenge themselves to master new skills and situations. In some states, teens may also earn credit toward graduation requirements through service-learning hours.

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About This Guide

The TIA curriculum features two components – a **Facilitator Guide** and a **Teen Leader Guide**. Because the guides mirror each other, facilitators and participants work through the service-learning process together, with teens leading and facilitators supporting.

Youth work through each step at their own pace, making sure to complete essential tasks before moving on. Steps can last anywhere from one to four sessions depending on the groups' progress and program time restrictions. Optimally, youth decide when they are ready for the next step.

TIA is formatted around the five steps to completing a service-learning project:

- **Brainstorming**
- **Building Consensus**
- **Planning**
- **Step 4: Conducting a Service Project**
- **Reflection, Evaluation and Celebration!**

In the Facilitator Guide, each step consists of four main components:

- **Jump Starts** kick off the session in a fun and exciting way. There are exercises meant for introducing teens to each other, energizing youth, encouraging group bonding and relaxation.
- **Facilitator-Led Activities** are required and provide context to the service-learning process before youth begin each step.
- **Teen-led Activities** are chosen by participants and use a variety of instructional methods to complete a specific step of the process.
- **Reflection Questions** at the end of each step allow youth to interpret experiences and gain new understanding.

Jump Starts, Facilitator- and Teen-Led Activities and Reflection Questions are required during each session. While Jump Starts and other activities can be modified for time, the Reflection is a vital component of the service-learning process and should be completed in full.

Why Service-Learning?

Through the service project planning process, teens are invited to:

- Become more aware of issues or needs in their schools and communities and the impact on the future.
- Acknowledge issues or needs in their own lives that contribute to the future of their schools and communities.
- Commit to taking action to address the things that prevent their schools and communities from meeting their needs.
- Challenge themselves and one another to work with a growth mindset, not a fixed mindset.

It is through this process that the teens:

- Develop confidence and leadership skills.
- Become prepared to challenge themselves to master new skills and situations.
- Achieve individual and group goals.
- Transform their schools and communities in ways they never thought possible.

After completing TIA, youth not only will have completed a significant service project, they also will have played an active role in making their community a better place.

Getting Started

The task of facilitating a service-learning project with a group of teenagers may seem daunting at first. This facilitator guide seeks to un-complicate the process by providing tips and techniques for completing each step.

But before jumping into the process, there are things you can do to better prepare yourself for a successful service-learning project facilitation. Complete these tasks before beginning the activities:

- 1. Read through both *Teens in Action: Facilitator Guide* and *Teens in Action: Teen Leader Guide*** to get a feel for the service learning process steps, activities, resources and techniques. Although teens will be leading the sessions, they'll be looking to you as an expert on the curriculum. Be sure to familiarize yourself with both guides and anticipate questions they may have.
- 2. Evaluate your program goals and determine if curriculum supplements are needed.** The activities in TIA are designed to work on skills related to service learning – growth mindset, goal management, life skills, reflecting and more – but do not cover all areas of Thrive{o}logy}. Consider your program needs and incorporate any additional activities, lessons or games as you see fit.
- 3. Assess program space and resources.** Activities in TIA are designed to require little space and few materials – the most important being writing utensils, large poster paper to record notes, and blank paper for participants. Find out what resources from your council are available for youth in your program to use and gather them before the first session.
- 4. Print the *Welcome to Teens in Action* handout for all participants.** The handout is meant to be a brief introduction to the curriculum and provide an overview of the service learning process.
- 5. Look over the *Teen Leader Guide* with youth and answer any questions.** Before jumping into the activities, budget program time for reading through the curriculum guide with participants. Walk through the service learning process steps and read through the sections on roadmaps, jump starts and reflections. Answer any questions teens and garner excitement for the weeks ahead.

After completing these steps, you and the teens in your program will be ready to begin the service-learning process.

Service Learning 101

Service-learning blends meaningful service to the community with specific, outcome-based program components. It combines decision making, leadership, and skill building with service projects while building on academic skills. Teens play active roles in determining how the projects are accomplished. By teaching youth early about the roles they can play in their communities, service-learning encourages lifelong civic participation. It gives them a sense of competency—they see themselves as active contributors rather than passive recipients of adult support.

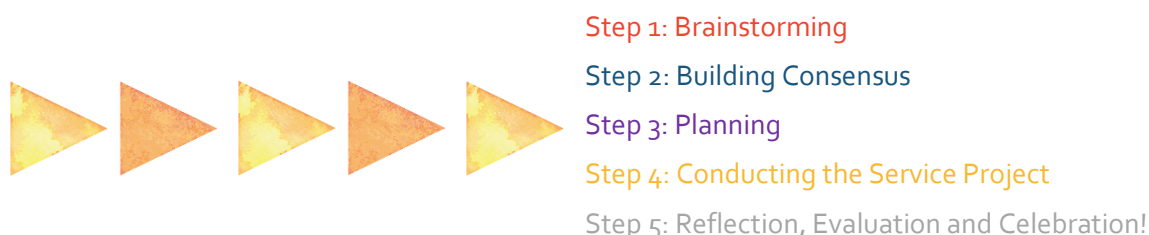
Critical to this type of learning is building in time for participants to reflect on their service experience. Reflection time helps youth make the connection between classroom learning and community learning while helping them understand the extent to which they can impact positive change.

TIA offers numerous opportunities for teens to build skills for their future:

- Serves as a vehicle for achieving community, group, and individual goals and objectives.
- Is based on a reciprocal relationship in which service reinforces and strengthens learning and vice versa.
- Enhances learning by joining theory with experience and thought with action.
- Exposes youth to societal inadequacies and injustices and encourages action.
- Fosters the development of empathy, personal values, beliefs, awareness, self-esteem, self-confidence, and social responsibility and helps foster a sense of caring for others.
- Enables students to give of themselves and to enter into caring relationships with others.
- Provides structured time for youth to reflect on their experiences—through a mix of writing, reading, speaking, listening, and creating—in small and large groups and individual work.
- Offers opportunities for leadership in their communities and prepares them for future careers.
- May help fulfill graduation requirements.

5-Step Service-Learning Process

TIA splits the service-learning process into 5 Steps:



Keep in mind that a service project can be a one-time event – such as a project for a day of service – or an ongoing initiative – such as serving as group leaders and delivering a literacy program at a local elementary school.

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Step 1. Brainstorming

The first step of the TIA service-learning process is for youth to set group norms, express their ideas or opinions, and think critically about their school and community.

If this is the first time teens are working together in a group, it is important to focus on ice breakers and introduction activities. Before jumping into the planning stages, youth should be familiar with each other and feel comfortable voicing their thoughts.

Activities in this step are meant for participants to share their opinions and brainstorm potential service-learning projects using a variety of instructional methods, including games, drawings, group discussions and more.

By the end of this step, youth should have thought of two or three issues or challenges in their community that they can possibly address.

Step 2. Building Consensus

Now that the group has fleshed out two or three community challenges, it's time to decide on one and investigate projects that will address this need. This section includes ways youth can go about building consensus and making group decisions. This can be a challenging task for some groups, as compromises need to be made.

The next step is for youth to assess the community's strengths and weaknesses to determine what type of project the community wants and needs. This can be done by surveying key informants, researching global perspectives and discussing problems they've seen in the community. These activities are meant to encourage youth to critically discuss the viability of their ideas, participate in respectful debate and decide as a group the direction in which the project should go.

By the end of this step, groups should have decided on the issue they are planning on addressing and have an idea of what the project will look like.

Step 3. Planning

Once they've chosen their project, they should create a road map for the project. The Action Planning Worksheet will walk teens through the process of creating a vision statement and a goal statement and identifying objectives; it also can be helpful if they're planning something long-term, such as ongoing service to the community or legislative involvement.

The action planning worksheet will also help your group identify elements needed in order for the project to be a success. Some questions they should consider while completing the action planning worksheet include:

- Will the project require a minimum number of volunteers?
- Is there a certain amount of money that will need to be raised for the project?
- Does the project require any special tools or training?

Have teens brainstorm these questions and others. It's important that they set realistic time lines, spell out the tasks that need to be completed, make assignments, and set deadlines. Covering all the bases in the planning stage will help the project run smoothly.

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This step will take multiple sessions to complete. Because the planning will be youth-led, the group also determines when they are ready to implement the service-learning project. Programs with very limited number of weeks to conduct the TIA curriculum will require more input from facilitators to make sure the group stays on schedule.

By the end of this step, youth should have a plan for their service project and be ready to implement it.

Step 4. Conducting the Service Project

At this point, youth should be ready to see their planning turn into action. As you continue to facilitate, keep in mind:

- **This is the teens' project.** The facilitator should not tell the group what to do but can ask questions and make suggestions (if needed). Let the teens lead the group.
- Have the phone numbers and email addresses of both a primary and secondary contact person for each participant at your project site. These are the people to contact in case of an emergency.
- Plan to save keepsakes from the project or take photos. These items will come in handy during your reflection time.
- Secure media coverage! Don't forget to send press releases, including the date and time of the project, to your local media outlets.

By the end of this step, youth should have completed their service project and recorded their initial thoughts on it.

Step 5. Reflection, Evaluation and Celebration

Part of service-learning is coming away from the project with a better understanding of what works and what doesn't. Evaluation is also a way for them to understand what was done well and what can be done better next time.

Evaluation through reflection is one of the most effective ways for them to see how well their project went. Reflection is the process of reviewing the service project and expressing what was learned. It links experience with knowledge.

Be creative! There are lots of ways to reflect on the project. Just remember that it's best to reflect right after the project so you can capture the feelings of the moment.

After reflecting on the experience, it's time for the youth to reward themselves for a job well done!

Recognition is a crucial element of any successful project. In addition to celebrating successes, find tangible ways to recognize the group's accomplishments, such as giving certificates and awards.

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What Teens Will Learn

Camp Fire believes that projects which focus on group work, exercising personal choice and working with caring adult mentors are critical to developing caring teens who can demonstrate confidence and leadership. Each step of the service learning project highlighted in this curriculum seeks to support youth development in these areas while allowing other skills to be practiced as they arise. While the activities conducted will vary from group to group, identifying the anticipated outcomes and corresponding indicators of success provides measurable uniformity.

Step 1: Brainstorming

In Step 1, teens will:

- Learn ways to communicate effectively.
- Practice voicing their opinions and listening to the opinions of others.
- Discover techniques for effective group work.
- Critically analyze their school and community.

Step 2: Building Consensus

In Step 2, teens will:

- Explore cultural diversity in self and community.
- Practice challenging stereotypes.
- Recognize the need for representation from diverse perspectives.
- Learn techniques to effectively and respectfully debate a topic.
- Participate in decision making.
- Practice resolving conflict in a healthy way.
- Exercise compromise to achieve a goal.

Step 3: Planning

In Step 3, teens will:

- Explore their creativity in different forms.
- Practice setting personal and group goals.
- Evaluate goals using GPS, the goal management model.
- Learn to prevent and manage conflict.

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Step 4: Conducting a Service Project

In Step 4, teens will:

- Actively participate in the service project.
- Document their experience.
- Lead the group through the project.
- Critically analyze accomplishments and challenges.

Reflection, Evaluation and Celebration!

In Step 5, teens will:

- Practice a growth mindset.
- Critically evaluate the service-learning process.
- Reflect on personal and group goals.

Facilitating vs. Leading

Many curricula ask the leader to do just that: lead. TIA requires a different kind of approach, with more facilitating and less hands-on decision making.

“To facilitate” means “to make easy.” Thinking of your role as a facilitator instead of a leader emphasizes that you aren’t just delivering information to the participants; instead, you are making learning easier for them. It suggests the idea of a team relationship, and the team works together to help the group learn and grow.

A facilitator:

- **Plans first.** When assuming the role of facilitator of a session, be prepared and well-organized by reviewing the session plans and having materials ready. Allow time to review the Youth Leader Guide with participants and act as a resource for any questions they may have.
- **Creates a comfortable learning space.** Comfort has to do with the physical space and the atmosphere you create in that space. People need an atmosphere in which they can have their voices heard.
- **Encourages participants to express their ideas.** Try not to talk too much; let participants do most of the talking. Avoid providing your own ideas, because some teens will latch on to those instead of coming up with ideas of their own.
- **Encourages participants to accept one another’s ideas, experiences, and feelings.**
- **Collaborates with the group** to set ground rules of personal respect to guide all discussions. After laying out basic Camp Fire or program space safety rules, work together with teens to decide upon a group contract all youth must follow.
- **Remembers** that the process for reaching an objective is as important, if not more important-as the objective itself.
- **Allows himself or herself to laugh** at mistakes and learn from them.
- **Does not pick a destination for the group;** that’s the job of the participants.

Youth Leader Guide

The Teens in Action curriculum features a companion Youth Leader Guide as a roadmap for participants. The Youth Leader Guide includes the same service-learning steps, activities, jump starts and techniques as this Facilitator Guide, with the language tailored to the participants. The goal of the Youth Leader Guide is for young people to feel empowered to steer the service-learning project in the direction of their choosing.

Youth have probably seen teachers and adult leaders teach out of a curriculum guide but may not have had the opportunity to hold one themselves. As a facilitator you should encourage participants to use the Youth Leader Guide to its full potential by reading through each step, creating a plan and working together to decide which activities to conduct and when to move onto the next step in the process.

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Facilitating Service Learning with Middle School Youth

The TIA service-learning process seeks to grow youth leadership skills by allowing participants to explore ideas and make decisions. While the learning objectives of the process remain unchanged, some modifications are required when facilitating the curriculum with middle school-aged youth. TIA facilitators may need to step in more often and play a larger role in directing the project while still maintaining authentic youth voice and choice. This can be a difficult balancing act. A facilitator can:

- Conduct research before the sessions to gain a better understanding of community needs to act as a resource for participants.
- Provide several examples of service learning projects youth can tackle.
- Lay out sample session schedules for young people to be inspired by.
- Walk through the Youth Leader Guide with the group or put it aside if it becomes overwhelming.
- Step in when decisions aren't being made and facilitate a consensus-building activity.
- Offer options for the group to choose from when progress is at a stand-still.

Facilitating TIA with youth in middle school can require more planning and research for facilitators before each session but being prepared will contribute to the group's success.

Creating the Space for Transformation

As a TIA facilitator, you will sometimes deal with difficult social issues—such as classism, racism, sexism, and heterosexism—as the group works to figure out where they're going and how to get there. The initial ground rules should explicitly state that diversity is valued and that no member should be judged based on any of the above criteria.

Your job is to trust the group process and encourage genuine shifts of mind and heart that allow the group members to determine their own goals and strategies. Resist the urge to lead the group in one direction, and avoid encouraging members to change their views or perspectives.

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TIA and Thrive{ology}

TIA and Thrive were practically made to go together. The process of creating service projects helps teens uncover their own Sparks and find ways to pursue them. It allows youth to find Spark Champions for themselves while being a champion to others.

Sparks

Sparks are inner passions, skills, and strengths that motivate.

Not every teen's Spark will be directly addressed through the service project, but there are ways to incorporate Spark exploration into the curriculum. During the brainstorming phase, consider facilitating a Spark activity to encourage youth to consider the link between their passions and their community's needs. For example, if several participants are interested in photography, have youth think of ways that art could benefit the community (taking pictures of dogs up for adoption to help advertising at the local shelter, design and run a photobooth for a local children's hospital, etc.).

Once youth are in the planning stages of their project, the group may need to assign certain roles to complete a task – such as creating posters, writing letters, or taking photos. Encourage young people to sign up for roles in areas that interest them or relate to their Spark. It can also be an opportunity to learn a new skill and bring to light an undiscovered Spark.

Understanding Mindset

How successful the group will be rooted in each participant's mindset. The service-learning process for teens is meant to challenge their ability to recover from setbacks, take calculated risks, and determine their own measures of success. There are two types of mindsets, with identifying behaviors to look out for.

Fixed Mindset focuses on ability. Each session will challenge youth to recognize when they:

- Avoid challenges because they don't want to look dumb.
- See failure as proof that they're not good enough.
- See success as proof that they're smart or talented.
- Allow the abilities, talents, and intelligence they were born with to limit them.

Individuals with a fixed mindset are not as likely to find solutions to obstacles and may even have difficulty identifying their own Sparks. Keeping an eye out for fixed-mindset behaviors and dialogue is critical, because once identified, a fixed mindset can be changed. Examples of fixed mindset phrases include:

- "I'm not good at that."
- "That's not who I am."
- "I'm not naturally talented at that."

Teens can learn to evaluate these fixed trains of thought and reframe them in growth mindset approaches instead.

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Growth Mindset focuses on learning. Each session will challenge youth to recognize when they:

- Seek challenges to learn/practice skills and improve.
- See failure as a chance to learn from mistakes.
- See success as proof of hard work.
- Do not allow the abilities, talents, and intelligence they were born with to limit them.

Growth mindset will propel the group to succeed as well as help participants recover from setbacks and problems more effectively. You likely will have a mix of mindsets in your group. Nobody is doomed to stay in a fixed mindset; some additional mentoring may be needed for those with fixed mindsets. Working on growth mindset will help teens develop resiliency, a trait that will benefit them all their lives as they face setbacks and disappointments. Learning to overcome these obstacles gives them much greater opportunity for success in the future.

Working on Mindset With Teens

- Model your own growth mindset through language and action (trying new strategies, putting in effort, asking for help). Show that you tackle challenges and learn from mistakes.
- Help youth understand that the brain grows with challenge. That doesn't mean challenge isn't scary sometimes, but it's worth overcoming the fear.
- Praise participants when you see them using growth mindset, such as tackling a challenge, showing effort, trying different strategies, or looking for help.
- Notice when someone seems to be in a fixed mindset. Gently encourage them to rethink the situation as someone with a growth mindset would.
- Without giving concrete answers, help teens think through strategies and brainstorm solutions or steps.
- Encourage them to ask for help when needed.

GPS

Goals are a critical part of TIA, as youth set group and personal goals during Step 3. They're also an important part of Thrive. GPS is a goal management model that includes:

- **Goal Selection:** The group determines where they want to go or what they want to do.
- **Pursuit of Strategies:** The group determines the best way to get where they want to go.
- **Shifting Gears:** The group determines what they will do when the going gets tough.

As a part of the service project planning process, teens will use GPS to:

- Identify group and personal goals.
- Brainstorm potential strategies to accomplish their goals.
- Evaluate benefits and barriers associated with potential strategies.
- Develop new strategies to address barriers and achieve their goal(s).

Part of the process is reflection, which should take place after each activity and session. More comprehensive discussion of reflection is covered in the next section.

Diversity and Inclusion

Camp Fire's Statement of Inclusion:

Camp Fire works to realize the dignity and worth of each individual and to eliminate human barriers based on all assumptions that prejudge individuals. Designed and implemented to reduce sexual, racial, religious, and cultural stereotypes and to foster positive intercultural relationships, in Camp Fire, everyone is welcome.

As one of the nation's leading youth development organizations, Camp Fire takes pride in its long-standing commitment to providing programs and services to all youth. Teens in Action reflects the Statement of Inclusion by teaching communication, collaboration, and trust-building skills. TIA addresses stereotyping and provides opportunities for youth to consider diverse perspectives in the community as well as amongst the group. Through these activities, facilitators can help provide a foundation for young people to work toward equity, inclusivity, and justice.

There are things facilitators can do to build the foundation. Some are small, like taking the time to learn the proper pronunciation of every participant's name or getting to know young people's families. Others require more time and investment, like incorporating identity-based responses into the study of texts and gathering information about participants' hopes, concerns, strengths, and life circumstances. At the community level, it is important to understand neighborhood demographics, strengths, concerns, conflicts, and challenges.

There are several ways lesson topics in the Teens in Action curriculum build skills related to diversity and inclusion.

- Active listening
- Empathy
- Respectful dialogue
- Building trust
- Challenging perceptions
- Encouraging youth voice

There are ways facilitators can support diversity and inclusion in their program space.

- Allow opportunities in small groups for youth to share knowledge, skills, and experience.
- Establish program norms and expectations that take into account different cultural and communication styles as well as gender differences and language needs.
- Avoid dividing group by gender. Using gender-neutral categories or allowing each youth to choose the group with which they identify affirms the experiences of all youth.

Remember that **diversity is not always visual** – program participants may differ in ways that are not obvious at first glance. Because of this, facilitators must be sure to actively address all instances of bias, bullying, exclusion and disrespect during program time. Middle school youth like to joke around or tease and may use language that is inappropriate or offensive. Address every instance of this and discuss with all youth why these behaviors might be harmful.

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Working With Teens

How you perceive and treat the youth in your group plays a tremendous role in the success of the curriculum. Through support and care, you can enable youth to develop a positive sense of self and a spirit of independence and responsibility. The relationship between participants and facilitators must be one of mutual respect if the positive potential is to be realized. Adults play key roles in the development of healthy identities and positive self-worth by modeling behaviors that respect others.

Teens are in various stages of maturation, both physically and emotionally. Their bodies are changing in ways they may intellectually understand but can't emotionally grasp. People around them are changing too, and people they've always been friends with may suddenly (or gradually) no longer be friends. It can be a bewildering, frustrating time for youth.

These changes can lead to rapid behavioral and emotional changes. Teens have moved out of the stage where their parents are the most important people in their lives and into a stage where friends and social relationships are everything. They're trying to assert their independence at the very same time that they're trying to fit in somewhere—a dichotomy that would be difficult at any age.

That said, this age group can also be energetic, enthusiastic, and sponge-like in their ability to soak up new ideas and concepts. Facilitators who are willing to work with teens will find they can have a tremendous effect on the kinds of adults those teens will be someday.

Adult Champions

The TIA curriculum strives to give youth an opportunity to practice relationship building with adults as well as their peers. As defined by Search Institute, developmental relationships are close connections through which young people discover who they are, gain abilities to shape their own lives, and learn how to interact with and contribute to the world around them. Research shows that relationships are the key to thriving now and in the future. During this stage of adolescence, youth report a weakening of relationships with parents and teachers.

Search Institute has identified five elements, expressed in twenty specific actions, that make relationships powerful in young people's lives. Camp Fire staff are trained to apply these actions to build developmental relationship with youth during program time:

- **Express Care**—be dependable, listen, believe, be warm, encourage.
- **Challenge Growth**—expect the best from youth, stretch, hold them accountable, reflect on failures.
- **Provide Support**—navigate, empower, advocate, set boundaries.
- **Share Power**—show respect, be inclusive, collaborate, let youth lead.
- **Expand Possibilities**—inspire, broaden horizons, connect.

During Teens in Action, youth practice many of these elements as well, given the nature of the curriculum content. As such, Teens in Action offers the add benefit of youth experiencing developmental relationships not only with their Camp Fire leader, but with other youth in the program.

So, How Best to Work With This High-Potential Group of Participants?

- **Build trust.** This takes time. Be honest, follow through on promises (or consequences), and be respectful. When a teen trusts you, they're going to take what you're teaching much more seriously.
- **Let them talk.** Instead of simply lecturing, create a space for teens to use their voice and join the conversation. This is also an important part of Thrive{oology}—when they talk, give them the opportunity to share ideas, brainstorm, discuss, and reflect.
- **Listen.** Teens need to know they're being heard and understood. There may already be adults in their lives who nod and say "Mmm-hmmm" without paying any attention. When you really listen to them, they can tell and they'll appreciate it.
- **Make yourself available for informal conversations.** Get to know the individuals in your group. Who are the bands they listen to? What are the games they play? The books they read and movies they watch? Instead of trying to be their friend, show interest in their interests.
- **Be flexible.** If the group's plan for that day has one direction, but the conversation goes a different way and the participants are involved and interested, go with it. Remember—one of the things teens are learning about is using a growth mindset and developing resiliency. This can very well be a sign of teens developing leadership and self-confidence.
- **Don't avoid difficult topics.** Communication and conflict are likely to raise some uncomfortable issues. Don't shy away from a discussion, but remind youth to keep the conversation civil and respectful. If topics arise that go beyond the scope of the lesson, work with your organization's leaders to deal with them (for example, abuse). Otherwise, let the topics out in the open.

Working With Groups

Throughout the TIA program, the goals are for teens to better understand themselves and their passions, to identify areas in their schools and communities that will benefit from their involvement, and to develop strategies that will allow them to transform their schools and communities. Some teens naturally find ways to do this on their own, but many can use guidance to accomplish this. A youth-led group can provide that guidance for the individuals.

Both the group and the community needs addressed as a part of the TIA program fit within Maslow's hierarchy of needs. TIA uses active listening and questioning to meet the teens' physical, safety, belonging, and esteem needs. Then the teens use their considerable skills, intelligence, and energy to find ways to give back to the greater community—which in turn will reinforce their sense of belonging and self-esteem.

A Welcoming Atmosphere

One of the most difficult challenges will be creating a space in which members are comfortable expressing themselves honestly and fully. Participants' input to the group will be greatest when they feel they are being heard and treated respectfully.

Some participants may hold back, waiting to see if it is really safe before sharing. Others may be quiet because they believe their views are too different from the rest of the group.

Whenever it seems that only one side of an issue is being discussed, invite participants who have different opinions or perspectives to be heard. When a different perspective is offered, reflect on and affirm the contribution. Hearing new perspectives will help the group reach a new level of thinking, and participants will begin to understand how the process benefits from exploring different perspectives.

Developing Effective Group Dynamics

For participants to accomplish both personal and group goals, it is imperative youth learn to work with one another effectively. Teens must:

- Value differences.
- Encourage contributions from all participants.
- Listen.
- Challenge assumptions.
- Provide honest and sensitive feedback.
- Share tasks.
- Make joint decisions.
- Commit to action.
- Follow through.

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Stages of Group Development

Described below are five stages that most groups go through: form, storm, norm, perform, and adjourn. It is important for facilitators to recognize these stages in their own groups and provide support if and when conflict arises.

Form	<p>Forming happens when the group comes together for the first time. Everyone is polite as participants learn about one another and the work that is to be done. This is the exciting “honeymoon” phase. Some may observe from the sidelines at first, while others will jump right in.</p> <p>During this stage, facilitators can encourage youth to choose Introduction and Get To Know You Jump Starts so teens begin to feel more comfortable with each other.</p>
Storm	<p>As the politeness and newness fades, the group starts to get more into the work. The honeymoon is over, and participants start to argue about things that were left unsaid or not realized when they first came together. Storming is most challenging when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Roles have not yet been established.• More than one participant insists on being the leader.• The goals of the group are unclear.• There is a perceived external threat. <p>During this stage, facilitators can encourage the creation of a group contract to alleviate uncertainty and prevent conflict before it arises.</p>
Norm	<p>As roles and conflicts are sorted out, the group begins to focus on its goals and strategies for accomplishing the service-learning project. Feeling more like a team, participants begin fully exploring strategies and how they will switch gears if and when a strategy fails.</p> <p>Teens learn how to best work together and support one another. They establish norms and a group identity, and conflicts shift from those with other participants to conflicts with outsiders.</p>
Perform	<p>The group is now well-established and making things happen. Participants may have issues with one another from time to time, but the group can now work them out on their own with no outside intervention. This is the stage where youth are most productive.</p>
Adjourn	<p>As the group’s time together winds down, participants start to worry about what happens next. The group has become a safe place, where teens can let their guard down and freely express themselves, be heard, and accomplish both personal and group goals. They may shut down, act out, or begin focusing on the next task to cope with the anxiety and fear of adjourning.</p> <p>During this stage, reflection is key. Facilitators can create opportunities for youth to think about the experience in a variety of ways and encourage teens to continue the work outside of the program.</p>

Working With Groups

One component of leadership is creating a positive atmosphere for learning. Facilitating group learning is an important skill for teens to develop throughout TIA. Use the following as an outline of responsibilities to be shared within your group. Begin at one of your first meetings to set the stage. They'll learn the responsibilities of a Leadership Learning Team and begin to practice these responsibilities.

Leadership Roles

Note: These are just examples. Not every team will need all of these roles, or you may find your team needs different roles. Depending on the size and nature of the project, the group should work together to determine which/how many roles are needed.

Leader	Responsible for organizing the work of the group and being sure the group stays on task.
Note Taker	Records the group conversation by taking notes, either on paper or on a computer.
Timekeeper	Ensures that the group is able to devote appropriate time to each assigned task and completes all within the allotted time. This role is especially useful when the group has a tight time frame.
Observer	Watches the interaction of group members and reports difficulties or successes in group interaction.
Energizer	Facilitates the Jump Start to energize the group for the start of the session, as well as encourages the group to stay on track and think positively.

In groups of four, one person should take on both the timekeeper and the observer roles. In groups of three, another person should take on both the note taker and the reporter roles.

Preparing for the Session

As a facilitator, you do not determine where the group is going or how they will get there. Instead, you establish learning objectives and identify activities that will support the group's process. **Preparation is critical, because the process for reaching a goal is just as important as the goal itself.**

In preparing and setting session goals, consider:

- What support the group needs.
- Different ways to support the group in achieving their goals.
- How the session will support the group process.
- Work the group needs/has to do to prepare for this session.
- How the results of the session will be used.

Before each session, be sure to complete the following steps to ensure the program time is used efficiently:

1.

Read through the step and gather materials.

Before each session, look over the intended plan and accompanying activities. Familiarize yourself with the learning objectives, checklist, facilitator-led activities and the youth-led activities. Some activities require specific materials or a printed worksheet – be sure to gather these before the start of the session to ensure youth get the most out of their program time.

2.

Review group history and progress.

As you prepare for each session, it's important to look back and review previous sessions to understand where the group is and what they need. There may be times when the group is frustrated because of an issue from the previous session. At other times, they may be overly excited and ready to go. Knowing where the group is will help you design a session that will best support the group's process.

3.

Research service learning project topic.

Remember – although teens lead the session, they may look to you as a resource for the service learning process. You may have to act as a guide for the scope of their service project, including potential community leaders they can contact, nonprofits they can work with, or resources they can utilize. Do some research on the school or community youth are working in to gain a better understanding of the options the group has.

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Facilitator Guide

Each Step in the Facilitator Guide follows the same simple format:

Introduction – Jump Start – Facilitator-Led Activities – Teen-Led Activities – Reflection.

Please note that each step of the service-learning project may require more than one session period. Time estimates are included for each activity to better help the group plan each program time.

Introduction

Each Step begins with a brief description of the service-learning project element youth will be focusing on during these sessions – **Brainstorming, Building Consensus, Planning, Conducting a Service Project, or Reflection, Evaluation and Celebration**. The Introduction lays out the process goal for the step as well as what participants will learn, practice and explore through the activities and discussions. In addition to the skills learned, the introduction includes the checklist from the Youth Leader Guide. This checklist is meant for youth to review before moving on to the next step in the process. Be sure to read through this section to gain better perspective on how the step fits into TIA's service-learning process.

Jump Start

After gaining a better understanding of the goals of the step, it is important to kick-off program time with an exciting group activity. Jump Starts are a way for teens to shift their mind-body state from the business of their everyday lives to program time. These activities are only 10 minutes long and prime the brain for the group work ahead.

Each step includes a suggested Jump Start to be done before beginning the process techniques each session. More Jump Starts can be found on page 22 and can be used in addition to or in place of the activity suggested. As some steps in the service-learning process may include multiple sessions, it is important to plan or have youth plan which Jump Start to use each session.

Jump Starts can be youth- or facilitator-led. The Youth Leader Guide features the same activity in each step with language more suited for teens to facilitate it. Depending on the age of the group or nature of the activity, TIA facilitators can take a greater role in conducting this section.

Jump Starts are split into four types – **Introducing, Bonding, Energizing and Relaxing**. Groups may need different approaches to focus for the different stages of the service-learning and group formation process. It may be helpful to gauge the energy level of participants during check-in to determine which Jump Start type would benefit the group the most. Be sure to also allow youth opportunities to self-evaluate and choose the most appropriate Jump Start.

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Facilitator-Led Activities

While TIA is meant to be a youth-led service learning project guide, there are some activities that have greater impact when conducted by the TIA facilitator. These activities, featured in the Facilitator-Led Activity section, are **required** for each step and should be completed before youth lead the session. These activities may need facilitators to set up a certain scenario or ask youth a series of questions and work best when the group works on it together. There are quick reflection questions at the end of all activities that should be discussed before moving on.

Teen-Led Activities

This is where youth engage in activities and discussions to think critically about their community, assess challenges and resources, draft a plan and execute a service project. All activities in this section are **optional** - teens have autonomy over which activities in this section are completed and when. They create the schedule for the session.

All activities include an estimation of the amount of time it will take to complete as well as any materials needed. Most materials in the TIA curriculum are limited to blank paper, notebooks, a whiteboard, large pieces of poster paper and sticky notes. Encourage teens to keep these two things in mind when deciding which activities to conduct.

Teen-led does not mean there is no role for the facilitator. It's quite the opposite. During these activities, the TIA facilitator will need to support youth leaders in planning the session and conducting the process. While facilitators don't make decisions for the group, they can ask processing questions to encourage youth to think about their choices more critically.

Facilitators may need to step in when progress is halted due to confusion or conflict to steer the group back on track.

Reflection

Along with the quick reflection questions at the end of each activity, it is important to have a more in-depth reflection that covers the completed stage of the service-learning process. There are Session Reflection Strategies included in Facilitator Guide and the Youth Leader Guide that detail engaging ways to address these questions. Youth can choose which strategy works best for them to wrap up the step. Be sure to encourage the group to try different reflection types throughout the project.

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Jump Starts

Jump Starts are a fun and effective way to kick-off program time by allowing participants to bond with their peers, move around in energizing ways, and begin to focus on the session. While each session has a suggested Jump Start included in it, some groups may want to complete additional activities to prepare themselves for the session. Choose (or have youth choose) any of the following Jump Start activities.

Introducing

Blanket Game

This game is best for participants who don't know another. Divide youth into two teams. Ask for two volunteers to hold a large blanket up, and have the teams stand on opposite sides. The volunteers must hold the blanket so that teams cannot see the members of the other team. Each team picks one person to stand up and face the blanket. When both teams are ready, the volunteers drop the blanket. The first person to say the name of the person across from them wins.

Brief Interviews

Divide youth into pairs, and have them interview each other for five minutes to find out three interesting facts about them. Bring the group back together, and have each participant introduce, and present the three things they learned about, their partner.

Bubble Names

Give each participant a large sheet of paper and instruct them to draw the letters of their name in large, open-spaced bubble letters. Ask participants to draw, in the open spaces of each of the letters, facts about themselves (e.g., favorite food, family, hobbies, birthplace, etc.). When everyone is finished, encourage youth to share and explain their bubble names.

Unique in Common

Group participants into pairs. Ask teens to introduce themselves to each other and continue their conversation with the goal of determining the most unique thing that they share in common. For example, participants may find out that they were born in the same hospital. Give partners several minutes to chat, and ask pairs to present each other to the group.

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Bonding

Cross the Line

Have all participants stand on one side of the program space. Read a statement, and anyone for which the statement is true must silently cross to the other side of the space. Use a reflective prompt, such as "Notice who moved to the other side and who stayed."

Participants silently take note of the change. Have all youth join back at the starting place. Repeat the activity with more statements. This exercise can be used as a simple bonding exercise or as a way to inform the group about minority viewpoints and/or power dynamics.

Sample statements: "Cross the line if..."

- You have brown eyes.
- You grew up in this town/city.
- You feel safe walking alone at night.
- You can pick up a magazine and find people who look like you.

Do You Love Your Neighbor?

Have participants stand in a circle, with one person in the middle. The person in the middle says something like "I love my neighbors who love pizza." All those who can answer yes must leave their place and find a new spot in the circle. The person left in the middle is the next to make the "I love my neighbors who..." statement. Any statement is fair game, and the goal is to have at least some people answer yes.

Sample statements: "I love my neighbors who..."

- Walk to school.
- Love science class.
- Play soccer.
- Have broken a bone.

Mill to Music

Play music from a phone or computer (upbeat music without words tends to work well). While the music plays, have youth move around the room—they don't have to dance or even move to the beat; they simply mill about. Once the music stops, have the youth will form a pair with the participant closest to them. Throw out a question for pairs to discuss for a minute, then start the music again and repeat.

Sample questions:

- What does a perfect Saturday look like?
- Which fictional character do you think best represents you?
- How do you feel about the group's progress so far?

Fact or Fiction

Have youth write two goals of theirs on a slip of paper—one real and the other made up. Goals can be anything, from making a varsity sports team to reading one book a month. Participants take turns presenting their goals and having the group vote on which one they think is true. Allow every youth the opportunity to say which goal is real and elaborate on it (if they desire).

Energizing

Copy My Rhythm

Create a rhythm by clapping, snapping, knee slapping, vocal noises, singing, or any other noise. Participants follow the rhythm. This can be done as a repeating rhythm or as a call and response. Mix it up by increasing the difficulty as you go. Allow participants to lead the rhythm.

Stand Up

Have youth split up into pairs. Partners stand back to back and then sit down. With their feet flat on the ground, and without using their hands, the pair must then attempt stand up. Tell them not to link arms during this activity, since it can cause shoulder strain.

Variations: After pairs have successfully stood up, encourage groups of four to try it, then six, and then possibly the entire group!

Bounce the Ball

This energizer requires a ball, anything from a tennis ball to a large bouncy ball. Have participants stand in a circle and bounce the ball to someone else while saying the name of a vegetable. That person must say the name of another vegetable while bouncing the ball to someone else in the circle. This goes on until people can't think of any new vegetables. This game can be repeated by playing with different categories (movies, celebrities, names of songs, presidents, etc.).

Three-Headed Oracle

Have three volunteers stand up in front of everyone, shoulder to shoulder. Introduce them as one, three-headed oracle that can answer any question. Each "head" can only say one word at a time. Encourage participants to take turns asking the Three-Headed Oracle questions on any topic (the arts, fashion, physics, the future, etc.). The Three-Headed Oracle must answer by having each volunteer say one word at a time, so that they three build sentences together. When one of the "heads" feels the answer is done, they just stop talking. Encourage the group to ask more questions.

Relaxing

Stretching

Depending on the group, the simple act of standing up and stretching can work wonders for energy and relaxation. Have youth stand up, bend over, and touch their toes (or as close as they can get). Then they slowly roll their bodies up until, ultimately, they are standing tall with hands stretched toward the ceiling. This can be done with sounds or coordinated breathing. Repeat as many times as necessary.

Imagery

To relieve stress and get youth in the right headspace to start the session, guide participants through the relaxation jump start by encouraging them to each visit their "happy place" in their mind. Have youth close their eyes, listen to relaxing music, and envision this happy place, thinking about how it looks, feels, smells, and sounds—the more detail the better. Allow youth a few minutes to relax and transition to the rest of the session.

Yoga

Guide youth through a few yoga poses to relieve tension in their muscles and energize them for the session. Look into beginner yoga poses to teach participants, including the mountain pose, downward dog, warrior, and tree pose.

Mindfulness Body Scan

There are tons of mindfulness activities to choose from. For the body scan, have youth sit or lie down comfortably with eyes closed. Instruct them to zoom all of their attention to their feet and toes. Encourage them to notice how they feel. Zoom up and focus on the legs. Then move the focused attention to their torso and back. Continue to guide youth all the way up their bodies, paying attention to how the parts feel individually. At the end, instruct youth to focus on their whole bodies and think about what they can accomplish this session.

Roadmap

While planning is an essential step within the service-learning process, youth should be given opportunities to make plans on how program time is utilized. As youth begin each step, they are encouraged to read through the materials and make a plan for the session. This plan, or Roadmap, includes the Jump Start, activities and reflection technique the group will use. Youth draw out the Roadmap on the Roadmap template or on poster paper.

The Roadmap has 5 parts:



Checklist

Each step begins with a brief description of the activities as well as a checklist of things to accomplish before moving onto the next step in the process. The items on the checklist are required and can be completed by doing a combination of the activities in the step.

Jump Start

It's important to kick-off program time with an exciting group activity. Each step includes a suggested Jump Start to be done before beginning any of the other activities. More Jump Starts can be found on page 22 and can be used in addition to or in replace of the activity suggested. As some steps in the service-learning process may include multiple sessions, it is important that youth choose more than one Jump Start.

There are four different types of Jump Starts: **Introducing, bonding, energizing and relaxing**. Each category may be useful to do at a certain time during the process.

Required Activities

Each step has one or two required activities that are only listed in this guide, not the Teen Leader Guide. Facilitators conduct the activities and hold a brief reflection to talk about the service-learning process.

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Youth Choose Activities

Just as the title says, this section of the step lists activities for the teens to choose to complete the items on their checklist. This is where youth get to engage in activities and discussions to think critically about their community, assess challenges and resources, draft a plan and execute a service project. All activities in this section are **optional** – the group decides which activities in this section are completed and when.

All activities include an estimation of the amount of time it will take to complete as well as any materials needed. Remind teens to keep these two things in mind when deciding which activities to conduct.

Reflection

Along with the quick reflection questions at the end of each activity, it is important to have a more in-depth reflection that covers the completed stage of the service-learning process. There are reflection questions at the end of each step for the group to go over. Reflection techniques are listed on page 27.

Reflection Techniques

Reflection is a vital part of the service-learning process. It's a powerful tool that allows youth to look back on the day with a critical eye and interpret the experience to gain new understanding. Reflections should include these six elements:

- **Significance:** Youth see the importance of the experience and their learning process.
- **Process Recognition:** Youth identify what went well and what needs work.
- **Strategies:** Youth brainstorm strategies to improve the experience.
- **Motivation:** Youth analyze their thoughts and feelings on the experience.
- **Analysis:** Youth theorize why the experience matters in a larger context.
- **Introspection:** Youth self-assess their individual strengths and areas for improvement.

There are two types of reflections youth should practice after each session: the **Session Reflection Techniques** and the **Cumulative Reflection Project**.

It is essential to provide time after each activity and each Step for youth to reflect on the experience. Allow youth to choose from one of these strategies to answer the quick reflection questions following an activity as well as the reflection questions at the end of each Step. Use a variety of strategies with youth, so the reflection will stay fresh and effective.

Circle Game

Gather the group in a circle and give each participant an index card or a loose piece of paper. Ask them to each write down a question or a comment they have about the lesson. Collect the cards and place them in the middle. One at a time, participants draw a card and answer the question or respond to the comment. Repeat with all youth in the circle.

Group Discussion and Shout-Outs

Gather participants for a group discussion to debrief on the day and answer discussion questions. Allow youth to give shout-outs to their peers who positively contributed to the project. Have the note-taker record the discussion.

Exit Ticket

Instruct youth to write their name, what they learned, and a question on an index card or a loose piece of paper. Before leaving the program space, have youth turn in their exit tickets. Discuss any lingering questions during the next program time.

Two-Dollar Summary

Ask the group a set of reflection questions. Participants must write a "two-dollar" (or more) summary of the lesson. Each word is worth 10 cents. Have each youth read their responses to the person next to them, and ask for volunteers to share in front of the group.

Journal

Provide youth with small journals or encourage them to bring notebooks to each session. Guide youth in reflecting upon the learning experience, not just logging the events of the day, by honestly writing about the five reflection elements.

Debrief Partner

Ask the group one reflection question at a time. Allow youth to share their thoughts and ideas with a partner. After a minute, instruct pairs to find another pair and discuss their answers. Repeat for the next question.

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Reflection Project

Step 5 of the service-learning process is all about reflecting, evaluating, and celebrating the hard work youth put into their projects. The Cumulative Reflection Project is a way to track every step in the process and highlight the important parts. Youth should not shy away from including challenges and setbacks in their reflection projects, since those are normal elements of the process. The group chooses a Cumulative Reflection Project during their first session and continues to work on it until Step 5. During the celebration, youth can present their reflection projects and look back on how far they've come.

Comic Book Instead of writing journal entries, encourage youth to write and draw comic book style reflections of the session, with a focus on the five reflection elements. Be sure youth are documenting specific interactions they had with other participants and their thoughts and feelings throughout the process. During Step 5 of the service-learning project, allow participants to put the finishing touches on their comic books and present them to the group.	Scrapbook Instead of individual journals for each participant, allow the group to create a collaborative scrapbook documenting the session. Taking into consideration the five reflection elements, encourage youth to include conversations, discussions, conflicts, and triumphs. If resources are available, include pictures of the group throughout the process. During Step 5 of the service-learning project, have youth work on finishing the scrapbook and celebrating their hard work.
Social Media Depending on resources and restrictions, the group can create a collaborative private social media page (Twitter, Instagram, or Facebook) on which they post pictures, thoughts, quotes, and articles related to the project. Be sure they post multiple times per session, keeping in mind the five reflection elements. All youth should be given the opportunity to create and/or contribute to posts on the page. During Step 5 of the service-learning project, youth can look back on the posts made on the social media page and see the progress they've made.	Presentation This reflection technique can be done individually or as a collaborative group presentation. After each session, encourage youth to consider the five reflection elements and record their thoughts and feelings. Depending on resources, allow youth to create presentation slides about each step of the service-learning project. Youth should include pictures, discussion topics, setbacks, triumphs, and a project evaluation. During Step 5 of the service-learning project, encourage youth to give a presentation to family, friends, and staff celebrating their hard work.

Multiple reflection techniques can be used each session. For example, posting on a Twitter page for the project might be a good way to track and record shout-outs after a group discussion.

Step 1: Brainstorming

Brainstorming is an invaluable part of the service-learning project. Participant-led brainstorming encourages youth voice and choice while developing a lot of ideas in a short amount of time. The job of the facilitator is to keep youth on track and mediate conflict, not to decide things for the group.

The goal of brainstorming is for youth to have a better understanding of the resources, strengths, and needs of their community as well as feel empowered to make a difference.

In Step 1, teens will:

- Learn ways to communicate effectively.
- Practice voicing their opinions and listening to the opinions of others.
- Discover techniques for effective group work.
- Critically analyze their school and community.

Step 1 Checklist

Have youth go over the Step 1 Checklist as a group. Before moving on to Step 2, the group should have completed the following tasks:

- ☐ Complete an activity to get to know each other better.
- ☐ Complete an activity to talk about community needs.
- ☐ Have everyone share their opinion on the service project.
- ☐ Thought of **at least two** service project topics.

Roadmap

Support youth in filling out the Brainstorming Roadmap. Make sure the group decides if there will be any leadership roles for this step and there is a fair system for assigning roles.

Jump Start

Every session begins with a Jump Start activity. Youth may complete the Jump Start listed below, or one from page 9 of the Teen Leader Guide.

Jump Start: Knowing Me

Time: 10 minutes

Materials: A printed Knowing Me form (page 30) per participant, writing utensils

Print out copies of the Knowing Me form and give one to each participant. Instruct youth to each find someone in the group whom they don't know very well. Have partners interview each other and write down the answers on the Knowing Me form. Once forms have been completed, have all participants introduce their partners to the group and read a few of their answers.

Knowing Me

Ask your partner the questions below and write their answers on your sheet. After they've answered all of the questions, present your partner to the group.

Full name: _____

Birthday: _____ Favorite color: _____

Pets: _____

Hometown: _____ Where I live now: _____

Hobbies: _____

Favorite food: _____ Favorite restaurant: _____

Favorite place I've been: _____

Favorite book: _____

Favorite movie: _____

Favorite TV show: _____

My dream job: _____

If I could travel anywhere in the world, I would go to: _____

If I could meet any famous person, I'd want to meet _____

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Facilitator-Led Activities

Following the Jump Start, prepare youth to start the service-learning process by creating a Group Contract, with guidelines agreed upon by all participants. Because TIA relies heavily on group processing skills, it is vital for teens to discuss what positive group work looks like and how they will handle disruptive behaviors or conflicts.

Group Contract

Time: 20 minutes

Materials: Large poster paper

This activity essentially establishes the ground rules for the service-learning project time. Even if TIA is being used within a larger Camp Fire program that already has established rules, it still is beneficial to lead the group through this process to set specific expectations for doing a service-learning project.

Begin by stating the nonnegotiable rules for TIA, and explain why they are important. The guidelines facilitators bring to the group should be the non-negotiables—the “rules” that are needed to keep the space safe (physically, emotionally, and socially) and productive. These may include staying safe and healthy; treating each other with fairness, kindness, and respect; respecting people’s privacy and space; listening when others are talking; sharing equipment; and respecting and protecting personal and program property. Try to keep these to a minimum of three to four.

Ask the group to offer other suggestions. This can be facilitated as a large-group discussion, as a think-pair-share with partners, or individually by asking each person to contribute at least one idea on a post-it note. As youth offer responses, ask them to clarify any ambiguous statements (What do you mean by “Be respectful” what does that look like?,) and support them in framing the statements positively (i.e., “Be respectful” instead of “Don’t be disrespectful”).

Take notes (or encourage participants to take notes) on a separate piece of paper or whiteboard. Once the group has had some time to offer different ideas, facilitate a discussion in which they decide which ones to include in the contract. Be sure that everyone agrees on them before adding them to the final document.

Once the contract has been completed and all youth have approved it, have participants sign the final document. Keep the contract out throughout the service-learning project, and refer back to it as necessary.

Quick Reflection Questions:

- What does it mean to sign a contract?
- What responsibilities come with signing your name to a contract?
- How will these guidelines help us build our Camp Fire community?

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Opinion Scale

Time: 10–20 minutes

Materials: Way to record discussion notes

Designate one side of the space as *agree* and the other as *disagree*. Pretend there is an invisible line connecting the two sides to function as a sliding opinion scale.

Read a statement out loud and have participants each move along the opinion scale to find a spot that represents their beliefs. The closer a participant is to the wall, the stronger their opinion is.

Here are examples of statements to brainstorm for potential service-learning projects:

- I am interested in learning about history.
- I try to follow current events.
- I read my town's/city's newspaper.
- My community is a pretty great place to live.
- I have seen or experienced major problems in my community.
- There are challenges or hardships in my community that only kids or teens experience.
- There are needs in my classroom that I can help solve.
- There are needs in my school that I can help solve.
- There are needs in my community that I can help solve.
- There are problems in the world that I can help solve.

This would also be a great opportunity to hear individuals' opinions related to Thrive{ology}, including Sparks, Growth Mindset, GPS and Developmental Relationships. Here are example statements:

- I have a passion or hobby that I could do all day (if it were allowed).
- There are some subjects or skills I just can't learn, and I'm okay with that.
- I like to try new things, even if I'm bad at them.
- I don't care if I look dumb as long as I'm having fun or gaining new skills.
- I currently don't have any long-term or short-term goals.
- There is at least one adult in my life that I can go to when I need help.

Have each corner's group discuss the statement and share their experiences. After some time, encourage participants to share with the larger group what their corner discussed. Record the discussions and reflect on trends or patterns after the activity. Have youth lead a discussion about the issues, challenges, and problems facing members of their community.

Quick Reflection Questions:

- What did you learn about others in the group?
- Do they share views on the community that are similar to yours? Why might their views be different?
- What community issue or need is most agreed upon?

Before jumping into the brainstorming activities, review the service-learning project steps on page 9. There is a chart in the Teen Leader Guide on page 3 that describes each step of the process. Make sure youth feel comfortable with the process and understand the goals of each step.

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Teen-Led Activities

There are several activities for the group to choose from that encourage youth to share their thoughts and opinions as well critically think about their community's needs. All of these activities are featured in Step 1 of the Teen Leader Guide. Teens should complete as many brainstorming activities as the group decides necessary to come up with at least two potential service-learning topics.

Follow along with the activities and provide support as needed.

Rose, Thorn, and Bud

Time: 15 minutes

Materials: Choice of construction paper, whiteboard, or large poster paper

This activity can incorporate elements of art and creativity or be a simple brainstorming technique. Participants can create drawings of their own, or volunteers with art Sparks can lead the discussion.

Youth will be using a flower to discuss strengths and weaknesses in their community. The **rose** represents something positive or beautiful about their community; a **thorn** on the stem represents an issue, challenge, or a resource that is lacking; and a **bud** represents a new idea or solution that would benefit the community.

Teens can draw their own roses to share with the group, or volunteers with art Sparks can draw a rosebush for participants to put their ideas on.

Quick Reflection Questions:

- What did you think about the activity?
- Were there roses, thorns, or buds that came up more than once?
- How can a community use a rose (a positive aspect of the community) to improve a thorn (an issue facing the community)?

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Asset Mapping

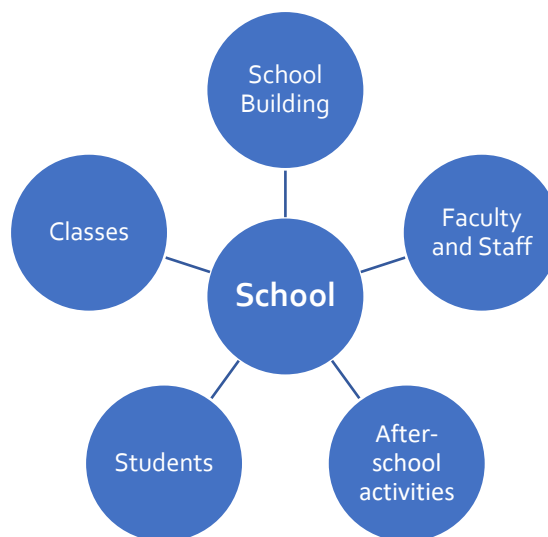
Time: 15–30 minutes

Materials: Whiteboard or large poster paper

Asset mapping is the process of creating a map of what is valuable in a community.

To begin mapping, youth think of a main resource their community has to offer—perhaps a community center, an annual festival, or a strong leader. In the example below, the main resource is a school.

Next, teens think of the people and resources connected to the main resource. The group should begin to link these elements together, thus creating a picture that paints a community full of positive, useful resources.



Youth can create several maps based on different main resources. Encourage youth to think of ways their maps connect as well as possible overlaps. For example, if participants choose different main resources, they can combine their maps together to create an even bigger picture of their community.

Facilitate a discussion to review the positive resources in the community. Encourage youth to highlight elements that they view as being weaker than others. Target important hot spots where assistance is needed. Have youth think of challenges that can be tackled to make the main (center) resource stronger.

Quick Reflection Questions:

- What did you think of this activity?
- Did it help you understand the community better?
- What are areas where you think assistance is needed?
- How can this map help inform us on an issue to base the service project on?

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Frenzied Brainstorm

Time: 10 minutes

Materials Needed: Paper for each participant, whiteboard or poster paper for group discussion

This is a way for youth to quickly get their initial ideas and thoughts down on paper without overthinking or second-guessing.

Participants divide their papers into four parts, since you will be asking them to answer four different questions. Set a timer for 30 seconds, and have youth write down as many ideas as they can related to a specific question. Really encourage youth to jot down the first things that pop into their heads.

Inform participants that they will not be sharing everything on their papers with the group, so they shouldn't be afraid to write down ideas that may seem silly, farfetched or impossible.

Example questions:

- Who or what needs help?
- Complete the sentence: What's up with _____?
- What are some problems with the world?
- Complete the sentence: Why doesn't _____ exist?
- What does your community or school do that you think is great?
- What are some resources available in your community?
- Complete the sentence: I wish my community _____.
- What are some challenges you or your peers are going through?

Once teens have their pieces of paper covered with thoughts, have them highlight at least one interesting idea from each section to share with the group.

Have youth lead a discussion on a whiteboard or poster paper with all participants sharing their ideas. Encourage the group to look for common threads and make connections between needs, challenges, and resources.

Quick Reflection Questions:

- Why were you instructed to write down your thoughts so quickly?
- How is jotting down ideas like this different from a longer brainstorming session?
- Is this way more beneficial? Why or why not?
- How can you use the first thing to pop out of your head to come up with a focused issue for the project?

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Community Needs Sticky Wall

Time: 20 minutes

Materials: Sticky notes, markers, wall or board space

In this brainstorming technique, youth are encouraged to think globally and locally about challenges facing people, society, and the environment. It is also a visual way to group similar issues and look for solutions that address multiple problems.

Participants have five sticky notes and five minutes to write down five global or local challenges.

Circulate the program space and ask open-ended questions to stimulate ideas. Questions can include:

- What challenges have you been hearing about in the news recently?
- Who are some people you think need help?
- What are some challenges you or your peers are going through now?
- What is your community lacking?

After five minutes, youth post their ideas on a designated Community Needs Sticky Wall. Allow the group to silently read all of the sticky notes and ask any questions. Once they've all been read, have participants lead a discussion on what is on the Community Needs Sticky Wall. Discussions can be in pairs or with the whole group.

After a brief discussion, the group should come up with five categories in which to organize all of the sticky notes. All participants should be involved in the organization and are encouraged to share their opinions and debate decisions.

Once the sticky notes have been categorized, facilitate a discussion to examine what issues are on the board and talk about similarities or common threads. Youth can use the Community Needs Sticky Wall to help make a decision on potential service-learning projects.

Quick Reflection Questions:

- Was this technique beneficial? Why or why not?
- Which notes or categories stuck out to you the most?
- Why did you group certain things together?
- What does this sticky wall say about your community? What does it say about the group?

Brainstorming Tips

Questioning

Questions are used to create a space for members to be heard and hear others. There are two types of questions used in facilitation: closed and open.

Closed questions often can be answered with one word and are most useful when making decisions or clarifying.

Closed questions, such as "What I'm hearing you say is... Is that accurate?" help confirm that they understand what is actually being said.

Open questions encourage in-depth responses. They help participants explore different perspectives and underlying values. Open questions, such as "Why is that important to you?" invite youth to think deeper, considering information and issues more fully and exploring different perspectives or underlying values.

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Listening

Listening is just as important as questioning for exploration and transformation. Active listening supports the emotional safety, unique perspectives, and creative contributions of all youth. It creates a space where each participant can be heard and hear themselves and others more fully.

To actively listen, one must be present, empathetic, respectful, and supportive. Invite each participant to express themselves freely and to elaborate or say more. In addition:

- Record each teen's contribution.
- Protect each teen's contribution by insisting that critical comments be directed toward you instead of other members.
- Welcome different views/perspectives and allow them to coexist.
- "Take all sides," refraining from "steering toward any one point of view."
- Model empathic listening—or listening to understand

Questioning and active listening are not intended to change youth in any way but, rather, to create a space for individual and collective transformation by helping participants make connections and explore their understanding of an issue, development, or option.

Step 1 Reflection Questions

Along with the quick reflection activities for each activity, facilitate a group reflection to wrap up the brainstorming process. Use a Session Reflection Strategy on page 27 to answer the following questions:

What?

- Did the group complete all items on the Step 1 Checklist?
- How did you feel about the brainstorming process?
- What were the highlights of the sessions?
- What were some challenges the group faced?

So what?

- Why is brainstorming included in the service-learning process?
- Why are the things we brainstormed important to the community?
- Are there other situations in your life that require brainstorming? If yes, when?

Now what?

- What is next for the group to do?
- What can we do better for the next session?

Self-Reflection

- What new skill would you like to learn through this project?
- What do you need in order to be able to learn it?
- How will you go about getting what you need?

Step 2: Building Consensus

Once youth have had time to brainstorm, explore, and discuss the resources, strengths, and needs of their community, the group must decide upon a service-learning project. Depending on the interpersonal relationships within the group, this step can be either a breeze or a hurricane.

The goal of building consensus is for youth to critically discuss the viability of their ideas, participate in respectful debate, and decide as a group the direction in which the project should go.

In Step 2, teens will:

- Explore cultural diversity in self and community.
- Practice challenging stereotypes.
- Recognize the need for representation from diverse perspectives.
- Learn techniques to effectively and respectfully debate a topic.
- Practice resolving conflict in a healthy way.
- Exercise compromise to achieve a goal.

Step 2 Checklist

Have youth go over the Step 2 Checklist as a group. Before moving on to Step 3, the group should have accomplished the following tasks:

- ☐ Complete an activity to get to know each other better.
- ☐ Talk about what it means to build consensus.
- ☐ Allow everyone to voice their opinion on the service project.
- ☐ Decide which service project the group will tackle.

Roadmap

Support youth in filling out the Brainstorming Roadmap. Make sure the group decides if there will be any leadership roles for this step and there is a fair system for assigning roles.

Jump Start

Begin program time with a Jump Start activity to have youth get to know each other better.

Family Flags

Time: 10 minutes

Materials: 1 piece of blank paper per participant, coloring utensils, Internet access (if available)

This activity looks to help youth explore their identity and share their family history, cultural, heritage, and beliefs. Instruct youth to each create a flag for their family as if they were their own country. Encourage participants to include symbols of where their family is from, some of their traditions, what's important to them, and more. Youth can create their family flags on large pieces of paper and hang them up in the program space.

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Facilitator-Led Activities

Facilitate a discussion on what “building consensus” means. Encourage participants to share times they’ve worked with a group to achieve a goal. Did they get everything they wanted? Did they have to make any compromises? Come up with a group definition for “building consensus” and what it looks like. This can be added to the Group Contract or displayed in the program space. Refer back to the definition throughout the process when conflict arises.

Step 2 of the service learning project has two parts; first, the group must choose one of the topics they thought of during Brainstorming. Examples of topics include:

- Lack of resources at the local animal shelter.
- Trash around the park.
- Not enough support for single parents.
- Lack of opportunities for homeless community members.

To choose a topic, there must be group consensus. Consensus can only be formed after everyone has voiced their opinions and weighed their options. It doesn’t have to be a formal division-making process. **Consensus is not a unanimous vote and does not completely satisfy everyone.** Consensus is reached when all participants can say, “Even though the decision may not be exactly what I want, I can live with and support it.”

Consensus needs to occur naturally. Don’t try to negotiate consensus before it happens. When the group appears to reach consensus, take a few minutes to verify any shared understandings or breakthroughs.

Once a topic is decided upon, youth come up with possible solutions to the community need. For example, youth may choose the topic of homelessness and decide to address this need by coordinating a clothing drive.

These two parts are laid out in the Teen Leader Guide, but it may be beneficial to go over it with the group before beginning any activities.

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Teen-Led Activities

Choosing a Topic

Before beginning to plan for the project, a topic must be chosen from the previous session. Examples of topics include:

- Lack of resources at the local animal shelter.
- Trash around the park.
- Not enough support for single parents.
- Lack of opportunities for homeless community members.

To choose a topic, there must be group consensus. Consensus can only be formed after everyone has voiced their opinions and weighed their options. **Consensus is not a unanimous vote and does not completely satisfy everyone.** Consensus is reached when everyone can say, "Even though the decision may not be exactly what I want, I can live with and support it."

Voting and Ranking

Time: 10 minutes

Materials: Whiteboard or large poster paper, markers or stickers or sticky dots

An easy way for youth to lead the process of decision making is by voting or ranking. These processes allow everyone to have equal say in the final decisions. It is helpful to have the narrowed-down topics displayed on a whiteboard or large poster paper.

Dots/Stickers: The facilitator provides all participants with stickers or sticky dots to place next to the issue(s) they believe to be most important. If stickers or sticky dots are unavailable, give participants different colored markers to make dots. Allow youth to decide how many stickers participants get. Encourage youth to make a final decision once a group consensus has been reached.

Points: The facilitator assigns each participant the same number of points (10 to 100) to divide among the choices. Teens can give however many points they want to any of the topics. Allow youth to decide how many points participants get. Encourage youth to make a final decision once a group consensus is reached.

Secondary Voting/Ranking: Prioritize all items using the dots/stickers or points method before voting on the top two topics. Voting can be done by show of hands, thumbs-up/thumbs-down, or anonymous ballot.

Quick Reflection Questions

- How did you feel about this process?
- Was this the best way you could have made a decision?
- Next time you have to make a big decision, what are some other methods you could use?
- How can you use this strategy outside of Camp Fire?

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SWOT Analysis

Time: 20 minutes

Materials: Whiteboard or large poster paper

SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) Analysis is a more complicated framework that helps groups explore a situation, strategy, or proposed decision in depth. It allows the group to step back and evaluate strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in accomplishing the service-learning project based on that topic. Facilitators may need to play a bigger role in facilitating this activity.

Have youth lead a discussion to complete a SWOT Analysis of each proposed topic.

	Helpful to Achieving Goal	Harmful to Achieving Goal
Internal (Inside the group)	Strengths What strengths does the group have for combatting this issue? What unique capabilities and resources does the group possess?	Weaknesses What weaknesses does the group have that might hinder combatting this issue? What are some limitations based on group resources?
External (Outside the group)	Opportunities What opportunities or outside help is available to the group? Who can help with this project?	Threats What conditions (out of your control) would make combatting this issue difficult?

This is also a good place to review mindsets. Have the group identify weaknesses, then encourage them to rethink those weaknesses – how might they become strengths? Can they be changed? Are there qualities in them that may not at first appear as strengths Reframing fixed mindset language reinforces the idea that growth mindset is the goal.

Have youth review the SWOT Analysis for each proposed topic and pick the issue with the most helpful attributes.

Quick Reflection Questions

- What does the SWOT Analysis tell us about these topics?
- How do you choose the topic based on the SWOT Analysis?
- What are some strategies for determining the topic with the most helpful attributes?

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Exploring Solutions

Once the broad topic has been chosen, the next step is for the group to explore ways they can have a positive impact on their community in that area. For example, if the group chose “lack of resources for the local animal shelter” as their issue, their projects could be:

- Raising money for the shelter.
- Collecting materials the shelter needs.
- Increasing media attention and public knowledge of the shelter.
- Coordinating and recruiting community members for a volunteer day at the shelter.

It’s important for youth to flesh out the challenges facing the topic before planning a service-learning project to address it. Teens choose one or more of the following techniques for exploring solutions.

Researching Perspectives

Time: 30 minutes

Materials: Access to computers or tablets and Internet

Allow youth time on the Internet to research and investigate how the chosen issue is being addressed in other cities, states, or countries. Encourage participants to find stories from around the globe about groups successfully tackling problems in their communities. As they’re researching, have youth write down notes on how their chosen issue is being addressed (both positively and negatively) in other places. Make sure youth think about:

- How the issue is being addressed in other regions.
- Similarities to ways we are addressing issue.
- Differences among methods being used here and in other regions.
- Resources used/needed in other regions.
- Outcomes in other regions.
- Things we can learn from them.

After some research time, gather the group members and have them share their discoveries on how similar issues are being tackled around the world. Encourage note-taking and discussion on how the group can use this information to form their next steps.

Quick Reflection Questions

- What did you learn about how others are dealing with this issue?
- How can we use this information to create a project plan?
- Why is it important to look at examples of similar situations around the world?

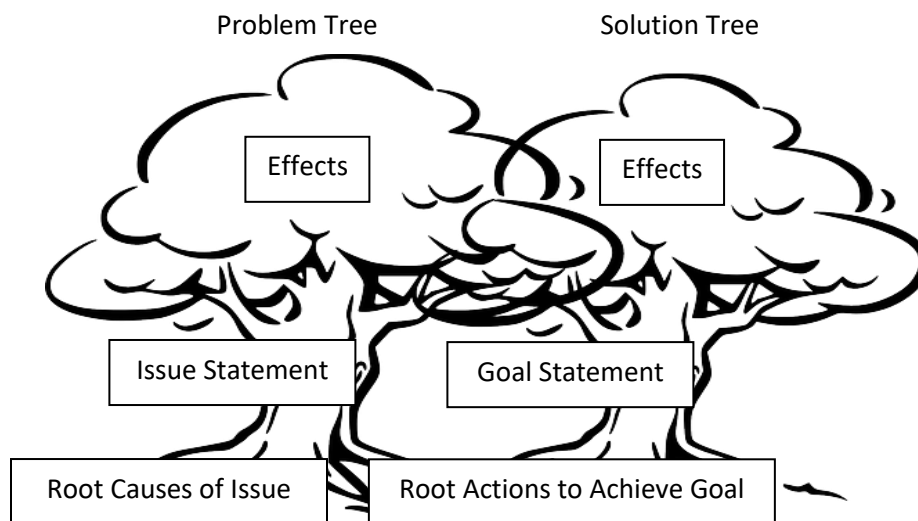
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Problem and Solution Tree Diagram

Time: 20 minutes

Materials: Example Problem and Solution Tree Diagrams (page 45), whiteboard or large poster paper

A Problem or Solution Tree is a way to visualize an issue, examine its cause, and explore its effect. There are three parts to the tree: the trunk, the roots, and the leaves.



Participants can fill out a Problem Tree and a Solution Tree individually, in pairs, or as a whole group. Be sure all youth are able to contribute and the group discusses these ideas. Sample Problem and Solution Trees can be found on page 45.

Once the solution tree has been completed, youth will have their first piece of project planning.

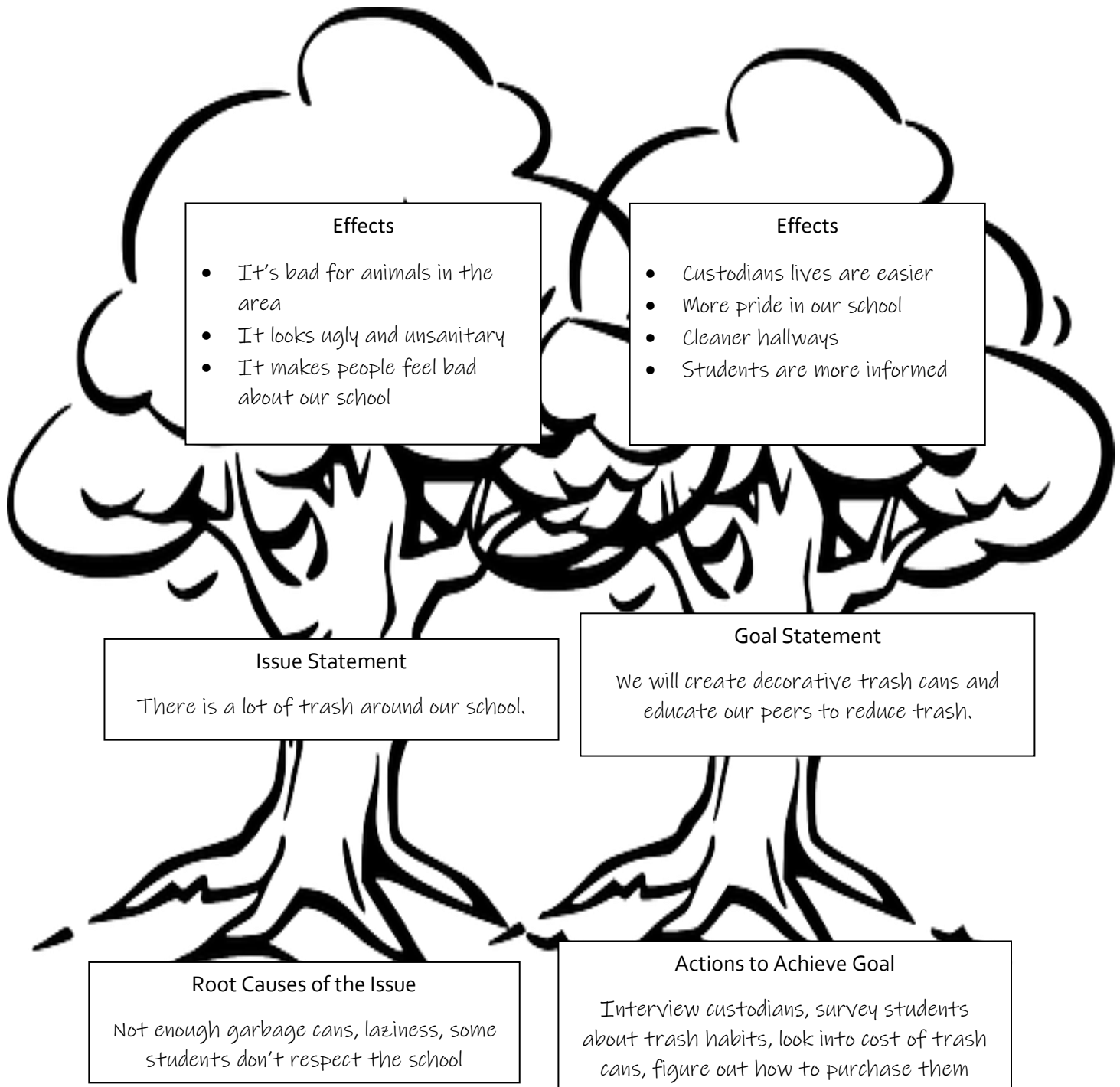
Quick Reflection Questions

- Is this an effective way to organize this information? What other analogy could we have used?
- Which element (effects, statement, or root causes/actions) was the most difficult to fill out? Which was the easiest? Why?
- How does this diagram help us with the next steps of our project?

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Problem Tree

Solution Tree



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Project Proposals

Time: 20 minutes

Materials: Paper or notebook, sticky notes

Distribute paper to each participant and have them think of one project they would like to do on the community issue. Their proposal can be short (e.g., “Organize a community volunteer day at the animal shelter.”) or more detailed (including steps to complete project). Give youth 5 minutes to write down their proposals.

Have youth silently circulate the room to read their peers’ proposals, write their commentaries on sticky notes and stick them on the others’ paper.

Once youth have had an opportunity to make comments on other proposals, youth can lead a discussion on project ideas. A participant can make an argument for their own proposal or endorse someone else’s.

Quick Reflection Questions

- How did you feel about sharing your own project proposal?
- What were some of the comments you received on your proposal?
- How can we make participants feel comfortable sharing their thoughts and ideas with the group without fear of judgement?

Tips for Building Consensus and Making Decisions

There are simple tips to remember when building consensus for a service-learning project:

- Once all brainstorming has been completed, have the group briefly discuss the ideas in terms of pros and cons. This should eliminate several of the weaker ideas.
- Ask the group to discuss the remaining ideas in more detail.
- If necessary, reframe the question to get the group moving.
- Remind youth to be respectful. It’s OK to be critical of an idea, but there’s a big difference between “That’s a dumb idea” and “I think that might be unrealistic, so let’s think of something else.”
- Sometimes the activities alone will lead the group to a consensus. However, they often will need more discussion time; occasionally, consensus will not be reached at all and a vote will have to be taken.

For this step, facilitators may initially need to take a bigger role to help the group learn leadership by example. Some groups may experience conflict at this stage as strong opinions come out and the group’s strength is tested. Don’t shy away from these conflicts but, instead, model to youth how to navigate the situation.

Step 2 Reflection Questions

Along with the quick reflection activities for each activity, facilitate a group reflection to wrap up the consensus-building process. Use a Session Reflection Strategy on page 27 to answer the following questions:

What?

- Did the group complete all items on the Step 2 Checklist?
- What did we discuss during Step 2? What was decided?
- How did you feel about the consensus-building process?
- What were the highlights of the sessions?
- What were some challenges the group faced?

So what?

- Why is it important to build consensus before taking action?
- In what ways does knowing the perspectives of others benefit you or your goals?

Now what?

- What is next for the group to do?
- How can the group take the ideas agreed upon today and turn them into a service project?
- What can you do better in the next session?

Self-Reflection

- What conflicts did the group experience in completing this activity?
- How was the issue resolved?
- What are some ways you can minimize conflicts in future activities?

Step 3: Planning

Now that youth have a better overview of the community, it's time for them to begin planning what the project will look like. Youth lay out the steps for achieving their goal and make an action plan to make it happen. They decide the tasks that need to be completed, make assignments and set deadlines. The goal of planning is for youth to identify elements needed in order for the project to be successful and to shift gears when things don't go according to plan.

In Step 3, teens will:

- Explore their creativity in different forms.
- Practice setting personal and group goals.
- Evaluate goals using GPS, a goal management model.
- Learn to prevent and manage conflict.

Step 3 Checklist

Have youth go over the Step 3 Checklist. Before moving on to conducting the service project, the group should have accomplished the following tasks:

- ☐ Review the Group Contract to make any changes and ensure sure it is being followed.
- ☐ Set at least two group goals for the project.
- ☐ Set at least one personal goal for the project.
- ☐ Determine all of the tasks needed to complete the project.
- ☐ Complete all of the tasks.
- ☐ Feel ready to conduct the service project during the next session!

Roadmap

Support youth in filling out the Brainstorming Roadmap. Make sure the group decides if there will be any leadership roles for this step and there is a fair system for assigning roles.

Jump Start

Begin program time with a Jump Start activity to have youth get to know each other better.

Red Light, Yellow Light, Green Light

Time: 10 minutes

Materials: Whiteboard or large piece of paper, Group Contract

This activity can add value at any step in the service-learning process and should be used in conjunction with the Group Contract.

On a large piece of paper or a whiteboard, draw three columns. In column one (green light) participants list the things that they would like to start doing in the group. In column two (yellow light) they list the things they'd like to continue doing in the group (with or without modifications). In column three (red light), they list all the things they'd like to stop doing in the group. This can lead to the group discussing norms, decisions, and behaviors that may change the Group Contract.

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Facilitator-Led Activities

Before youth create a plan of action, make sure participants verbalize and record their personal goals and group goals for the service-learning process. What do they want to accomplish at the end? What changes would they like to see in the community? What changes would they like to see in themselves?

By the end of this step, teens should have set two group goals and at least one personal goal they'd like to accomplish, along with measures of success for each.

Goal-less Activity

Time: 10 minutes

Materials: Random items

Do an activity or game with no stated goal or objective. The purpose of this activity is for youth to realize that setting goals, defining objectives and determining measures of success are vital in completing a task.

Give directions for the activity, but don't explain what the goals or objectives are. At the end of the activity, appoint a winner, but don't explain why they won. This activity should provide some frustration, lack of clarity, and a bit of chaos to get youth understand the point.

Example activities:

- Divide youth into pairs, give them a table of materials, and say, "build something." Set five minutes on the clock, and see what happens. Don't answer any of their questions—just keep repeating how much time pairs have left. Example materials might include paper, tape, rulers, crayons, scissors, straws, markers.
- Get the group on one side of the room, and explain that they have to move to the other side of the room. Define the goal of this activity but not the measures of success (participants must walk backwards). Say "Go!" Give them feedback by telling participants they aren't doing it correctly and to try again. Repeat this until someone gets it right or the group gives up in frustration.

Debrief the activity by asking youth how they felt about the activities and why. Encourage youth to think about what was missing from each game (the goal or the measures of success) and think of ways it could have been done better. Have a group discussion about the importance of goals and outcomes in games and in the service-learning project.

Quick Reflection Questions

- How did you feel about that activity?
- What was challenging about it? How could it have been made clearer?
- Why are goals or outcomes important, even for a game like this?

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GPS Navigation

Time: 20 minutes

Materials: Whiteboard or large poster paper, notebook or journal

In this activity, participants will set group goals and each youth will set a personal goal to be achieved by the end of the project. To set a group goal and determine the measures of success, have youth brainstorm the changes they'd like to see in the community and in the group. Encourage youth to choose and lead any of the Brainstorm Activities (page 33-36 in the Facilitator Guide and 15-18 in the Teen Leader Guide) to discuss their goals. Youth should decide on two or more group goals—at least one centered around making an impact on the community, and at least one about the group dynamics. For example, if the group has decided to coordinate a community volunteer day at an animal shelter, their goals and measures of success could be:

- **Goal:** Have 20 community members participate in the volunteer day. **Measure of Success:** Count and record the number of participants.
- **Goal:** Serve 50 animals during the volunteer day. **Measure of Success:** Create a post-event survey to gather information from the contact at the animal shelter.
- **Goal:** Group reports a 90-percent participant satisfaction after each session. **Measure of Success:** Conduct anonymous surveys after each session and track the results.

Throughout the planning phase, teens will set goals, try to work through them, and evaluate how they did. The GPS system works well for this and is something the group should return to over and over again. GPS isn't just about setting the goal—it's about keeping an eye on progress in reaching the goal.

Goal Selection

Once youth have decided upon the group goals, encourage them to consider whether each goal is meaningful and realistic yet still a stretch. Goals should be challenging but attainable. It's also important to break goals into small steps, with actions assigned to each step. This is a great way to visualize the process.

Pursue Strategies

After the goals have been solidified, have youth create a plan of action and stick to it. After each step of the plan, youth should check their progress and review the strategies. Encourage them to assess the success of their plan thus far and reevaluate strategies as needed.

Shift Gears

Sometimes, the best laid plans go awry. If youth are finding a certain strategy isn't working, encourage them to change elements of it to create a better plan. Youth should feel able to look for help from outside sources and request resources as needed. It's okay to change goals if the original goal isn't attainable! Allow for group discussions to determine if they should shift gears and reestablish new goals and measures of success.

Quick Reflection Questions

- How do you feel about the goals you just set? Why are they important?
- What happens if things aren't going according to plan? How might that affect your group dynamic?
- What are you most looking forward to in the upcoming sessions?

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Personal Goal Setting

Time: 20 minutes

Materials: Notebook or journal

Encourage teens to each think about a personal goal they would like to have accomplished by the end of the project. These plans should include specific goals, their measures of success, and tactics to achieve them. Example personal goals can include:

- **Goal:** Work on my leadership skills. **Measure of Success:** Lead at least two Jump Starts or activities before the end of the project. **Strategies:** Be more vocal in group discussions to gain more confidence. Ask advice from other leaders in the group, and learn from their experience.
- **Goal:** Be on time for sessions. **Measures of Success:** Arrive at least five minutes before program time 75 percent of the time, and never be late. **Strategies:** Set a timer so I start getting ready early. Go to the session with a friend as an accountability buddy.

Have them work in small teams to assess each plan through the GPS lens. Is it realistic? Is it achievable? Is it enough of a stretch? Make sure all participants allow time for reevaluation at regular intervals (for example, weekly check-ins). Follow the plan for the entirety of the project. During the regular check-ins, ask youth to evaluate how the goals are going, what's working, what isn't, and what changes they can make to get back on track. The emphasis here is on the process more than the end result.

Quick Reflection Questions

- Is it more or less challenging to create personal goals rather than group goals?
- How might working toward reaching the goals in this project help you in other areas of your life?

Teen-Led Activities

Most community needs are longstanding and complex; few can be solved with just an afternoon's effort. If the group doesn't spend adequate time on the service project, participants may think they can solve the challenge by simple means. This does not encourage much reflection or problem solving and probably does not produce substantial change in their outlook or commitment to community issues.

Unfortunately, this may be the unintended result of some community service projects, such as cleaning up litter from a creek bank for one afternoon. That solves the problem for a day, but over time, the littering may continue unless a longer-term solution is found and the source of the problem is examined and analyzed. The amount of time spent on a service-learning project and the sense of meaningful activity that produces long-term impacts are directly related to positive outcomes for youth involved in service-learning. Overall, participants learn that the world is more complex than they thought, and they gain a deeper respect for diversity and the challenges that others face.

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Action Planning Worksheet

Time: 30–60 min

Materials: Action Planning Guide (page 54; download available in Resource Library on Learning Lab)

After youth have discussed and set goals for the project, the next step is to create an action plan. The action planning guide walks youth through the process of creating a vision statement, a goal statement, and objectives. It encourages youth to look into the specifics of their project as they create their plan of action.

The action planning guide is also a helpful tool for youth to use in identifying elements needed for the project to be a success. Go over the sample action planning worksheet found on page 52. Print and distribute an action planning guide to each participant. Encourage teens to work in pairs or small teams to fill out the guide. Some questions youth should consider while filling out the action planning guide include:

- How long will this project take to accomplish?
- Will a certain amount of money need to be raised for the project?
- Does the project require any special tools or trainings?

Have youth brainstorm these questions and others. It's important that teens set realistic time lines, spell out the tasks that need to be completed, make assignments, and set deadlines.

Once the pairs/teams have completed their own action planning guides, have them facilitate a full-group discussion on what should be included in the group guide.

Quick Reflection Questions

- How do you feel about our action plan?
- Was it challenging to create?
- What are our next steps for the project?

Planning Tips

There are three types of meaningful action that can be incorporated into a service-learning project.

- *Direct service*, such as tutoring, mentoring, and helping the elderly.
- *Indirect service*, such as drives, collections, fundraisers, clean-up, construction, and environmental projects.
- *Advocacy*, such as lobbying, speaking, and performing.

Have youth consider which kinds of action would be appropriate or most effective for the project. Service-learning projects often incorporate more than one type of action, and many use all three.

Step 3 Reflection Questions

Along with the quick reflection activities for each activity, facilitate a group reflection to wrap up the planning process. Use a Session Reflection Strategy on page 27 to answer the following questions:

What?

- Did the group complete all items on the checklist?
- How did you feel about the goal-setting process?
- What does GPS mean?
- What were the highlights of the sessions?
- What were some challenges the group faced?

So what?

- Why do we need to set goals for ourselves and the group?
- How do our Sparks and creativity contribute to the service-learning process?

Now what?

- What is next for the group to do?
- What can we do better in the next session?
- How can you use the goal setting and planning process in other areas of your life?

Self-Reflection

- How did you share one of your talents in this activity?
- How did your team benefit from it?

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Vision Statement

A broad statement that embodies what you want your community to look like after your project is over.

Goal Statement

A specific statement of what will be different in your community after the service project. The goal should be concise, measurable, and action-based.

Objectives

Specific activities that will help you reach your goal.

Resources

What resources are available?

Obstacles

What obstacles need to be overcome?

Timelines

When do you need to finish the project by?

Success Factors

What is required if you are to be successful?

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Vision Statement

A broad statement that embodies what you want your community to look like after your project is over.

Our community will have more resources to combat hunger and feed members of our community.

Goal Statement

A specific statement of what will be different in your community after the service project. The goal should be concise, measurable, and action-based.

There will be 100 more food items donated to the local food pantry and volunteer days with our classmates as a result of our service project.

Objectives

Specific activities that will help you reach your goal.

1. We will work with a local food pantry and our school to set up a food collection drive.
2. We will start a campaign to raise awareness of hunger in our school.
3. We will organize a volunteer day for our friends and families to help out at the food pantry.

Resources

What resources are available?

- \$200 grant from a local foundation
- Mrs. Smith from the food pantry
- Principal Brown
- Mike's ability to make fliers
- Art teacher's printer
- Marie's connection to the city council
- Matt's experience volunteering at the food pantry

Obstacles

What obstacles need to be overcome?

- Getting friends and families to sign up for volunteer day
- Storing food items that we collect
- Getting our classmates involved in the campaign

Timelines

When do you need to finish the project by?

- Post fliers around school by October 1
- Start collecting cans at lunch on November 1
- Collect all cans by December 10
- Conduct volunteer day at the food pantry by December 10

Success Factors

What is required to be successful?

- Our principal working with us to allow collecting cans during school
- At least 50 cans collected
- At least 20 volunteers at our volunteer day at the food pantry

Step 4: Conducting the Service Project

At this point, youth should be ready to see all the planning turn into action.

In Step 4, teens will:

- Actively participate in the service project.
- Document their experience.
- Lead the group through the project.
- Critically analyze accomplishments and challenges.

Step 4 Checklist

Have youth go over the Step 4 Checklist. Before moving on to the reflection, evaluation and celebration, the group should have accomplished the following tasks:

- ☐ Complete the service project.
- ☐ Record your initial thoughts.

Roadmap

Have youth discuss the plan for conducting the service project and create a roadmap detailing all that needs to be completed. This roadmap may come in relieving confusion during the day. Be sure they include tasks that must be accomplished, who is responsible for the tasks, any materials needed, when things need to be completed and other important details. The more information the better!

Jump Start

Before conducting the service project, begin program time with a Jump Start activity (either the one listed below or one from page 22) to relieve any stress.

Icicle/Puddle Relaxation	
Time: 5 minutes	Materials: (Optional) soothing music
This relaxation technique is a good way to quell nerves and focus attention. Inform youth that they will close their eyes and hear either the word “frozen” or the word “puddle.” Instruct participants that when “frozen” is called, they should imagine they are frozen solid, like an icicle, by standing up straight and stiffening all muscles. Then, when they hear the word “puddle” they are to imagine they are melting into a puddle by relaxing all of their muscles and moving their bodies freely. Repeat this process several times to release tension in participants’ muscles and relax their minds.	

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After completing the Jump Start, have youth begin their service project. Keep in mind that **this is the teens' project, not the facilitators**. Refrain from telling the group what to do, but ask questions and make suggestions (if needed). Let the teens lead the group.

Tips for Conducting the Service Project

The day of the project may feel stressful or even chaotic. Here are some tips for successfully facilitating and watching over the teens' project:

- **Have staff or family members volunteer to help out.** An extra pair of hands can go a long way with an event like a bake sale. As a facilitator, determine early on if the group will need more adults to help and, if so, encourage youth to think of ways to find volunteers.
- **Make sure volunteers know when and where they will be meeting.**
- **Have the phone numbers and/or email addresses of community members involved.** If the service project includes working with community members during the service project, make sure to have their contact information available.
- **Record and document the project as it is happening.** While this element is usually completed by the participants, plan to save keepsakes, take pictures, record notes, and jot down quotes while the service project is happening. This will be a great contribution to the cumulative reflection during Step 5.
- **Check in with individual participants.** Take time to talk with each participant during the project to get their feedback about the experience and answer any questions. It is important for the teens to be able to process the experience in the moment and convey their thoughts to a caring adult.

Step 4 Reflection Questions

After conducting the service project, facilitate a group reflection to wrap up the day. Use a Reflection Technique from page 27 to answer the following questions:

What?

- How do you think today went?
- What were some positives of the project?
- What were some challenges?
- How did you all work as a group to complete the task?

So what?

- Did you reach your goals?
- If yes, what were the biggest contributing factors to your success?
- If no, what went wrong and how could it have been handled better?

Now what?

- Now that the group has conducted the service project, what is left to do?
- How can you continue helping this cause even after the project is done?

Self-Reflection

- Identify three emotions that the group experienced throughout the day. How did these emotions affect our actions?
- How did you care for others and the resources used during the service project?
- How did it affect others?

Step 5: Reflection, Evaluation and Celebration!

The goal of reflecting, evaluating and celebrating is for youth to look back on the TIA service-learning process to reflect on the experience, evaluate the strategies and celebrate their hard work. These three activities are incredibly important to measuring youth outcomes and skill development.

Please note that this step doesn't designate facilitator-led activities from teen-led. At this point in the process, participants should feel comfortable leading reflections, but it may be beneficial for facilitators to help guide the discussion.

In Step 5, teens will:

- Practice a growth mindset,
- Critically evaluate service-learning process,
- Reflect on personal and group goals.

Step 5 Checklist

Have youth go over the Step 5 Checklist as a group. The group should have accomplished the following tasks:

- ☐ Complete one final Jump Start activities.
- ☐ Reflect on the service process.
- ☐ Complete an evaluation form.
- ☐ Celebrate the completion of a service project!

Roadmap

Have youth complete a final roadmap detailing the celebration schedule, including tasks, timelines and materials.

Jump Start

Begin program time with a Jump Start activity (either the one listed below or one from page 22) to have youth connect with one another and express their feelings.

Back Compliments

Time: 10 minutes

Materials: Blank paper, tape, markers

Have all participants write their name on a piece of paper and tape it to their back. Youth circulate the room and write anonymous compliments on each other's paper. The compliments can be specific praises ("Thank you for helping me finish that task."), general statements ("You're great at keeping your cool during a conflict.") or positive attributes ("Caring and creative."). After youth have written on all participants' papers, have teens quietly read and reflect on the affirmations they were given.

Reflecting

The TIA concepts are not taught – they’re learned through experience and reflection. Reflections are the process by which participants think critically about their experience and honestly evaluate what worked and what didn’t work. The goal is for teens to look back on what they learned – a process that’s at the core of Thrive{ology}.

6 Elements of Reflection

Time: 20 minutes

Materials: None

For the last session together as a TIA group, youth conduct one final reflection (using one of the Session Reflection Strategies). Purposefully frame the reflection around the six elements to allow youth to recognize and commit them to memory.

- **Significance:** What was the importance of the project you chose, planned, and executed? Did you discover something new about yourself during the process? Find any Sparks you’d like to pursue?
- **Process Recognitions:** What went well during the process? What planning strategy, consensus building activity or group guideline added to the success? What needed some more work?
- **Strategies:** When you do a similar project like this in the future, what new strategy would you try? What strategy would you avoid? What would you do to make the group work better together?
- **Motivation:** How do you feel about the whole experience? Did we do what we set out to do, even if our goals changed throughout the process?
- **Analysis:** What have you gained from conducting a service-learning project? What have you learned from your peers in the group? What have you learned from the community members you interacted with? How can this new knowledge assist you in other areas of your life?
- **Introspection:** What strengths did you bring to the service project? How did you contribute to the project? What was most difficult for you to do? How did it feel to collaborate with others? What new skills have you gained? What are you better at now than you were before the project?

This final reflection should be a special time for teens to speak honestly about their process and mark any changes they see in themselves or in their peers. Youth are invited to discuss the personal goals they set for the project. Encourage teens to give each other compliments when appropriate.

Cumulative Reflection Project

Time: 20 minutes

Materials: Various

Youth should have chosen a Cumulative Reflection Project at the beginning of the service-learning process and added to it throughout the weeks with ideas, quotes, pictures, triumphs and setbacks. During Step 5 – the final step in the process – youth should put finishing touches on the comic book, presentation scrapbook or whichever medium they chose and be prepared to present it during the celebration.

Allow time for youth to put the finishing touches on their Cumulative Reflection Project and prepare to show the results during the celebration.

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Evaluating

Part of service-learning is coming away from the project with a better understanding of what works and what doesn't. Evaluation isn't just a matter of finding out what didn't work and why; rather, it's also to understand what was done well and what can be done better next time.

Have youth complete the TIA Post-Project Evaluation Form (download available on the Resource Library of the Learning Lab and on page 42 of the Teen Leader Guide) independently and turn it into the facilitator when they're complete. Encourage youth to answer the questions honestly, as it is an anonymous evaluation form used to gain feedback on the TIA curriculum. After Camp Fire staff have had time to collect and analyze the evaluation forms, be sure to report the results back to the group (if available) with notes about any genuine changes to the TIA curriculum as a result of their response. **It is important for youth to know that their voice matters and their opinions are valued.** Evaluations shouldn't be conducted just for the sake of conducting them – work with Camp Fire staff to turn feedback into positive changes.

Facilitators are also encouraged to fill out a [TIA Feedback Form](#) to inform Camp Fire National Headquarters on the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum.

Celebrating!

It's time for youth to reward themselves for a job well done!

Recognition is a crucial element of any successful project. It encourages a growth mindset by praising and celebrating the learning process over the project outcomes. It's also a way for groups to celebrate their accomplishments as a team, and recognize individual personal goals achieved.

Let youth use their creativity (within reason) to determine the most fitting way to celebrate the completion of their project. Allow youth time during the process to plan the celebration, including determining guests (Family, friends, teachers, staff?), setting the menu (If allowed, will there be snacks for the celebration? Who brings what?), attire (Should everyone dress professional to present their Cumulative Reflection Project?) and the run of show (Will there be any presentations, photo album sharing, or speeches given?).

Give youth guidelines for the celebration (things like whether or not youth can do a field trip, travel somewhere fun, get dinner at a restaurant, etc.) but allow them to make the choices. Look into whether your Camp Fire Council has awards they can donate or if there is a possibility of having things donated to the program.

The most important element of the celebration is that youth are able to look back on the TIA service-learning experience, recognize the leadership skills they've gained, and be proud of their hard work.

Useful Resources and Recognition

Citations

A special recognition to the following:

- Camp Fire Columbia
- Edutopia
- University of Memphis
- Character.org

Community Partners and Resources

Developing community partnerships will provide many opportunities in support of your Teens in Action (TIA) program. Furnishing time, financial support, materials, and supplies are all ways that a business/service organization may invest in the positive development of youth in their community.

Consider the following when searching for community partners and resources:

- Camp Fire National Headquarters
- Camp Fire Local Council
- Chamber of Commerce
- City Hall
- Parks and Recreation Department
- State and National Wildlife Departments
- Other Youth-Serving Organizations
- Churches, Mosques, and Synagogues
- Civic Organizations: Rotary Clubs, Women's Clubs, etc.
- Schools, Colleges, and Universities
- Art Museums (Education Department)
- Symphony and Theater Groups
- Fraternities and Sororities
- American Camping Association
- Banks
- Nonprofit Fundraising Organizations (United Way)
- American Red Cross
- American Heart Association
- Hospitals
- Public Speakers For other service and leadership program options:
- National Youth Leadership Council offers national-level projects (<http://www.nylc.org/>)
- GoLEAD offers the Points of Light Youth Leadership Institute (<http://www.generationon.org>)

Youth Advisory Cabinet Information

Teens who have successfully worked on the TIA program may be good candidates for Camp Fire's National Youth Advisory Council (YAC). This is an outstanding achievement for Camp Fire youth, a recognition of excellence and an opportunity to demonstrate leadership on a national scale. What follows is a description of the responsibilities and requirements for application. The application process begins in early September every year. The virtual application is sent to councils via Camp Fire National Headquarters.

Note: participants who are interested in the YAC may also be interested in applying for the President's Volunteer Service Award (www.presidentialserviceawards.gov).

The YAC serves in an advisory capacity at the national level and represents the body of Camp Fire youth in general. Its members discuss matters of mutual concern; review national level teen programs; help plan Camp Fire events; deliberate on organizational issues, as identified by the National President/(CEO); consult with the CEO on youth issues, as identified through communication with youth at the local level; represent Camp Fire at local and national events; and provide a supporting, learning role for youth involvement with adults in various aspects of the organization.

There may be an occasional need for ad hoc task forces to be formed out of the YAC to provide in-depth discussion and review of particular issues and/or criteria.

Composition

Camp Fire's National YAC is comprised of 17 young people from across the nation. These youth have extraordinary leadership skills and are passionate about shaping the world. While Camp Fire experience is not required to serve on the cabinet, Camp Fire programs equip youth with the service-learning and leadership tools needed to serve on this level.

The YAC is led by its Chair and Vice Chair. These leadership positions serve as the liaison from the cabinet to the National Board of Trustees and CEO.

Term of Office

New representatives will be selected for two-year terms.

Qualifications

To qualify, youth will:

- Have reached the age of 16 by the first day of term (Jan. 1) and will not attain age 21 in their first year of term.
- Be active in their community through volunteering, community service, or a leadership position.
- Be willing to make a two-year commitment, which includes a face-to-face meeting. (travel costs covered by Camp Fire) and bi-weekly conference calls.
- Be open to the opinions and perspectives of others and willing to try new things.
- Have a passion for bettering themselves, the community, and the world in which we live.

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Selection Process

YAC members will be selected through an application process. Any youth who meets the qualifications may apply for a position on the YAC. Persons previously serving on YAC may reapply if they still meet the qualifications.

The application is composed of three essay questions to better understand the applicant's leadership experience and passion for serving. Should an applicant not be selected to serve, they may reapply as many times necessary as long as they meet the qualifications.

After the initial screening, phone interviews will be conducted with the finalists. The CEO, current YAC Chair, and the National Staff Partner to the YAC are involved in the final selection and phone interviews. Letters will be sent to all applicants notifying them of the final decision.

Responsibilities

YAC members are required to:

- Discuss matters of mutual concern related to youth.
- Review national-level program curricula to provide youth input. • Help plan Camp Fire events, including the National Youth Leadership Experience.
- Promote deliberation of organizational issues, as identified by the national staff.
- Consult with the national staff and national board members on youth issues, as identified through communications with youth at the local level.
- Represent Camp Fire at local and national events.
- Evaluate the YAC application yearly and determine the questions to be asked of applicants.

Meetings

Mandatory attendance is expected at the following:

- One face-to-face meeting per year
 - Bi-weekly conference calls
- Ad hoc task force meetings as needed

Funding

National headquarters will pay actual expenses for travel and other resources necessary to complete projects.

President's Volunteer Service Awards

In the United States, one of the distinctive characteristics of our democracy is that each individual can make a difference. The Purpose of the President's Volunteer Service Awards is to create a widespread, grassroots recognition system to encourage Americans to participate in voluntary community service.

Volunteers can work individually or in groups. The hours-served requirement varies by age group and by award level, but for young people aged 15–25, the minimum is 100–174 hours in a 12-month period for an individual or 200–499 hours for a group

The award levels and other information are available here: [http://www. presidentialserviceawards.gov](http://www.presidentialserviceawards.gov)

Congressional Award

The U.S. Congress has awards for youth ages 14—23 who have distinguished themselves in four program areas: Volunteer Public Service, Personal Development, Physical Fitness, and Expedition or Exploration. There are varying levels of awards, based on hours. Candidates must have an adult mentor help them set reasonable goals for achieving the awards.

Full details can be found at www.congressionalaward.org