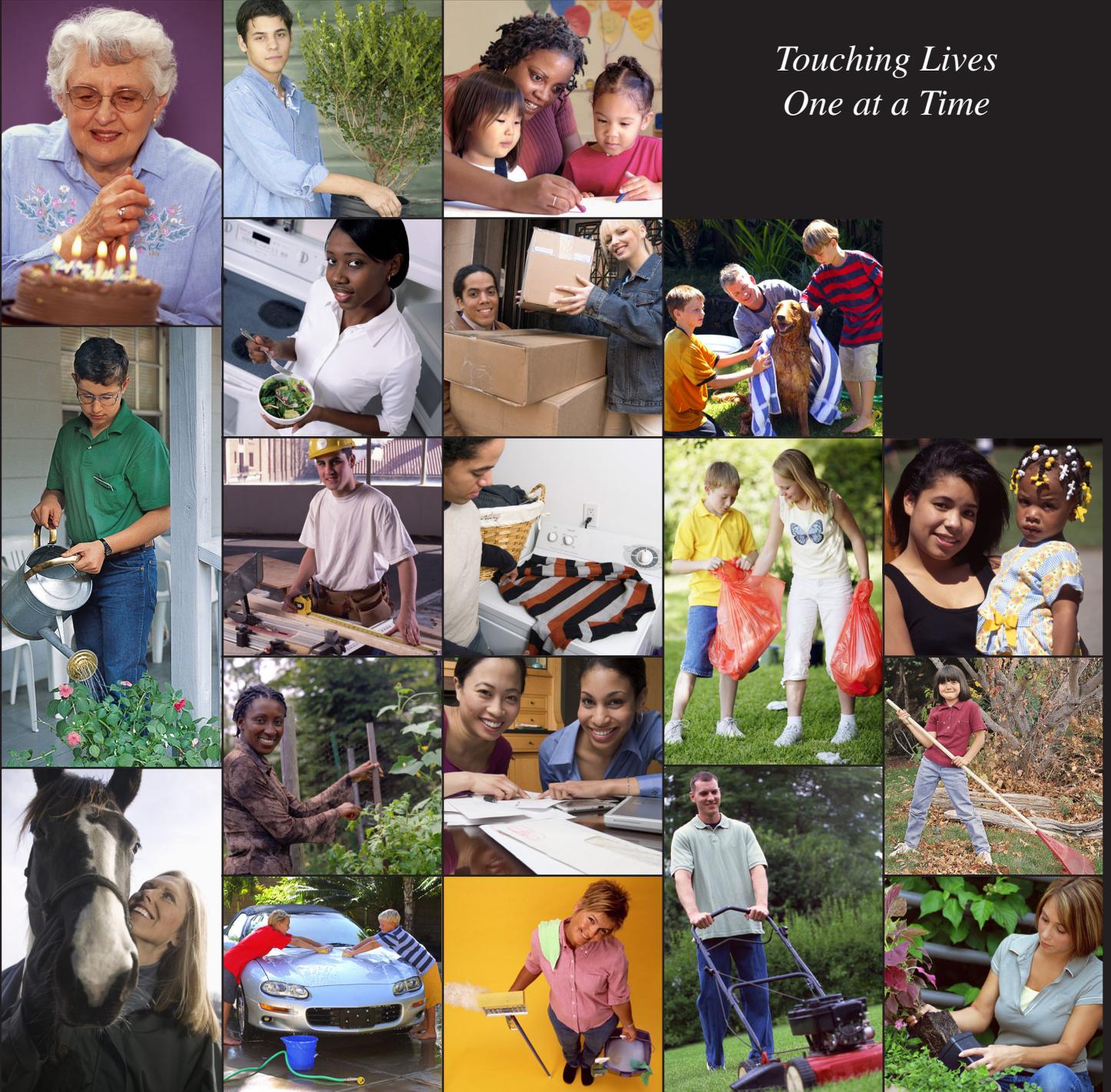


Creating Community Service Opportunities for Suspended and Expelled Youth: A Final Report on Virginia's Experience

*Touching Lives
One at a Time*



**CREATING
COMMUNITY SERVICE
OPPORTUNITIES FOR
SUSPENDED AND
EXPELLED YOUTH**

**A FINAL REPORT ON
VIRGINIA'S EXPERIENCE**

Virginia Department of Education

2005

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Creating Community Service Opportunities for Suspended and Expelled Youth: Overview

Purpose

This publication is intended to serve as a useful information resource for communities interested in developing community service opportunities for students who have been suspended or expelled. It is based on both the Virginia experience in creating such opportunities and on the broader body of knowledge found in the related fields of youth service, civic engagement, and youth development.

This information resources includes findings, insights, and “lessons learned” from the diverse experiences of eighteen Virginia communities. Additionally, it assists the reader in navigating several related, but potentially confusing fields; provides many examples of program models and community partnerships; describes considerations and steps in program planning; and identifies many valuable resources.

Overview of Content

Chapter One provides background information about the U.S. Department of Education (USED) Community Service Grant Program for Suspended and Expelled Students and about how the Virginia Department of Education approached and implemented the program. Although three goals for the program were set forth in federal statute, the USED allowed state education agencies considerable latitude in administering programs within their states. Funding was authorized for only a two-year period.

Chapter Two examines community service, its multiple definitions, and the variety of beliefs, assumptions, and frameworks influencing the approaches of community service advocates. Community service is differentiated from service learning and “community service learning,” a program growing in youth courts, is introduced. The Chapter concludes with a national perspective on the dramatic growth of service and service.

Chapter Three reviews some of the research demonstrating the benefits of community service and takes a closer look at benefits for students who are suspended and expelled. Included are Virginia findings based on feedback from youth and from community service sites. The contribution of community service experience to positive youth development is also examined.

Chapter Four focuses on building community partnerships to create community service opportunities for students who are suspended or expelled. The issue of suspension and expulsion is viewed as a community issue most effectively addressed through collaborative efforts. A seven-step program planning process is set forth. Descriptions of Virginia’s local community service projects and lists of local community service sites and the types of services performed demonstrate the variety of ways Virginia communities formed collaborative program partnerships to create different program models and services and to provide rich community service opportunities for youth. Findings on the relationship of effective collaboration and effective program implementation conclude the chapter.

Chapter Five examines the elements of a high quality community service program. Lessons learned from Virginia’s experience and other “best practice” tips and guidelines from the most credible and usable resources are included. The information is intended to support quality programming.

Chapter Six provides a basic model for evaluating a community service program for suspended and expelled students. The model can be adapted to meet local program needs.

Appendices contain additional information about Virginia’s Community Service Program, youth service and prevention frameworks that inform community service practice, and lists of resources and publications of interest to readers.

What You Will Not Find

You will not find a simple program model that can be replicated easily in any community.

More than anything, Virginia’s community service projects demonstrated the diversity of approaches used by local collaborative partnerships to address local conditions using local resources. Local creativity and resourcefulness were evident throughout.

What you will find is a synthesis and compilation of the most relevant information currently available designed to provide –

- Critical considerations in designing a community service program;
- Insights from Virginia’s experience and the experience of others; and
- Key resources to support quality program development and implementation.

Chapter One

The Community Service Program for Suspended and Expelled Students: Background

U.S. Department of Education Community Service Grant Program

Purpose and Goal

The Community Service Grant program was authorized in Section 4126 of Title IV, Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as re-authorized in the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001. The **purpose** of the Community Service Grant program was to enable States to implement and coordinate programs under which students expelled or suspended from school are required to perform community service.

The **goal** of the program set forth in statute was –

- to provide suspended and expelled students with meaningful activities to occupy their time during their absence from regular school;
- to help them avoid negative behavior; and
- to teach them the value of service to others and their communities.

The statute prescribed that the Community Service Grant program were to be administered by state education agencies (SEAs); in Virginia, the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) administered the program. Funding was authorized for only a two-year period beginning in 2002. In Virginia programs have continued into the 2004-2005 school year using carryover funds. Virginia received approximately \$970,000 each year for a two-year period.

Characteristics of Effective Community Service Programs for Suspended and Expelled Students

According to draft nonregulatory guidance provided by the U.S. Department of Education (U.S. Department of Education, September 2002), community service programs are characterized by activities that are not based on curriculum and can be arranged through schools, community agencies, or private companies. These services can encompass a variety of activities, including activities such as volunteering at local homeless shelters, sanitation and community clean-up, or working with the elderly. They also may or may not be related to a student's future career choice. Since it is not curriculum-based and does not contain specific learning objectives, community service usually does not allow its

participants to earn course credit toward graduation. Other examples of activities allowable under the community service program include (but are not limited to):

- Expanding mandatory community service programs for juvenile offenders to include suspended and expelled students;
- Developing activities that promote awareness of effective community service programs that can serve suspended and expelled youth;
- Disseminating information about community service programs to local school districts and communities;
- Coordinating “alternative education” services with community service programs;
- Formulating comprehensive and collaborative community service programs that include strategies, such as reintegration approaches, individual and family counseling services, and alternative education services, for transitioning suspended and expelled students back into the education mainstream;
- Developing a partnership with the Governor’s SDFSCA program to integrate community service into existing community-based programs; and
- Collaborating with State VISTA and service-learning coordinators to establish community service opportunities for suspended and expelled students (Contact the Corporation for National and Community Service for additional information).

The U.S. Department of Education viewed effective community service programs as likely to:

- Be based on sound research and include an evaluation component;
- Feature a tracking system to ensure that students complete community service requirements and return to the education mainstream in a timely manner;
- Involve schools, community organizations, parents, and students in the design and implementation of the programs;
- Engage youth in meaningful and positive activities; and
- Provide troubled students with consistent support, opportunities, and skills for successful futures.

To develop and implement programs that are aligned with these principles, every aspect of the community – businesses, youth serving organizations, law enforcement, mental health organizations, and religious organizations – must be active supporters.

Although titled the community service “grant” program, the authorizing federal statute [Section 4126 of Title IV, Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)] required that state educational agencies administering the community service grant program enter into contracts with, rather than award grants to, eligible organizations. Organizations eligible to be awarded contracts were local school divisions, community-based organizations (CBOs), including faith-based organizations, or public or private non-profit entities.

Virginia's Community Service Grant Program

In early 2003, the VDOE formed an advisory task force of school leaders and representatives from community agencies to advise VDOE on best ways to use available funds. The VDOE worked with the Center for School/Community Collaboration (CSCC) at the School of Education, Virginia Commonwealth University, in preparing a "Best Practices" Implementation Plan for the Community Service Grant program. Tasks defined for the advisory task force were as follows:

- to define the needs of suspended/expelled students;
- to examine programs currently being used;
- to recommend the best ways of using the available federal funding in serving suspended/expelled students.

Pursuant to Task Force Recommendations, funded local community service projects were required to:

- involve collaborative partnerships among schools and community agencies and organizations that reflect the perspective that suspensions and expulsions constitute a community issue rather than exclusively a school issue;
- use proven program, approaches and practices that have been demonstrated to be effective;
- include academic, counseling and parent involvement components in addition to community service;
- provide highly individualized services designed to ensure that the community service is a meaningful experience and achieves intended program goals; and
- participate in program-related training and a cross-site evaluation.

A request for proposals (RFP) was issued through Superintendents Informational Memo No. 90, issued May 23, 2003, and a half-day technical assistance workshop was held for prospective bidders in June 2003. Proposals were reviewed in late July and contractors were notified in early August 2003. Funds were awarded to eighteen contractors to establish community service programs for suspended and expelled students in 2003-2004; fifteen contractors were awarded funds to continue their programs through the 2004-2005 school year. Recognized as a time-limited initiative with funding authorized for only two years, the Community Service Grant program was viewed as an opportunity to put community service projects and resources in place that have not heretofore existed and that potentially could remain after the funding ends.

The VDOE worked with the Center for School-Community Collaboration (CSCC) at the School of Education, Virginia Commonwealth University, in coordinating the implementation of the community service program. The CSCC provided ongoing technical assistance to contractors, including periodic

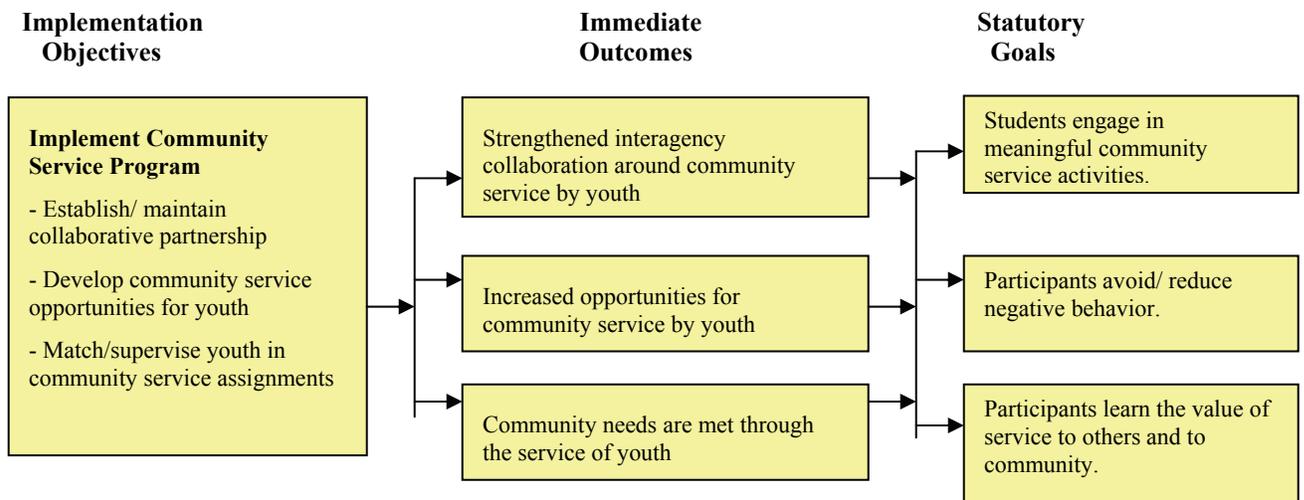
“networking” workshops that have focused on critical aspects of program implementation. PolicyWorks, Ltd., an independent program evaluation and policy research firm, provided external evaluation services, designing and conducting the comprehensive cross-site evaluation.

Program Logic Model and Evaluation Questions

The underlying program theory or “logic model” upon which the Community Service Program is based is represented below in Figure 1. It schematically represents assumptions and expectations about how the Community Service Program activities align to produce the three statutory goals.

Community Service Program Simple Logic Model

Assumption: Performing community service will provide suspended or expelled students with meaningful activities to occupy their time during their absence from regular school, will help them avoid negative behavior, and will teach them the value of service to others and to their communities.



The comprehensive cross-site evaluation was designed to answer the following primary evaluation questions:

1. What are the essential characteristics of the Community Service Programs in Virginia?
2. What are the essential characteristics of program participants?
3. In what types of service activities did participants engage?
4. To what extent are opportunities for community service increased in participating communities?
5. Did participants engage in meaningful service activities?
6. Did participants avoid/reduce negative behavior?
7. Did participants learn the value of service to others and to community?
8. What program characteristics lead to the accomplishment of program goals and why?

Selected findings from the cross-site evaluation are reported throughout this publication. Final evaluation findings are included in this publication as Chapter Seven, beginning on page 91.

Virginia Community Service Program for Suspended and Expelled Students: Local Programs

Project	Locality	Lead Agency/Organization
Teens GIVE/Enterprise Center	Albemarle County	Albemarle County Schools
L.I.F.E. - Learning in Field Environments Program	Bristol	Bristol City Schools
V.O.I.C.E. - Volunteer Opportunities in Community Services	Buckingham County	Buckingham County Schools
Pathway Program	Staunton, Waynesboro, Augusta County	Central Shenandoah Valley Office on Youth
S.O.S. - Support on Suspension Program	Fairfax County	Vienna Teen Foundation
CAPS (Counseling Academic Parenting Service)	Fauquier County	Fauquier County Public Schools
CAPS - Community Alternative Program for Suspension	Franklin County	Franklin County/Ben Franklin Middle School
Youth in Service to the Community	Isle of Wight County	Isle of Wight County Schools
T.E.A.M.S., Stay for Life	Wise County	Lonesome Pine Office on Youth
Making It Work	Petersburg	Petersburg City/Juvenile Community Crime Control
Project Uplift	Portsmouth	Portsmouth City Public Schools
Powhatan Youth and Community Partnership	Powhatan County	Powhatan Department of Juvenile Justice
Project ACT - Achievement, Character, Teamwork	Southampton County	Southampton County Schools
SHINE - Students Helping In a New Experience	Stafford County	Stafford County Schools
TACT - Teaching Attitudes and Community Together	Staunton	Staunton City Schools

Chapter Two

Community Service: What It Is, What It Isn't, and What It Might Be

This Chapter examines community service, its multiple meanings, and the beliefs, assumptions, and frameworks that influence the approaches of community service advocates. Community service is differentiated from service learning and “community service-learning” and other related terms are introduced. The Chapter concludes with an examination of the dramatic growth in community service opportunities for youth that has occurred in the past two decades.

Definitions: Both Positive and Negative

Community service may be defined quite simply as volunteer work undertaken as an individual or as a member of a group for a single, brief event or over an extended period of time. Community service also may be understood in more philosophical terms as a structured way of interacting in the community where a service is rendered in return for an intangible good that will positively impact the life of the participant. Both the simple and more philosophical meanings connote a positive activity.

In criminal justice circles, the term “community service” is typically understood to be a sentence handed down to someone who has violated the law – a decidedly more negative connotation. In juvenile justice circles, the term has been associated with “restorative justice” that focuses on righting a wrong and changing a negative behavior into a positive one. In this context, community service is seen as having both compensatory and rehabilitative aspects in which the service is seen as not only righting a wrong but also strengthening the connection between the juvenile and his community, and potentially reducing recidivism. Asserting that community service is “the external evidence of an inner ethic of responsibility” and “an obligation to be met, not a punishment to be avoided,” Byron and Ehrlich (1992) have suggested use of the term “compensatory service” when referring to service as a form of punishment.

Sensitive to the mixed interpretations of the term “community service,” Youth Service America convened a knowledgeable group and developed a white paper (Youth Service America, 2002) that explored some of the semantic challenges of the term. The white paper suggests specifying “court-ordered” or “court-mandated” when so required to differentiate such service from that performed “out of the goodness of (the volunteer’s) heart” (p. 5).

Multiple definitions of community service that carry both positive and negative connotations create an immediate challenge for communities interested in creating

community service opportunities for suspended and expelled youth. A somewhat dated but applicable axiom is: “The way you view it is the way you pursue it.”

If community service is viewed by a community as a vehicle for positive youth development, then the approach to planning, promoting, and implementing the program is likely to be different from a program that views community service as a punishment. Community service programs certainly can reflect multiple definitions and approaches – one operational definition does not necessarily preclude another. However, the primary and secondary operational definitions will define primary and secondary program purposes and those purposes will shape the program design and influence a multitude of implementation decisions.

For any community interested in creating community service opportunities for suspended and expelled youth, a fundamental question to be answered early in the planning process is:

Is community service intended to be primarily punitive, rehabilitative, or developmental?

Clarity of purpose will pave the way to better communication, increased buy-in, and smoother implementation. Ultimately, a program should be able to answer a parent’s question:

“Why is my child performing community service?”

<i>When a parent asks, “Why is my child performing community service?”</i>	
Some answers	Definition(s) reflected
“The service is part of his punishment and we hope he will learn the value of service to others and community.”	Primarily punitive with secondary gains recognized but not specifically defined.
“The service is designed to address your child’s behavior and alienation by developing his social skills and competencies and strengthening his bonds to the community.”	Primarily rehabilitative addressing problem behaviors by improving attitudes and skills.
“The service provides your child with positive opportunities to be a valuable resource to his community; the community will benefit directly from his service and he will develop positive relationships, provide meaningful services, learn about his community and develop skills.”	Developmental with clearly articulated benefits and a view of youths as resources rather than problems.

Approaches to Community Service

When a community begins to consider developing a program of community service for youth, representatives of schools, community agencies, and civic organizations are likely to bring a broad range of beliefs and assumptions to the table. Practitioners may also bring theoretical and practice frameworks. It is instructive to examine briefly several philosophical perspectives and two frameworks that are likely to influence and inform the process of community service program development, planning, and implementation.

Community Service as an Approach to Improving Values and Behaviors

Some advocates see community service as an approach to improving the values and behaviors of youth (Conrad and Hedin, 1989). They strongly believe that levels of adolescent alienation may be reduced through student involvement in community service activities, which lead to an increase in self-esteem and decrease in negative behaviors (Calabrese and Shumer, 1986). This philosophical perspective on community service espouses the concept of *social capital*. It is believed that community service enables youth to build *social capital*.

Social capital is defined by Nicolas Winter as “the set of social resources a person has access to and on which they can draw” (2003). Putnam (2000) speaks of *social capital* in terms of community and the trust, norms, and social networks that exist within a community for its constituents use in daily life. Winter (2003) contends that as youth develop *social capital*, they form or reinforce an identity as a person engaged in their community, an identity that promotes positive outcomes throughout life.

Finally, this perspective asserts that community service plays a crucial part in helping establish a normative orientation through daily activity (Youniss, McLellan, Su and Yates, 1999). Through community service, social responsibility and equity will be added to the set of values from which youth may draw in forming their identities (Adams and Marshall, 1996).

Community Service as a Tool to Improve Educational Outcomes

Another philosophical perspective on community service is service as a tool to improve educational outcomes (Conrad & Hedin, 1989). Many educators believe that community service can positively impact students’ intellectual development by expanding their basic academic skills, their critical thinking capacity, and their problem solving ability (Alt &

Medrich, 1994). By engaging students, who may not flourish in the classroom, outside of the classroom, community service provides a hands-on learning experience that, if closely monitored, can demonstrate academic principles, as well as life and vocation skills. This perspective is most evident in service learning programming.

Community Service as a Strategy for Productive Use of Out-of-School Time

Risks associated with out-of-school time have received increased attention over the past decade. A 1992 Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development report, *A Matter of Time: Risk and Opportunity in the Out-of-School Hours*, highlighted the needs of youth and communities in light of the growing number of “latch-key” children. A 1998 report jointly published by the U.S. Departments of Education and Justice entitled *Safe and Smart: Making the After-School Hours Work for Kids* cites numerous negative outcomes associated with unsupervised time, including the following:

- Children and teens who are unsupervised during the hours after school are "far more likely to use alcohol, drugs, and tobacco, engage in criminal and other high-risk behaviors, receive poor grades, and drop out of school."
- Recent data compiled by the Federal Bureau of Investigation make clear that the peak hours for violent juvenile crime are from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m.
- A 1994 Harris poll in which more than half of teachers singled out "children who are left on their own after school" as the primary explanation of students' difficulties in class.
- Children are most likely to be victims of violent crime (e.g., murder, violent sex offense, robbery, and assault) committed by a non-family member between 2 p.m. and 6 p.m.

Students suspended or expelled from school are, by definition, excluded from the supervised school setting. They are, at best, not engaged in productive activity and, at worst, exposed to increased risk for negative behaviors and victimization.

The Risk and Protective Factors Framework

Among the most important developments in substance abuse prevention theory and programming in recent years has been the focus on risk and protective factors as a unifying descriptive and predictive framework. A *risk factor* is an attitude, behavior, belief, situation, or action that may put a group, organization, individual or community at risk for alcohol and drug problems. A *protective factor* is an attitude, behavior, belief,

situation, or action that builds resilience in a group, organization, individual or community. Prevention strategies are designed to reduce risks and increase protective factors. Using this strongly research-based framework, advocates are likely to value community service for strengthening protective factors, including positive personal characteristics and competencies and bonding to societal institutions and values. Additional information about the Risk and Protective Factors Framework is included in Appendix C, page 136.

The Youth Development Framework

This research-based framework focuses on five supports and opportunities that young people need to experience in a youth development program in order to move towards positive long-term outcomes. The five supports and opportunities are safety, supportive relationships, meaningful involvement, skill building, and community involvement. Using this framework, advocates are likely to value community service as a programmatic vehicle for providing many of the identified supports and opportunities for positive youth development. An important dimension of a youth development approach is that it recognizes *youth as resources and contributors* to their communities rather than as problems and as only recipients of services. It represents a shift from a problem-focused

approach to serving youth to a community-youth involvement model designed to create caring pathways of access to opportunity for youth and harness their talents.

Additional information about the Youth Development Framework is included in Appendix B, page 134.

Service requires a different way of thinking about children and youth—not only as the recipients of others’ service, but also as providers of much needed service and solutions to community problems if they are given proper support and guidance in high-quality programs.

- *Service as a Strategy in Out-of-School Time: A How-To Manual*

Many Perspectives Supporting a Community’s Program

The above perspectives and frameworks are likely to influence and inform the process of developing, planning, and implementing community service in any community. These perspectives appear to be particularly applicable to programs for students whose behavior has resulted in suspension or expulsion. They are not necessarily competing views, but can be complementary perspectives that allow a broad range of community stakeholders – educators, courts, mental health professionals, youth development organizations, parents, and civic groups – to collaborate in creating community service opportunities for youth.

Just as with the multiple definitions of community service, these multiple perspectives need to be recognized and understood, then integrated into a local program tailored to local needs and resources. Ultimately, a program should be able to answer for stakeholders the question:

Why create community service opportunities for suspended and expelled youth?

<i>When a community stakeholder asks, “Why create community service opportunities for suspended and expelled youth?”</i>	
Some answers	Approach(es) reflected
“Community service will help youths to improve their behavior and develop values supporting social responsibility and equity.”	Community service as an approach to improving values and behaviors
“Community service provides a hands-on learning experience that can help youths develop critical thinking and problem-solving ability.”	Community service as a tool to improve educational outcomes
“Community service provides those excluded from school with a worthwhile activities in a supervised setting.”	Community service as a strategy for productive use of out-of-school time
“Community service will strengthen the protective factors that reduce the likelihood of negative behaviors; youths will develop positive personal characteristics such social skills, responsiveness, and cooperativeness.”	Risk/protective factor prevention framework
“Youth are resources and contributors to their communities. Community service creates caring pathways to access opportunities for youth to contribute.”	Youth development framework

Community Service and Service Learning: What's the Difference?

Anyone seeking information about community service will quickly be inundated with information on service learning. A recent Google search for “community service” yielded nearly 37 million results. According to the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993, service-learning:

- Is a method whereby students learn and develop through active participation in thoughtfully organized service that is conducted in and meets the needs of communities
- Is coordinated with an elementary school, secondary school, institution of higher education, or community service program and the community
- Helps foster civic responsibility
- Is integrated into and enhances the academic curriculum of the students, or the education components of the community service program in which the participants are enrolled
- Provides structured time for students or participants to reflect on the service experience

Service-learning aims to build knowledge, character, and civic skills in young people by combining service to the community with academic learning. By directly linking service to the academic curriculum, service-learning creates a place for service that is integrated into a school's core mission: education. Instead of becoming one more burden on the already busy lives of teachers, families, and students, service learning strives to make their lives easier by combining academic instruction with civic involvement.

Youth Service America Definitions

A quite simple example that differentiates community service from service learning is one provided by Youth Service America:

- Cleaning up a river is **service**.
- Sitting in a science classroom, looking at water samples under a microscope is **learning**.
- Students taking samples from local water sources, analyzing the samples, documenting the results and presenting scientific findings to a local pollution control agency is **service learning**.

National Center for Education Statistics Definitions

The National Center for Education Statistics, working with the Corporation for National Service, developed differentiated definitions for community service and service learning for use in a survey. The definitions provided to survey respondents are compared below:

Community Service	Service Learning
Community service activities that are <i>non-curriculum-based</i> and are recognized by and/or arranged through the school.	<i>Curriculum-based</i> community service that integrates classroom instruction with community service activities.
<p>The community service:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ May be mandatory or voluntary; ▪ Generally does not include explicit learning objectives or organized reflection or critical analysis activities; and ▪ May include activities that take place off of school grounds or may happen primarily within the school. 	<p>The service must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Be organized in relation to an academic course or curriculum; ▪ Have clearly stated learning objectives; ▪ Address real community needs in a sustained manner over a period of time; and ▪ Assist students in drawing lessons from the service through regularly scheduled, organized reflection or critical analysis activities, such as classroom discussions, presentations, or directed writing.
<p>Examples: Community service activities may be carried out as school-wide events, separately organized school programs, or projects conducted by school-sponsored clubs (e.g., Girls/Boys Clubs, National Honor Society). Examples of service activities could include cleaning up a local park, visiting the elderly, or collecting and distributing food to those in need.</p>	<p>Example: Students in a middle school science class studying the environment help preserve the natural habitat of animals living at a local lake. Through classroom studies, the students learn about the environment. The students keep the area around the lake clean, post signs providing information to the public, and study soil and water composition as well as the impact of industrial development on wildlife. Throughout the project, students write about their experiences in journals and participate in class discussions about the project.</p>

Youth Courts and “Community Service Learning”

The term “community service-learning” has entered the lexicon through the efforts of youth courts to add service-learning components to their programming. In response to teen courts’ interest in service learning, and with funding from the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the Constitutional Rights Foundation and its sister organization in Chicago have developed ***Giving Back: A Community Service-Learning Manual for Youth Courts*** (2002). ***Giving Back*** contains a great deal of very practical guidance about planning and implementing community service activities and projects. Although written for youth courts, other organizations implementing community service project for youth will find the information valuable. ***Giving Back*** can be accessed online at:

http://www.crf-usa.org/YouthCourt/GivingBack_home.html/

Youth courts, also known as teen courts or peer juries, engage young volunteers to help their peers who have committed delinquent acts or other problem behaviors. Youth courts most frequently serve as sentencing hearings for first-time offenders who have acknowledged guilt and agreed – with consent of their parents or guardians – to accept a sentence determined by their peers. Youth court volunteers learn about due process, balanced and restorative justice, and the benefits of volunteering to improve their communities and themselves. Additional information about youth courts is available from the National Youth Court Center at <http://www.youthcourt.net/>

In recent years, there has been much interest in establishing service-learning components to youth court programming. A connection is being made between the goals and objectives of school-based service learning and those of balanced and restorative justice. The chart that follows compares the goals and objectives of each:

Service-Learning Goals and Objectives*	Balanced and Restorative Justice Goals and Objectives
<p>Students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn about their community and its people, processes, and institutions. • Identify and analyze community problems. • Develop social, political, and analytical skills necessary to participate in community life. • Learn that individual rights and freedoms are balanced by responsibilities. • Understand the value of service for the good of the themselves and the community. • Recognize characteristics and actions of a participating citizen. • Work cooperatively with others. 	<p>Youth court respondents will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the legal and judicial system. • Repair harm they have done to victims and the community. • Analyze their own needs and the needs of others, i.e., victims and the community. • Develop competencies that will enable them to become responsible and productive citizens. • Understand the impact their actions have on others, i.e., victims and the community. • Identify and act upon opportunities to make meaningful contributions to their families, schools, peer groups, and communities. • Develop a personal stake in the future of their communities. • Increase life and coping skills.

*Service-learning goals and objectives excerpted from Active Citizenship Today, a school-based, service-learning program designed and implemented by Constitutional Rights Foundation and Close Up Foundation.

Other Key Terms

When reading about community service involving youth, one is likely to encounter several related terms.

Youth Service

“Youth Service” is an umbrella term to identify a vast number of program models, titles, and organizations which share one core attribute: the utilization of youth to provide service to their schools and/or communities. The term should not be confused with "youth services," which typically refer to programs that serve youth. A primary source of information on youth service is Youth Service America (<http://www.ysa.org>).

Volunteerism

“Volunteerism” is the performance of formal service to benefit others or one's community without receiving any external rewards; such programs may or may not involve structured training and reflection. Community service is volunteerism that occurs in the community--action taken to meet the needs of others and better the community as a whole. Programs of all types, like scouts, schools or YMCAs, often perform "community service."

Civic Engagement

Youth “civic engagement” is defined as young citizens developing civic skills and habits as they actively shape democratic society in collaboration with others. Additional information on civic engagement is available from the Center for Democracy and Citizenship at the University of Minnesota - <http://www.publicwork.org/>

Civic Education

Service can foster civic responsibility by giving young people responsibility for significant activities, encouraging interaction among people, and having students perform tasks that are important to community well-being. However, not all service and service-learning can be called civic education.

In order for service to be an effective strategy for building civic engagement and participation in American democracy, civic and historical knowledge should be a part of the learning or training associated with the service the individuals perform. An effective civic engagement strategy might include three components:

- 1) Instruction in the fundamentals of democracy, including essential civic documents and history; civic and government processes; and instruction in civic skills, including responsibility, tolerance, public debate, making presentations, information-gathering, and analysis of current events.
- 2) Meaningful community service activities.
- 3) The effective linkage of the above through reflection and analysis.

While civic education is most commonly a part of social studies or history, it can be incorporated in all service projects and through all curriculum areas. Additional information on civic education is available from the National Alliance for Civic Education at <http://www.cived.net/> and the Center for Civic Education at <http://www.civiced.org/>

Character Education

Character education helps young people to know, care about, and act upon core ethical values such as fairness, honesty, compassion, responsibility, and respect for self and others. While parents and other family members have the primary responsibility for nurturing their children's character, schools, religious institutions, and community-based youth service programs can support and emphasize values through character education. Character education can be provided in a variety of ways, including civics classes that emphasize constitutional principles and the responsibilities of citizenship; school wide projects on ethics and character; student government; and other extracurricular activities.

Volunteer service is a frequent feature of character education programs. It helps young people to practice the values of compassion, caring, cooperation, responsibility and citizenship through meaningful service to others in the community. More information on character education is available from the Character Education Partnership at <http://www.character.org/>

Growth of Community Service Opportunities for Youth

During the past two decades, the array of youth service opportunities has expanded as schools, community organizations, religious institutions, and colleges have incorporated community service into their programming. Legislative action has set in motion a growing national emphasis on increasing students' involvement with their local communities and linking this service to academic study through service-learning. The National and Community Service Act of 1990, through the Serve America program, and the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993, through the Learn and Serve America program, provided support for service-learning activities in elementary and secondary schools (Corporation for National Service, 1999). In addition, through programs such as AmeriCorps, the federal government has offered opportunities to high school graduates, college students, and recent college graduates to serve local communities in exchange for stipends and payment of education loans or money toward future postsecondary education. Both Learn and Serve America and AmeriCorps are administered by the Corporation for National Service, a federal organization also created by the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993.

The 1996 National Household Education Survey (NHES), conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), found that 49 percent of all students in grades 6 through 12 participated in community service; 26 percent participated on a regular basis and 23 percent participated once or twice (U.S. Department of Education, 1999). Of the students participating in community service, 56 percent reported that their community service was incorporated into the curriculum in some way. Student participation rates in schools that only arranged community service were higher than student participation rates in schools that only required community service; participation rates in schools that both required and arranged community service were similar to rates in schools that only arranged community service.

The number of schools offering community service opportunities has grown dramatically. A 1984 study found that 27 percent of all high schools (public and private) in the United States offered some type of community service and 9 percent of all high schools offered service learning, defined as curriculum-related service programs (Newmann and Rutter, 1985). By 1999, a study examining school engagement in community service found that:

- Sixty-four percent of all public schools, including 83 percent of public high schools, had students participating in community service activities recognized by and/or arranged through the school;
- Fifty-seven percent of all public schools organized community service activities for their students;
- Thirty-two percent of all public schools organized service-learning as part of their curriculum, including nearly half of all high schools; and
- Most schools with service-learning cited strengthening relationships among students, the school, and the community as key reasons for practicing service-learning (U.S. Department of Education, 1999).

High Schools Offering Community Service Opportunities		
	1984	1999
Offering community service	27%	83%
Offering service learning	9%	46%

A closer examination of findings from the 1999 study reveals that a higher percentage of high schools (83 percent) than elementary schools (55 percent) or middle schools (77 percent) had students engaged in community service activities.

Community Service, School Size and Wealth

There were also differences in community service participation by school size, with larger schools (i.e., those enrolling 1000 or more students) more likely to have students participating in community service activities than schools with lower enrollments. Schools' use of community service also varied by economic background of students. Using the Title I threshold for schools that qualify as schoolwide Title I programs, schools where 50 percent or more of the student body were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch were compared with those where fewer students qualified. Schools with less than 50 percent of their students eligible for free and reduced-price lunch were more likely to have students participating in community service activities than those that had higher percentages of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch.

Funding for Community Service

Schools were asked whether they received any special grant or other special funding to support community service and/or service-learning. Four-fifths of all schools (84 percent) that reported they had some level of service-learning and/or community service also reported they did not receive outside financial help to fund the program(s).

Of the 16 percent of schools that did report receiving special funding,

- 43 percent reported receiving support from corporations or businesses,
- 37 percent reported receiving support from foundation grants, and
- 10 percent indicated that they received support through the Learn and Serve America program, a federal program designed to provide grants to schools interested in integrating service learning into their curriculum.

This Chapter has examined definitions of “community service,” their positive and negative connotations, and various philosophical perspectives and practice frameworks that are likely to influence approaches to community service. “Community service” was differentiated from “service learning” and “community service-learning” and other related terms were introduced. Additionally, the dramatic growth in community service opportunities for youth that has occurred in the past two decades was examined. In Chapter Three, reasons to involve youth who are suspended or expelled from school in community service will be more closely examined.

Chapter Three

Why Involve Suspended and Expelled Youth in Community Service?

This Chapter examines the benefits of community service, particularly for youth at elevated risk for negative behaviors. Virginia findings based on feedback from youth participants and community service sites are presented. The contribution of community service to positive youth development is also reviewed.

Benefits of Community Service

What the Research Says

A growing body of research suggests that giving young people opportunities to become engaged in civic activities increases the likelihood that they will become healthy, active citizens. In a review of research, Michelsen et al. (2002) found that civic engagement – defined as including community service, political activism, environmentalism, and other volunteer activities – provides not only needed services to community residents but also psychological, social, and intellectual benefits to participants. The following is excerpted from their review (pp. 2 and 5):

Civic engagement activities benefit youths primarily by addressing their need for information and for technical and academic knowledge; social support and interaction; and meaning in life (McDevitt and Chaffee, 2000; Weiler, LaGoy, Crane, and Rovner, 1998). Civic engagement programs that focus on only one of these needs may not be effective. For instance, over two-thirds of youths are proficient in civic knowledge (National Center for Education Statistics, 1999) and say they want to volunteer in the future (Harris Interactive, 2001), but only 14 percent actually participate in political organizations or clubs, and fewer than 50 percent undertake community service (e.g., Flanagan, Bowes, Jonsson, Csap, and Sheblanova, 1998; Harris Interactive, 2001; National Association of Secretaries of State, 1998; National Center for Education Statistics, 1999; Zaff, Moore, Papillo, and Williams, 2001). Research suggests that giving youths social support and helping them understand the importance of their participation are important factors in achieving positive outcomes.

Congress' National Educational Goals for 2000 set forth "involving America's children in community service activities" as an important

objective in preparing students for responsible citizenship. In a society that considers service in the benefit of another a desirable trait, the good produced by community service (helping the poor, environmental cleanup, and so on) is an end in itself.

Research has found that service activities can exert positive academic, psychological, and occupational effects on those who undertake them as well as benefiting the community. For instance, community service activities can contribute to the psychological, social, and intellectual growth of participants (Conrad and Hedin, 1982). Short-term outcomes include improved grades and attendance at school, increased personal efficacy, recognition of the importance of participating in the political system, and socially responsible, community-oriented attitudes (Calabrese and Schumer, 1986; Giles and Eyler, 1994; Hamilton and Fenzel, 1988; Schumer, 1994). Long-term outcomes include increased likelihood of voting in adulthood, commitment to future service, decreased likelihood of dropping out of school, improved transition from school to work, and a strong intrinsic work motivation (Giles and Eyler, 1994; Johnson, Beebe, Mortimer, and Snyder, 1998; Kraft, 1996; Scales and Blyth, 1997). Volunteering is associated with higher rates of church attendance, voting, and taking part in other political acts, such as boycotting and demonstrating; it is associated with a decreased rate of marijuana use and teenage pregnancy (Moore and Allen, 1996; Youniss, McLellan, Su, and Yates, 1999).

National Commission on Service-Learning Findings

In 2000, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, a long-time supporter of service-learning, appointed a National Commission on Service-Learning. The Commission, cosponsored by the John Glenn Institute for Public Service and Public Policy and chaired by former U.S. Senator John Glenn, spent a year studying the state of service-learning in the Nation's schools. The Commission consisted of 18 education, government and community leaders. More details from the Commission's report are available online at www.learningindeed.org/slcommission. The following is a summary of the Commission findings and other studies on potential service-learning effects:

Increased student engagement

Students who participate in high quality service-learning programs can become more active learners. Service-learning allows students to make the critical connection between the knowledge they are acquiring in the classroom and its use in the real world. Through service-learning, students

are taught to think critically, make key decisions, interact with others, and provide service that makes a difference both to themselves and the community. As a result, their school attendance and motivation to learn can increase.

Improved academic achievement

When teachers explicitly tie service activities to academic standards and learning objectives, students can show gains on measures of academic achievement, including standardized tests. Service-learning that includes environmental activities, for example, can help students apply math skills (e.g., measurement and problem solving) and science skills (e.g. prediction and knowledge of botany), if they are explicitly woven into the experience.

Improved thinking skills

Service-learning helps students improve their ability to analyze complex tasks, draw inferences from data, solve new problems, and make decisions. The degree to which improvements occur in these "higher order thinking skills" can depend on how well teachers get students to talk about and understand the service activities they are performing.

Improved character

Service-learning promotes responsibility, trustworthiness, and caring for others. Through service projects, students can learn not to let each other down or to disappoint those being served. Young people who participate in service-learning are the students who acquire an ethic of service, volunteer more frequently, and say they plan to continue to volunteer as they get older.

Improved social behavior

Young people who are active in service programs are less likely to engage in risky behaviors. For many young people, service-learning provides a venue in which they can be more successful than they have been in more traditional classroom settings. Service and service-learning can also reinforce the kinds of social behaviors that are crucial for success in the workforce.

Providing youth with opportunities to connect to their community and to demonstrate the impact they can have on local issues empowers both youth and adults to view youth as community resources rather than liabilities or risks.

- National Commission on Service Learning, 2002

Stronger ties to schools, communities, and society

Service-learning can give students a sense of belonging to and responsibility for their communities. For example, through service projects, young people often come to believe that they can make a difference in their schools, communities, and society. Some studies have established a strong connection between this sense of "efficacy" and academic achievement, as well as greater concern for personal health and well-being.

Exposure to new careers

Through service-learning, many students come into contact with adults in careers that would otherwise remain hidden to them. For example, students may meet social workers, scientists, park rangers, government workers, health workers, and others who work in community agencies. By assisting them and seeing how schoolwork relates to what they do, students can acquire higher or more varied career or job aspirations, along with a more realistic understanding of what is necessary to attain them.

Positive school environments

Where service-learning is practiced school-wide, program experience shows that teachers can feel reinvigorated, dialogue on teaching and learning can be stimulated, and the school climate can improve. In fact, many teachers become advocates for incorporating more service into the curriculum. Service programs have also been associated with reduced negative student behaviors and disciplinary referrals, as well as dropout rates.

Stronger community groups

When young people form early connections with community groups through service activities, the groups themselves are often the beneficiaries. Young people can infuse a charity or civic group with energy and inspiration; become members of the volunteer force, staff, or board; help build awareness of the group's mission throughout the community; and help an organization garner positive press and media attention.

Increased community support for schools

Community members who work with the young people engaged in service activities frequently say they come to view youth differently, seeing them as assets who contribute to the community in positive ways. Public support for schools can grow as a result of student involvement in community activities.

The benefits described here do not come about without careful attention to the design and implementation of service and service-learning projects. In particular, teachers, principals, and community group leaders must tie the

service to particular educational goals and learning standards; facilitate discussion of and reflection on the service and civic principles involved; and give students real choices in the planning, implementation, and assessment of the projects.

Community service activities allow youth to develop and apply their skills and knowledge to real-life situations, enhancing their ability to become productive, contributing adult citizens. Plus, studies show that engaging youth in community service helps establish civic responsibility and public service as a lifelong habit.

Learn and Serve America

<http://www.learnandserve.org>

Learn and Serve America engages students from kindergarten through college in community projects that integrate service and learning. Learn and Serve America builds on the grassroots service learning movement by promoting service as a learning opportunity and providing models and resources to schools, universities, and community groups. Students use academic skills to solve real world problems and learn the value of service, citizenship, and responsibility.

- In Learn and Serve America's *school-based programs*, schools plan, implement, and expand service activities for elementary and secondary students. Schools also use Learn and Serve America grants for adult volunteer programs and teacher training.
- In Learn and Serve's *community-based programs*, nonprofit community organizations implement, expand, and multiply service-learning programs in local communities. Participants are between the ages of five and seventeen and include students and youth who are not in school.
- In Learn and Serve America's *higher education programs*, colleges and universities help create and strengthen community service and service-learning initiatives. A wide array of students and organizations collaborate to address community needs. Grants also support technical assistance for expanding the field of service-learning.

Community Service and At-risk Populations

Research has demonstrated that disadvantaged youth would benefit most from community service experience but are often the ones least likely to become involved. In their study of community service programs, Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995) examine who participates in community service and discuss recruitment as an important aspect of community service. It was observed that individuals, generally, do not sign up on their own accord but are located through social networks and, then, encouraged to sign up.

Those individuals who would benefit most from community service are often not the ones who sign up or who are located through social networks. Those with greater participatory resources are more likely to be involved in community service; these resources include civic skills (literacy and verbal skills), organizational and leadership ability, and personal resources (income and time) associated with greater financial assets.

Lewis-Charp, et al. (2003) observed that individuals with initial advantages early in life are also the ones most likely to be positioned to learn the skills, make the informal and formal connections, be recruited, and develop identities that perpetuate their position in society. Those who potentially can benefit most from community service, but are hardest to reach and recruit are likely to have the following characteristics:

- older youth
- disadvantaged background
- high rates of alienation from their communities
- low self-esteem, and
- struggle with identity formation.

Once reached, however, community service can offer opportunities to these individuals to develop the linkage between self and society in their identity construction (Youniss and Yates, 1997). In addition community service can allow them to see themselves as empowered and in control of the forces in their lives (Gibson, 2001). Equipped with the skills, networks, and positive attitudes developed through community service, disadvantaged youth are made more capable to break out of the cycle of cumulative disadvantage (Winter, 2003).

Benefits for Suspended and Expelled Students

The U.S. Department of Education’s Community Service Grant Program for Suspended and Expelled Students established a three-part goal:

- to provide suspended and expelled students with meaningful activities to occupy their time during their absence from regular school;
- to help them avoid negative behavior; and
- to teach them the value of service to others and their communities.

The influences of the various philosophical perspectives and approaches to community service are evident in the goals statement.

What Virginia Community Service Participants Said

In the eighteen community service projects funded in Virginia, during the first three semesters of operation more than 1200 suspended and expelled students performed nearly 30,000 hours of community service. In feedback from these participants –

- 55 percent reported they liked the experience either “a lot” (24%) or “most of the time” (31%);
- 84 percent viewed community service as either “very important” (43%) or “moderately important (41%); and
- 76 percent reported they either “will definitely volunteer” (17%) or “may volunteer” (59%).

Among the “best parts” of community service identified by participants were helping others, accomplishing the service itself, positive interaction with clients (e.g., children, elderly, animals), learning about their community, and positive relationships with community service site staff. Many participants appear to take pride in their work, whether or not they report enjoying the experience; many appear to be happy that they could help others and that they were learning skills that they could use in the future. Perhaps the participants’ own words best express their views:

“Feeling like a person, knowing someone understood me. Also knowing the big world beyond school.”

“I was getting out of school and experiencing some new thing in the county”

“I got some responsibility now and people trust me because they give me something to do, I’ll do it and that is what I liked about my experience.”

“To see the outcome of the great job I did and the compliments I received.”

What Virginia Community Service Partners Said

Feedback was solicited from key staff at several hundred Virginia community service sites. In feedback from community service partners –

- 88 percent were “very satisfied” with communication with the community service program;
- 79 percent reported the youth to be “well prepared”; and
- 95 percent judged the quality of service performed to be either “excellent” (56%) or “good” (30%).

Service site partners identified a number of benefits for students gained from community service that are consistent with previous research findings. Among the benefits identified were job skills/experience, greater self-esteem, self-discipline, interaction with the community, developing empathy, greater responsibility, and greater awareness of both self and others. Partners expressed the belief that the greatest benefit for participants stemmed from the self-growth that occurred in terms of responsibility, accountability, and respect. A key part of this growth had to do with the students’ opportunity to function successfully within the community and to contribute.

Again, the community service site partners’ own words are most persuasive:

“Students learn new skills that could lead them to a vocational trade. They also benefit from having to work on a team, building their communication skills and provide a service to the community that demonstrates to the youth they have value and worth.”

“I believe that rather than adding additional ‘punishment’ through idleness, community service reinforces the fact that each has a place in society and in their community and that their action, positive and negative, have an effect.”

“Pride is established in self and in the community which they are a part of and in which they participate. I think the more the students are familiarized with their community and people that live there, they will become more interested in activities and programs.”

Community Service and Positive Youth Development

Community service opportunities help develop a broad range of personal and social assets that help promote positive youth development. The Commission on Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education (CBASSE) has identified a list of critical assets that have been published in *Community Programs to Promote Youth Development* (2002). The publication provides valuable information about the research on which the list is based and about the characteristics of programs that are effective in promoting youth development. The publication may be read online at www.nap.edu/books/0309072751/html/

The personal and social assets that help promote positive youth development are listed below along with the contribution that community service can make to their development.

Personal and Social Assets That Facilitate Positive Youth Development	Community Service Contributes
Physical development	
Good health habits	Possibly
Good health risk management skills	Possibly
Intellectual development	
Knowledge of essential life skills	Yes
Knowledge of essential vocational skills	Yes
School success	Yes
Rational habits of mind—critical thinking and reasoning skills	Yes
In-depth knowledge of more than one culture	Possibly
Good decision-making skills	Yes
Knowledge of skills needed to navigate through multiple cultural contexts	Possibly
Psychological and emotional development	
Good mental health including positive self-regard	Yes
Good emotional self-regulation skills	Yes
Good coping skills	Yes
Good conflict resolution skills	Yes
Mastery motivation and positive achievement motivation	Yes
Confidence in one’s personal efficacy	Yes
“Planfulness” —planning for the future and future life events	Yes
Sense of personal autonomy/responsibility for self	Yes
Optimism coupled with realism	Yes
Coherent and positive personal and social identity	Yes

Personal and Social Assets That Facilitate Positive Youth Development	Community Service Contributes
Prosocial and culturally sensitive values	Strongly
Spirituality or a sense of a “larger” purpose in life	Possibly
Strong moral character	Yes
A commitment to good use of time	Strongly
Social development	
Connectedness—perceived good relationships and trust with parents, peers, and some other adults	Strongly
Sense of social place/integration—being connected and valued by larger social networks	Strongly
Attachment to prosocial/conventional institutions, such as school, church, nonschool youth program	Strongly
Ability to navigate in multiple cultural contexts	Yes
Commitment to civic engagement	Strongly

This Chapter has examined the benefits of community service with particular emphasis on benefits for youth at elevated risk for negative behaviors. Virginia findings on the benefits reported by program participants and by community service sites were also presented. Finally, the contribution of community service to positive youth development was reviewed.

The next Chapter focuses on building community partnerships. It assumes that the issue of suspension and expulsion is a community issue most effectively addressed through collaborative efforts. The Chapter provides extensive descriptions of Virginia’s local community service projects and lists of local community service sites and the types of services performed. The relationship between effective collaboration and effective program implementation is also examined.

Chapter Four

Community Approaches to Suspension and Expulsion

The next Chapter focuses on building community partnerships to create community service opportunities for students who are suspended or expelled. The issue of suspension and expulsion is viewed as a community issue most effectively addressed through collaborative efforts, and a seven-step program planning process is set forth. Descriptions of Virginia’s local community service projects and lists of local community service sites and the types of services performed demonstrate the variety of ways Virginia communities formed collaborative program partnerships to create different program models and services and to provide rich community service opportunities for youth. Findings on the relationship of effective collaboration and effective program implementation conclude the chapter.

Suspension and Expulsion: A Community Issue

Central to Virginia’s approach to community service for suspended and expelled students is the perspective that *the suspension and expulsion of students constitutes a community issue* rather than exclusively a school issue. Therefore, funded projects were required to form collaborative partnerships among schools and community agencies and organizations. Additionally, projects were required to include academic, counseling, and parent involvement components in their programs and to provide highly individualized services to youth. Communities that received funding created program partnerships and developed a variety of project models, frequently by building on existing resources.

“First Steps” in Program Planning

Outlined below are several “first steps” for a community interested in creating community service opportunities for suspended and expelled youth.

Step 1. Assess needs.

Conduct an initial examination of the issue of suspended and expelled students in your local community. Gather sufficient information to answer the following basic questions:

- How many students are suspended and expelled annually?
- How many are placed on short-term suspension? On long-term suspension? Are expelled?
- Look at key demographics: grade level, gender, race; geographic distribution.
- What programs and services currently serve these students?
- Is there concern among school or community agency personnel about what these students are doing or what is happening to them while they are out of school?

Step 2. Identify and engage potential “program partners.”

The term “program partners” refers to those community agencies and organizations that have an interest in these students or may be providing services to them or their families, and are potential collaborators in establishing a community service program. Likely “program partners” include existing alternative programs, the local juvenile court service unit, family service agencies, Boys and Girls Clubs, and faith communities that have established programs serving high risk youth.

Step 3. Review needs assessment findings with potential program partners and determine “next steps.”

At this stage, the “next steps” may include:

- Gather additional information, as needed, to gain a better understanding of the issue and resources that currently exist and/or better define program/service needs and gaps.
- Begin to define the types of programs/services that are needed.

Note: The needs assessment may demonstrate the need for a variety of programs and services, including alternative placements, academic support, counseling, behavior intervention, or parent involvement, among others.

This planning process focuses on community service program planning.

Step 4. Begin to design a local community service program that will achieve intended outcomes by answering the following basic questions:

- Who will the community service program serve?
 - Elementary, middle school, high school students?
 - Students on short-term or long-term suspension? Expelled?
- What will the program be designed to achieve? What approach(es) will be used?
 - Punitive, rehabilitative, or developmental?
 - Is the program a vehicle for . . .

- improving values and behaviors?
 - improving educational achievement?
 - to make productive use of out-of-school time?
 - promoting positive development?
 - preventing future negative behavior?
- What are feasible strategies for implementing the program?
 - Will the community service program be an added component of an existing alternative program?
 - Will the community service program be combined with other programs and services to create a new comprehensive program?
 - Will the community service program be a “stand-alone” program offering youth service opportunities to youth referred by schools or courts?

Step 5. Identify existing and new resources needed to implement the local program.

Think about:

- Program site; transportation to the site and to service sites.
- Will the program have other components such as academic support or counseling? If so, how are these configured to create a coherent program that addresses well-documented needs?
- What agencies/organizations can contribute what services?
- Who would be “in charge?”
- How would things operate on a day-to-day basis? Who coordinates what?
- What existing resources can be directed to the program? Source of resource?
- What new resources are needed? Potential sources?
- Who else should be brought into the planning process?

Step 6. Secure needed resources and support

- Budget allocation(s)
- Grants – federal, state, foundation
- Business/corporate contributions
- Civic organizations

The Critical Resource: Coordination
 In an effective community service program the following critical tasks must be performed:

1. Recruiting community agencies/organizations as “service partners,” providing service projects/sites.
2. Matching youth with community projects/sites.
3. Engaging youth in planning/preparation/action/reflection.
4. Establishing/maintaining relationships with “service partners.”
5. Maintaining program records, including records of service.
6. Communicating with all stakeholder groups, parents, and general public.

Step 7. Establish and implement program

Worksheet for “First Steps” in Program Planning

Worksheet for “First Steps” in Program Planning		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Step 1. Assess needs. Conduct an initial examination of the issue of suspended and expelled students in your local community.	
	How many students are suspended and expelled annually?	
	How many are placed on short-term suspension? On long-term suspension? Are expelled?	
	Look at key demographics: grade level, gender, race; geographic distribution.	
	What programs and services currently serve these students?	
	Is there concern among school or community agency personnel about what these students are doing or what is happening to them while they are out of school?	
	Step 2. Identify and engage potential “program partners.”	
	Community agencies and organizations that have an interest in these students or may be providing services to them or their families.	
	Step 3. Review needs assessment findings with potential program partners and determine “next steps.”	
	Additional information needed to gain a better understanding of the issue and resources that currently exist and/or better define program/service needs and gaps.	
	Begin to define the types of programs/services that are needed.	
	Step 4. Begin to design a local community service program that will achieve intended outcomes by answering the following basic questions:	
	Who will the community service program serve? Elementary, middle school, high school students? Students on short-term or long-term suspension? Expelled?	
	What will the program be designed to achieve?	
	What approach(es) will be used?	

Worksheet for “First Steps” in Program Planning		
	What are feasible strategies for implementing the program? CS program added to an existing alternative program? CS program combined with other programs and services? CS as a “stand-alone” program for referred youth?	
Step 5. Identify existing and new resources needed to implement the local program.		
	Program site; transportation to the site and to service sites.	
	Will the program have other components such as academic support or counseling? If so, how are these configured to create a coherent program that addresses well-documented needs?	
	What agencies/organizations can contribute what services?	
	Who would be “in charge?”	
	How would things operate on a day-to-day basis? Who coordinates what?	
	What existing resources can be directed to the program? Source of resource?	
	What new resources are needed? Potential sources?	
	Who else should be brought into the planning process?	
Step 6. Secure needed resources and support		
	Budget allocation(s)	
	Grants – federal, state, foundation	
	Business/corporate contributions	
	Civic organizations	
Step 7. Establish and implement program		

Virginia Program Descriptions

The following program descriptions demonstrate the variety of ways Virginia communities formed collaborative program partnerships to create community service opportunities for suspended and expelled youth. The descriptions also provide a glimpse of the variety of program models and services provided through Virginia projects.

Albemarle County

Collaborating Organizations: Albemarle County Public Schools and Teens GIVE

Albemarle County Public School's Enterprise Center (EC), an Alternative Program that serves children long-term suspended or expelled from Albemarle County Middle/High School is partnering with Teens GIVE (TG), a Community Attention program that, since 1992, has been providing community service activities, life skills training, tutoring, counseling and case management services to at-risk students referred by local schools and/or the juvenile court, and to provide structured community service activities to suspended students at the EC. Objectives are (1) to provide "relationship-based" community service activities to EC students at local non-profit sites that are well organized, meet a community need, and involve the students in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of these volunteer activities; (2) to teach students individual and teamwork skills to help resolve the reasons for their suspensions; (3) to help students avoid further involvement in illegal or negative school, home, and/or community behaviors; (4) to teach students the value of community service and positive citizenship. Students are individually assessed and placed in supervised service teams of 5-10 students each and provide volunteer services for children, adults, and animals in local non-profit organizations and schools. Services activities are preceded by planning discussions and role clarification, and followed by reflection discussions. Individualized services include academic instruction, counseling, and parental involvement. Weekly life skills groups are tailored to meet the needs of the students. TG and EC staff meet weekly to plan, coordinate, and evaluate project implementation activities.

Bristol

Collaborating Organizations: Bristol City Public Schools, Boys and Girls Club of Bristol, Bristol Youth Services, Family Resource Center, and Highlands Community Services

The Learning In Field Environments (L.I.F.E.) Program serves suspended and expelled middle and high school students. The program will target middle school and high school students who have received a short-term suspension of 3 or more days, long-term suspension of 10 or more days, or an expulsion of 180 days. The program operates during the school year from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. This 32-week program will be housed at the Boys & Girls Club who will also provide use of their vans for transportation, classroom space, as well as use of their computer lab. From 8:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., students will complete school work, receive tutoring and participate in research based classes that include: decision making, personal control strategies, conflict resolution, anger management, interpersonal communication, positive school bonding and job readiness. From 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m., all students will be performing community service at numerous sites in the community. The program has the following objectives: (1) the number of students having multiple suspensions will be reduced; (2) 25% of all long-term or expelled students will be successfully reintegrated into regular school. Additional indicators that the program is impacting positively include: improved attendance, grades and behavior. Ultimately, we want to see positive change in the school climate with fewer students overall being suspended.

Buckingham County

Collaborating Organizations: Buckingham County Public Schools, Crossroads Prevention Services, Buckingham Alliance for Youth, Straight Street, Inc. – Buckingham, Fork Union Baptist Church, Buckingham County Sheriff's Office

The Buckingham County Alliance for Youth and the Buckingham County School Board provide community service opportunities for middle and high school students who have been suspended and expelled. Students receive academic assistance through the program's Learning Center, housed in the facility of a faith-based partner. Counseling services and parent support are also provided.

Fauquier County

Collaborating Organizations: Fauquier County Public Schools, Family Preservation Services, Inc., Thorpe House Adult Learning Center, and Fauquier Community Action Committee, Inc.

The Fauquier Counseling Academic Parenting Service (CAPS) is aimed at providing suspended middle school students and their families the opportunity to participate in an alternative educational setting in lieu of suspension from the school division. This program will consist of COUNSELING: Group Counseling designed to focus on the student's behaviors and the choices they make in school. ACADEMIC: Academic opportunities designed to keep students involved in learning when suspended from their base school building. PARENTING: Parenting forums help families understand their middle school child's development and provide research-based ideas that parents can use to work with children at home. SERVICE: Community Service activities provide the opportunity for the students to give back to the community through service.

Vienna Teen Foundation (Fairfax County)

Collaborating Organizations: Fairfax Partnership for Youth, Fairfax County Recreation Services, Town of Vienna Parks and Recreation, Fairfax County Public Schools, Vienna Teen Foundation.

The Support on Suspension Program (S.O.S.), developed and sponsored by the Fairfax County Partnership for Youth and the Vienna Teen Foundation, in collaboration with area schools and local government and businesses, provide a safe, supervised environment for suspended students. Students attend the program voluntarily at the local teen center during their suspension time, where they receive help completing class work, counseling and mentoring where appropriate and opportunities to be of service to their community. Their parents receive referrals to other agencies and support. S.O.S. staff and volunteers work closely with the schools, parents and the Town of Vienna staff to ensure that students are supervised while out of school and have a smooth, positive re-entry to school at the end of their suspensions. The objectives of S.O.S. are: (1) to provide a safe, supervised environment for students out of school on suspension; and (2) to help students transition back into school by helping them keep abreast of school work, learn to make healthier choices and improve their self-esteem through good works in their community. Community service opportunities are provided in collaboration with the Town of Vienna Parks and Recreation programs at the Community Center.

Franklin County

Collaborating Organizations: Franklin County Public Schools, Piedmont Community Services, Ferrum College, and Juvenile Court.

The Community Alternative Program for Suspension (C.A.P.S.) Program serves middle school students who have been suspended for 3 to 10 days. The program is housed in a building on the middle school campus. A behavioral specialist meets with students individually and in small groups on a daily basis; an instructional specialist and an instructional aide provide individualized instruction so students are able to complete all assigned class work. Piedmont Community Services provides a full-time counselor and Ferrum College provides a student who provides tutoring. By providing students with community service opportunities, students learn the value of service to others and their community.

Isle of Wight

Collaborating Organizations: Isle of Wight County Schools, Isle of Wight County Office on Youth, Isle of Wight Sheriff's Office, Juvenile/Domestic Relations Court Service Unit

Youth in Service to the Community is the community service component of the New Directions alternative program. In addition to academic support, students engage in highly individualized community service projects. Students reflect on their experiences by keeping journals and by participating in group discussions with their peers. Other program components include group counseling, training in the Lions Quest programs for middle and secondary students, and assistance with reentry to their home schools.

Petersburg

Collaborating Organizations: Petersburg Juvenile Community Crime Control Program, Petersburg City Public Schools, Petersburg Redevelopment and Housing Authority, Restoration of Petersburg Community Corporation

Petersburg's "Making it Work" program is operated by the Petersburg Juvenile Crime Control Program and provides a structured and supervised environment for court-involved students who are suspended from 3 to 10 days. Located at an alternative education site, two on-site teachers assist students to complete make-up assignments sent by their home schools. Students participate in Guiding Good Choices and Life Skills program activities. Community service is performed at a variety of city-owned housing areas, parks, and offices.

Portsmouth

Collaborating Organizations: Portsmouth City Public Schools, Friends of the Portsmouth Juvenile Court, Behavioral Healthcare Services

Portsmouth City Public Schools is collaborating with Friends of the Portsmouth Juvenile Court, Inc. (FRIENDS) and Behavioral Healthcare Services in Public Uplift to provide students who are expelled (1) an alternative educational program during their absence from regular school; (2) positive behavioral support and skills for successful transition back to public school; and (3) community service opportunities with academic learning, personal growth, civic responsibility, and help develop a sense of caring for others. Individualized academic assistance is provided through Nova Net, a computer-based instructional program.

Powhatan County

Collaborating Organizations: Powhatan Department of Juvenile Justice, Powhatan Youth and Community Partnership, Department of Social Services, VA Cooperative Extension, Powhatan County Administration, , Powhatan County School Board

The Powhatan Youth and Community Partnership offers students who have been suspended and expelled students meaningful activities and community service projects, academic tutoring, mentoring, and group counseling. Parent education/support groups assist parents in coping better with the challenges, stresses, and problems involved in the growth and rearing of their children. Using an individualized assessment tool, students and families identify their strengths and challenges and are challenged to make healthy life choices. Students participate in a reintegration group designed to work on self-esteem, anger management, coping skills, substance abuse education, law awareness, job skills training and independent living skills. Program goals include a decrease in the incidents of suspensions, improved school attendance, improved grades, increased self-esteem, use of more appropriate social and communication skills and improved anger management strategies and problem-solving skills.

Shenandoah Valley

Collaborating Organizations: Central Shenandoah Valley Office on Youth, Staunton City Public Schools, Waynesboro City Public Schools, Augusta County Public Schools, 25th District Juvenile Court, and Valley Community Services Board

The Pathway Program is a merger of two existing programs: SWEAT (Students Working Effectively Against Truancy) Program for suspended students and the CARE (Community Alternatives to Rehabilitation and Education) Program for expelled students. The main goal of the Pathway Program is to provide a community place for suspended and expelled youth to participate in activities that will occupy their time while they are not in school. Program objectives will focus on life skill development, educational tutoring and coursework, counseling assessments and referrals, and meaningful community service work. A secondary program goal is to provide case management to students after they exit the program to help them succeed once they return to school and to remain positively engaged in their community. This is accomplished through the provision of follow-up contacts with schools, parents and youth, along with referrals to other programs. The desired outcomes for participants are avoidance of negative behavior while absent from school, community involvement, return to school and reduction in future suspensions and expulsions. Parents must attend an intake before their child participates in the program and are asked to sign off on daily participant logs. Students meet daily individually with program staff, participate in group sessions, have the opportunity to complete homework assignments and related schoolwork, and participate in daily community service work. Students successfully completing the program have a letter sent to their parent and school administrator outlining their accomplishments during the program.

Southampton County

Collaborating Organizations: Southampton County Public Schools, Juvenile Court, Southampton County Sheriff's Office, and Cooperative Extension Service.

Southampton County Public Schools currently offers an alternative educational component for students who are not eligible for attendance at schools during the regular school hours, as a result of disciplinary action. That program meets from 4:00 P.M. to 7:00 P.M. leaving students assigned to the program in most instances without proper supervision during the day hours. Project ACT (Achievement, Character, Teamwork) alleviates this problem by providing community service opportunities during the regular school hours, parent programs in the evening, tutoring assistance, and guidance for eligible students. Students benefit academically by the increased structured time with SOL-related materials and with the assistance of guidance and tutoring activities; students who participate are also discouraged from behaviors that lead to placement in the program.

Stafford County

Collaborating Organizations: Stafford County Public Schools, Employment Resources, Inc., Stafford Juvenile Court, Rappahannock Area Office on Youth, Youth Volunteer Involvement Office, Rotary Club of Stafford, and Transformations Counseling Services.

Project SHINE (Students Helping in New Experiences) is an important addition to the Middle School Alternative Education Program that provides educational services to students, grades 6-8, who are referred by the Superintendent or School Board following a long-term suspension or expulsion involving a weapon, a controlled substance, or a violent act. The comprehensive program involves five components: academic, character education, counseling, parental education and community service. Goals of SHINE are 1) for students to develop the skills they need to become effective community citizens and 2) to decrease the number of offenses-against-others committed by participating students.

Staunton

Collaborating Organizations: Staunton City Public Schools, Staunton Parks and Recreation, Staunton-Augusta SPCA, Valley Mission, Covenant Presbyterian Church

The TACT (Teaching Attitudes and Community Together) Program serves students ages 9-12 who have been or are at-risk of being suspended or expelled from school. The goal of the program is to counteract negative behaviors of students by occupying them with meaningful service activities. TACT builds on the belief that programs that emphasize community service tap into the important concept that caring and giving back to the community are important elements of social and emotional development. The program focuses students on the needs of others through community service activities, provides resources and activities that build resiliency and emphasize the need for internal locus of control on the part of students. Academics assist students in passing the Standards of Learning and in reentry by eliminating the behaviors that led to the suspension or expulsion. A parent involvement component is also emphasized.

Wise County

Collaborating Organizations: Lonesome Pine Office on Youth, Wise County Public Schools, Wise County Habitat for Humanity, Wise County Sheriff's Office, Wise Police Department, Mountain Empire Older Citizens, Wise County Redevelopment and Housing Authority, and the University of Virginia's College at Wise.

Lonesome Pine Office on Youth, a Delinquency Prevention and Youth Development program, and over fifteen community organizations, are implementing a community service component to an existing Alternative Education Program known as the Regional Learning Academy (RLA) for students who a) have violated local school board policy related to weapons, drug and substance abuse or intentional injury to another person, b) have been expelled or have long-term suspensions, and/or c) have been released from a Juvenile Correctional Center and would benefit from the program. The community service program component provides students with the opportunity to engage in meaningful community service activities during their non-school hours.

Examples of Community Service Partnerships

The Virginia community service experience provides strong evidence that youth can serve in a variety of ways across a broad range of community sites. Virginia’s community service projects developed partnerships with well over two hundred different community agencies and organizations and performed services that made substantive contributions to their communities. Listed below are community service sites and the types of services performed in the Virginia project communities. The list demonstrates both the effectiveness of projects in partnering to create meaningful community service opportunities and the significant contributions the suspended and expelled youth made to their communities.

Virginia Community Service Project	Local Community Service Sites	Types of Service Activities
Albemarle County Community Service	Albemarle Housing Improvement Program (AHIP)	Help build affordable houses, carpentry and clean up; landscaping.
	Caring for Creatures Animal Sanctuary	Socialization with animals, shelter maintenance, indirect projects helping educate citizens about the humane treatment of dogs and cats.
	Cedars Nursing Home	Playing games with residents; visits; manicures; assisting staff with calendars & bulletin boards.
	Charlottesville Parks and Grounds	Planting, mulching; helped with basic landscaping tasks in order to beautify the community.
	Charlottesville/ Albemarle SPCA	Socialization with animals, shelter maintenance, indirect projects helping educate citizens about the humane treatment of dogs and cats.
	Common Ground	Grooming and farm animal care.
	Fluvanna SPCA	Socialization with animals, shelter maintenance, indirect projects helping educate citizens about the humane treatment of dogs and cats.
	Heritage Hall Nursing Home	Playing bingo with residents.
	Jackson Via Elementary School	Reading to children, games songs. Assisted in 3 rd grade art class; crafts projects.
	Meals on Wheels	Delivering food to elderly and disabled members of the community.
	Rescue Squad	Acts of kindness for rescue squad volunteers; cleaning and washing ambulances.
	Thomas Jefferson Food Bank	Sorting food, organizing food bins.
	Trinity Day Care	Playing games and reading to students; clean up; socialization.
Shenandoah Office on Youth Pathway Program	Adopt a Highway	Clean roadside; pickup trash from roadside.
	Arc of Augusta	Collate and sort letters/flyers. Seal newsletter.
	Augusta Co. Cooperative	Work on loading dock.
	Augusta Co. Library	Prepare projects for kids programs; shelve books.
	Baby Think it Over	Clean/dress dolls; move computers; doll pick up and distribution.

Virginia Community Service Project	Local Community Service Sites	Types of Service Activities
	Baldwin Park Retirement Community	Assist with serving refreshments and interacting with residents during social activity.
	Montgomery Hill Park; Ridgeview Park	Yard work; grounds keeping, pickup garbage/large sticks.
	Bethany Preschool	Prepare crafts; office work/grounds keeping.
	Bethany Preschool	Clean; help with children.
	Blue Ridge Area Food Bank	Stock/sort food; clean/organize storage closet, pick up and distribute food; assembled boxes for Thanksgiving.
	Booker T. Community Center	Clean building, parking lot and grounds; moving furniture; cleaned gym; clean and paint over graffiti.
	CADRE	Move records; stuffed bags for conference.
	CASA and Chamber of Commerce	Recycle paper.
	Chevron Supply	Paint over graffiti.
	Community Corp	Decorate Christmas Tree
	Covenant Presbyterian Church	Clerical; custodial; gardening services.
	Farm Bureau	Clean warehouse, stock shelves; customer service, loading materials.
	Frontier Culture Museum Pathway	Create nature trails; remove sticks and debris.
	Hugh K. Cassell Elementary	Teacher assistant second grade; reading to students; arts and crafts with students.
	Kids Matter Day	clean/organize storage closet.
	Kings Daughters Nursing Home	Interact with residents during game time.
	Nelson Street Center	Clean building; shovel snow.
	New Directions	Cleaning old house/removing trash.
	New Street Parking deck	Sweeping stairs/lot.
	Oakhill Retirement Community	Weed gardens; remove trash.
	Office On Youth	Blue Ribbon Campaign; folding brochures; cleaning center and picking up trash outside; set up graduation tent; assisted with moving furniture and boxes; painting; fold brochures; decorate Christmas tree; general office tasks.
	Pathway Recycling	Recycling collection for area business; assist patrons with sorting household recyclables.
	Phoenix alternative school	Assist in classroom; clean.
	Police Department	Graffiti removal.
	Public Works of Waynesboro	Cleaned graveyard; ride around with engineers; water and sewer checks.
	Ready Print	Recycled paper.
	Ritenour Nursing Home	Cleaning/yard work.
	Salvation Army	Thrift store help; pricing items/stocking/sorting; re-organized toy department; cleaning center & outside.
	Salvation Army – Waynesboro	Stock merchandise; clean.
	Salvation Army – Augusta	Organized items within thrift store; clean up.

Virginia Community Service Project	Local Community Service Sites	Types of Service Activities
	Sharon Bookstore	Recycled paper; collect cardboard.
	Shelburne Middle School	Custodial and gardening services.
	Solid Rock Café	Weeding, mulching; pull weeds from outdoor volleyball court.
	Special Olympics – Area 5	Assisting and interacting with athletes during sporting events.
	Staunton/Waynesboro/ Augusta SPCA	Custodial services; cleaning animal cages; laundry.
	SAW Foundation	Copy and collate surveys.
	Solid Rock Café	Weed volleyball courts; clean.
	Staunton Public Library	Clean grounds.
	Staunton Parking Garage	Clean parking deck.
	Staunton Parks & Recreation	Clean parks & football field; raked leaves/pick up trash; rid soccer field of rocks; snow removal.
	Staunton Rodney’s Limo	Cleaned cars, sorted cans.
	Staunton Cooperative	Move merchandise; straighten store.
	Stoney Creek Homeowners Association	Repair of roads and ditches; raked leaves; filled potholes.
	Terry's House	Rake leaves.
	VA Extension Service	Clean up recycling center; sort/box food; prepare gift baskets.
	Valley Mission	Assist with duties involving Thrift Store.
	Ware Elementary School	Custodial and gardening services.
	Wayne Appliance	Clean, straighten store.
	Waynesboro Cooperative	Help load cars; clean store.
	Waynesboro Library	Shelve books and videos.
	Waynesboro Parks & Recreation	Pick up trash/sticks/debris.
Waynesboro Recycling Center	Sort recyclables; unload vehicles.	
Waynesboro Theater	Set up for event; paint over graffiti.	
YMCA of Waynesboro	Cleaning equipment & rooms.	
YMCA of Staunton/ Augusta	Custodial services.	
Bristol Learning in Field Environments (L.I.F.E.) Program	Bristol Public Library	Cleaning building; sorting, labeling, and shelving books.
	Bristol Redevelopment and Housing Authority	Setting up for Thanksgiving dinner; distributing flyers; working registration; cleaning windows for elderly residents; setting up for community job fair; copying/folding/delivering resident newsletter; distribution of commodities – assembling/distributing bags.
	Bristol Youth Services	Data entry in a data base; typing information onto program assessment sheets; clean windows and other errands; stuffing and addressing envelopes; sorting brochures.
	CASA Office	Putting packets together; buying web space on the internet site.
	Children’s Advocacy Center	Phoning community agencies to get information for a resource guide; planted mums; general cleaning.
	Crisis Center	Cleaning the building; sorting & folding newsletter; making brochure; yard work.
	Crossroads Medical Mission	Data entry, assist with mailing and filing; office work, cleaning; assist with 1200 piece mailing.
Douglas Community Center	Filled up cabinets with food from food bank and cleaned building.	

Virginia Community Service Project	Local Community Service Sites	Types of Service Activities
	Employment Training Center	Cleaning building.
	Family Resource Center	Stuffing packets.
	First Baptist Church	Washing vans; cleaning the building.
	Girls Inc.	Cleaning agency vans and inside of building; assist with copying.
	Healing Hands	Assist with monthly mailing; general housekeeping.
	Highlands Community Services Board	Wrapped Christmas gifts for children in foster care; wrapped Christmas gifts for teen mothers.
	Janie Hammit Home	Yard work; cleaning inside of group home; copying, folding and mailing board packets.
	L.I.F.E.	Car wash for non-profits; community trash pick up.
	Paramount Theater	Help with mass mailing; housekeeping, office work.
	Randall Expressway	Picking up trash.
	Rhythm & Roots Music Festival	Sorting Flyers; clean up from festival; sorting t-shirts.
	State Street Church	Clean tables and chairs and setting up tents; cleaning pews; washing and cleaning van.
	TN Boys and Girls Club	Setting up tables for Thanksgiving.
	VA Boys & Girls Club Girls Inc.	Picking up trash; cleaning building; raking; weeding flowerbed, mulching.
Buckingham County VOICE	Ali's Place	Stocking shelves.
	Allen's Towing	Assisting with towing; outside mechanical projects.
	Allen's Ambulance/Wheelchair repair	Special projects.
	Andersonville Animal Care	Animal grooming and pet care; cleaning kennels; reception; filing.
	Atwork Personnel	Clerical work, receptionist; yard work; mowing grass.
	Buckingham Bloomin'	Planting, raking, digging; greenhouse work.
	Buckingham County Library	Shelving/carried heavy boxes; special projects.
	Cheryl's Beauty Shop	Folding towels, reception; light cleaning; laundry.
	Christian Outreach Program and Pregnancy Center - COPPC-Thrift Store	Sorting donated items, shelving; maintenance.
	Dillwyn Carwash	Washing cars.
	Fork Union Baptist Church	Preparing soil, planting flowers; clerical work; janitorial.
	Fork Union Baptist Church Senior Nutrition Program	Assist with senior leisure activities.
	Heritage Hall Nursing Home	Maintenance.
	Jessie Auto	Mechanical Assistant.
	Madeline's House	Thrift shop organization.
NuMiracle Window Washing	Window washing/cleaning.	
Sheryl's Beauty Shop	Cleaning; organizing; reception.	

Virginia Community Service Project	Local Community Service Sites	Types of Service Activities
Fairfax - Vienna Teen Center Support on Suspension Program	AFS Intercultural Program	Mailings.
	Community for Helping Others	Sorting donated goods.
	Food for Others (Food Bank)	Food pick up; sorting.
	Great Falls National Park	Trash pick up.
	JMHS Parent Network/PTSA	Program mailing; labels preparation.
	Northern VA Ethical Society	Mass mailing; newsletter preparation.
	Oakton Safe Youth Coalition	PTSA Coalition mailing.
	Optimist Club	Seasonal Work; Senior Music Program; Seasonal Tree Stand.
	Senior Bridge Club	Preparing game cards, materials.
	Shepherd's Center of Vienna/Oakton	Mailings; yardwork for senior citizens.
	Town of Vienna	Mature Adult Programs mailing, telephone work, preparation for program. Pre-school program preparation of materials; housekeeping chores.
	Vienna – Madison Community Coalition	Community awareness; materials preparation and mailings.
	Vienna Parks and Recreation	Bike trail trash pickup.
	Vienna Teen Center	Custodial work.
Fauquier County CAPS (Counseling Academic Parenting Service)	CAPS	Moving textbooks; administrative duties; performed filing.
	Fauquier Community Action Committee	Sorted food for food bank; sorted clothes; broke down boxes; drive event aide.
	Fauquier County Parks and Recreation	Mulched; trash pick-up; pulled weeds; cleaned courtyard; administrative helper; event aide.
	Head Start	Teacher helper; cleaning; helping with Olympics; Christmas helper, lunch help, reading, snack helper, art projects.
	Shadow Lawn	Washing walls; painting; served food; washed dishes; organized shelves/closets; walk with/played games with seniors; moved computers/furniture; prepare for retirement party for senior director; salted sidewalks; assisted with Teddy Bear Picnic and Valentine's Day Party; crafts, games.
	Virginia Civic Ballet	Cut tarp for performance.
Franklin County CAPS (Community Alternative Program for Suspension)	Bus Garage	Washed buses/windows.
	Callaway/ Dudley/Ferrum/Rocky Mount/ Burnt Chimney/ Boones Mill / Wald Elementary Schools	Clean cafeteria/bathrooms; pull weeds/rake leaves/mulch/flower beds; wash windows.
	Franklin Co. Parks and Recreation Dept.	Trash pickup; landscaping.
	Heavenly Manna	Food packaging/distribution.
	Middle School	Cafeteria/pulled weeds/rake leaves/landscaping; clean windows; office work.
	Police Department	Pulled weeds; mulch; landscaping.

Virginia Community Service Project	Local Community Service Sites	Types of Service Activities
	Town of Rocky Mount	Trash pickup; painting.
	YMCA	Trail cleaning
Isle of Wight County Youth in Service to the Community	Blackwater Library	Library shelve books, clerical; miscellaneous assistance
	Carrollton Public Library	Shelve books; special projects
	Carrollton Volunteer Fire Department	Donation drive, training for emergency services.
	Isle of Wight Sheriff's Office	Filing, data entry.
	New Directions Alternative School	Canned food contribution; administrated canned food drive; custodial; co-write, edit, generate newsletter; clean up/touch up paint; recycling project.
	Nike Park Recreation Center	Grounds maintenance, custodial.
	Smithfield Library	Shelve books; clerical.
	Windsor Library	Shelve books, clerical.
	Windsor Middle School	Recycling project; custodial (on Fridays); pick up, recycle newspapers.
Petersburg Making It Work	A. P. Hill Community Center	Sweep, mop, and trash pickup. Clean windows and stairwells; pulling weeds, planting flowers.
	Adopt-A-Spot Campaign – City of Petersburg	Landscaping – beautification.
	City Hall	Landscaping – plant flowers, pull weeds, painting, cleaning.
	Court Service Unit Offices	Dusting, vacuum, cleaning bathrooms, picking-up trash, paper shredding, cleaning tables.
	Lee Park	Picking up trash.
	Old Town District	Trash pick-up; cleanup after Nostalgia Festival.
	Petersburg Housing Authority – Pecan Acres/Pin Oaks	Picking-up trash; distribute flyers; clean windows and stairs.
	Petersburg Juvenile Community Crime Control Program	Vacuum, shredding paper.
Portsmouth Project Uplift	Maryview Medical Center	Environmental services; food service.
	New Direction Center	Environmental services; teacher's aide.
Powhatan Youth and Community Partnership	(Family Names)	Yard work for elderly.
	11 th District Court Service Unit	Janitorial.
	Activities Field	Yard maintenance.
	Activity Field	Kitchen/trash pickup.
	Adopt-a-Highway	Clean highway.
	Advisory Board Luncheon	menu planning, budgeting, setup, shopping, food preparation, serving and cleanup for opening; bathrooms, parking lot, mop floors, fold menus.
	Bingo Hall	Landscaping; cleaning.
	Bon Secours Hospice	build railings.
	British Car Sales	cleanup/ maintenance.
	Cedarwood Stables	Brush, raked and burned leaves and sticks; cleaned stalls, swept barn; yard work, cleanup; caring for horses, feed, clean.
	Christmas Mother	Wrapping presents for needy.

Virginia Community Service Project	Local Community Service Sites	Types of Service Activities
	Christmas Parade	Christmas float; float preparation.
	Garber Enterprises	Construction job training.
	Grace Ministries	Setup, take down, for banquet; post flyers.
	Hardwells	Computer, cleaning, copier.
	Hunters Ridge Equestrian Center	Assist therapeutic riding.
	Juvenile Probation	Office clean-up.
	Master Gardeners of Powhatan	Flower bed maintenance.
	Meals on Wheels	Hot food delivery.
	Midlothian Mini Storage	Job skills training.
	Powhatan	
	Powhatan Food Pantry	Stocking shelves; distribute food.
	Powhatan United Methodist	Landscaping.
	Powhatan Volunteer Rescue Squad	Wash sheets; clean building.
	Senior Connections	Cleaning for elderly; yard work.
	Splat Brothers Paintball	Cleanup/ maintenance; build paint ball field.
	Transfer Station	Clean up dump.
	United Methodist Church	Yard work, cleanup.
	VA Cooperative Extension Service Annual Corp. Conference	luncheon preparation; Amnesty Day.
Youth Partnership, County Line Productions	hanging posters and flyers.	
Southampton County Project ACT (Achievement, Character, Teamwork)	Graz'n Acres	Rake leaves/pastures, pick up trash; clean stalls.
	Southampton County Fairgrounds	Area beautification; rake leaves; spring cleaning.
	Southampton County Sheriffs Office	Wash police vehicles.
	Southampton County Public Schools	Rake leaves/pastures, pick up trash; wash windows; spread/turn mulch.
	Franklin YMCA	Rake leaves.
Stafford County SHINE (Students Helping In a New Experience)	Brooke Nursing Home	Bingo/game activities with residents.
	Fredericksburg Area Food Bank	Stocking and sorting food items.
	MS Alternative Education Program	Students completed projects: Flower Pot Projects - designing and donating flower pots; Laws of Life Essay Contest - Character Education; April Blue Ribbon campaign; Veteran guest speaker; agency mailings; thank you letters to area agencies providing community service opportunities; planting trees for Arbor Day; assorting and folding donated clothes; assembled envelopes for Employment Resources.
	Outlook Pointe Nursing Home	Bingo and prizes with the residents.
	Read to Feed Project	Reading books and being sponsored to purchase an animal gift to a struggling family through Heifer International.
	Rebuilding Together with Christmas in April	Gardening, raking leaves.

Virginia Community Service Project	Local Community Service Sites	Types of Service Activities
	Stafford County Head Start	Foundation Read Aloud - Reading to children, assisting with activities and lunch, assisting teachers with projects; library organization; transition forum. SHINE Garden - maintaining garden, planting, and mulching; Community Clothes Room – sorting/organizing donated clothes; organized cleaning day care room; sorting/assembling books/educational materials in bags.
	Stafford Rotary Club	Rebuilding with Christmas in April – Landscaping.
Staunton TACT (Teaching Attitudes and Community Together)	Baldwin Park Retirement Community	Assisting and interacting with residents during social activities.
	Covenant Presbyterian Church	Placed pockets on books and videos for church library; clerical work in church office; gardening; custodial.
	King's Daughter's Nursing Home	Assist in serving refreshments and interact with residents; interaction with senior residents during “game time.”
	Shelburne Middle School	Gardening and custodial.
	Shelburne Middle School/Ware Elementary School/Bessie Weller Elementary School/McSwain Elementary School/ R. E. Lee High School/ T. W. Dixon Elementary	Custodial duties in gyms; general custodial duties; cleaned brick wall in cafeteria; cleaned bleachers and set up chairs for concert; picked up trash outside of building, moved boxes of copy paper, mopped floors.
	SPCA	Laundry, animal socialization; cleaned cat cages.
	Special Olympics	Assisted athletes in wheel chairs in “ramp bowl” and others with special needs to participate appropriately and keep score.
	Staunton Parks & Recreation	Raking leaves in local park; rid soccer field of rocks, rid tennis court of weeds.
	Valley Mission	Served lunch and interacted with special populations at monthly mixer. Folded holiday cards.
	YMCA	Folded and arranged towels and sheets in storage unit.
Wise County - Lonesome Pine Office on Youth T.E.A.M.S., Stay for Life	Appalachia Food Bank	Food project for community.
	Appalachia Tourist Commission	Work at festivals.
	Appalachian Children's Theater	Helped with relocation, programs and seating.
	Boy Scouts	Helped carry heavy dirt for gardening project.
	Clinch Valley Nursing Home	Weeding flower beds; games/interaction with residents.
	Coeburn Police Department	Helped plan Christmas party.
	Habitat for Humanity	Work at new house site.
	His Ministries	Coats for Kids Project.
	Lonesome Pine Office on Youth	Prepared Teen Resource Guide; Coats for Kids Project - making/handing out flier, helped collect, sort, check, deliver coats; clerical and support assistance; clean storage area; pick up trash.
	LPOY classes	Set up and clean up for classes; Folded flyers/cleaned windows.
	LPOY/K.I.D.S.,	Made books for kids.
Norton Community Hospice	Clerical and support care.	

Virginia Community Service Project	Local Community Service Sites	Types of Service Activities
	Pound Food Bank	Picked up food, helped deliver/store food; mentoring project.
	Powell River Project	Weeding.
	Southwest Virginia Museum	Christmas Tree Project.
	Thrift House (Pound)	Help volunteers w/stock.
	Trinity Methodist Church	Helping prepare Thanksgiving dinners; collecting coats at 1 day drop.
	UVA Wise Athletics	Coats for Kids Project.
	VA Relay Center	Helped with Activity Day.
	Wise Garden Club	Prepare for Fall Fling.
	Wise Senior Citizens	Cleaned facility; games with seniors.

Successful Collaboration: Virginia's Experience

Effective collaboration may be the most critical element in the success of Virginia's community service projects. Organizations seeking community service funding were required from the beginning to partner with others in establishing their programs; then they were required to establish additional collaborative partnerships to increase the number of community service opportunities for youth.

Throughout the process of implementation, as part of the comprehensive cross-site evaluation, community service projects submitted monthly reports identifying their successes and their challenges and factors associated with both. In addition, in quarterly reports, project directors rated and commented on the components of their respective programs and set forth strategies to address implementation challenges in the coming quarter. These reports provide strong evidence of the critical role that collaboration has played in these communities' projects. Emerging from an analysis of these data are factors that appear to support effective collaboration. Preliminary findings are outlined below:

Community Climate

The communities whose projects “got off the ground running” were the communities where a history of prior successful collaboration was evident. Furthermore, these communities appeared to have secured firm commitments from key partners during the proposal development phase so that, when funding was awarded, the resources and approvals were in place and timely implementation could occur. Several projects that were particularly successful in initial implementation activities enjoyed the active support of influential individuals and groups in their communities. Conversely, several projects that experienced initial difficulty in implementation often lacked a history of collaboration among project partners and had not secured firm commitments in proposal development phase.

Clarity/Unity of Purpose

Communities that were able to most clearly articulate what they aimed to achieve and specifically what the key partners would contribute were most successful in both initial and ongoing implementation of their projects. The ability to clearly articulate a shared vision and to coordinate partner resources/services to create a community service program can reflect staff expertise in proposal writing; however, evaluation of the projects over an eighteen month period suggests more than proposal writing expertise. The most successful projects evidenced a substantive unity of purpose that

both contributed to effective collaboration and was the product of effective collaboration. Territorial issues did not arise in projects with clearly defined and mutually shared goals. Communities whose proposals were less clearly focused on creating community service opportunities for youth and whose program designs were less collaborative experienced greater difficulty. It was observed that a few projects focused as much on academic support as on community service and, in these projects, the community service aspects of programming may have been “short-changed” in terms of time, attention, and resources necessary to create community service opportunities for youth. Participants in these projects typically experienced fewer high quality community service opportunities.

Trusting Relationships

The quality of the relationships of key staff members and their respective organizations appears to be critical to the quality of the collaboration and to the success of projects. Relationships in the communities that experienced greatest success were characterized by understanding, respect, and trust that appeared to facilitate compromise and creative solutions to operational challenges. Clearly, developing community service opportunities for youth – particularly those who have been suspended and expelled from school – required the capacity to establish trusting relationships with potential community service sites, to honestly assess the experience, and to make necessary refinements to “match” participant resources with community needs.

The quality of relationships appears to be integrally related to personnel choices. Having the right person in the coordinating role was shown to be critical in Virginia’s projects. Staffing problems – either within the project or with a key collaborator – were present in several projects that experienced the greatest difficulty with implementation; conversely, greater success was experienced by two projects after staff changes.

Organization and Process

Communities that organized their projects around creating community service opportunities and engaged in a well-organized, deliberative process of clearly articulating roles, policies, and operational procedures experienced the greatest success in creating community service opportunities. Monthly implementation reports from sites experiencing the greatest success in implementing projects reflected ongoing monitoring that was reflective and resulted in ongoing adaptations and refinements to improve projects. Conversely, reports about challenges in project implementation frequently cited problems that could be attributed to lack of clarity as to purpose, roles, or procedures and under-development of guiding policy.

Communication Quality/Frequency

An integral contributor to and product of effective collaboration is communication. The communication in projects that experienced greatest success in creating community service opportunities for youth was typically open and frequent. Both formal and informal channels of communication were established and multiple strategies for communicating with external groups such as advisory groups, school boards, community influentials, civic organizations, and parents were developed. Conversely, projects that experienced greatest difficulty creating community service opportunities for youth typically communicate less, with fewer collaborating entities, and using fewer avenues of communication.

Resources Contributed

The material and personnel resources committed to projects from sponsoring partners appears to have been a strong indicator of effective collaboration. Projects with a high level of material and personnel resources devoted to community service have had the greatest success in project implementation. As noted above under Unity/Clarity of Purpose, some projects devoted a relatively smaller proportion of resources in terms of time, attention, and budget to the creation of community service opportunities and these projects have provided youth fewer high quality community service experiences.

Skilled leadership appears to be a critical element of resources contributed to a project. There is strong evidence from the comprehensive cross-site evaluation that skilled leadership has played a central role in successful project implementation and effective collaboration. Highly skilled leadership appears to be associated with other indicators of success including experience in interagency collaboration, clarity of purpose, capacity to establish productive relationships, effective project organizational structure and implementation process, and effective internal and external communication.

100 Ways Virginia's Youth Are Making a Difference by Serving

1. Help teach a younger child to read.
2. Pack and hand out food at a local food bank.
3. Collect winter coats for low-income families.
4. Aid local tourist commission.
5. Make books for underprivileged children in community.
6. Perform acts of kindness for rescue squad volunteers.
7. Visit senior citizens at a nursing home.
8. Rake leaves, shovel snow, clean gutters, or wash windows of schools, nursing homes.
9. Volunteer to help at a Special Olympics event.
10. Clean up a vacant lot or park.
11. Wash school buses.
12. Hold a donation drive for the local fire department.
13. Clean up roadside trash.
14. Volunteer at horse stables.
15. Mentor a young person.
16. Sing for residents at a nursing home.
17. Help build affordable housing.
18. Volunteer for a local animal shelter.
19. Play bingo with elderly.
20. Volunteer at local Salvation Army.
21. Deliver food to elderly and disabled members of the community.
22. Wrap Christmas gifts for children in foster care, teen mothers.
23. Recycle.
24. Hold car wash to raise money for special cause, nonprofits.
25. Join local employees in collecting community trash.
26. Participate in local relief operations after storms, hurricanes.
27. Prepare food for local government officials' meetings, local nonprofit conferences.
28. Listen and learn from others.
29. Hang posters and hand out flyers to recruit others to join youth organizations.
30. Give elderly manicures.
31. Raise money to purchase an animal gift for a struggling family in a 3rd world country.
32. Read books or newspaper for visually impaired people.
33. Prepare projects for kids' programs at local library.
34. Clean local cemetery.
35. Shadow an individual in the community in order to learn about their job.
36. Help organize and run youth abstinence program.
37. Educate citizens about humane treatment of dogs and cats.
38. Help collect and deliver meals to low-income families over holidays.
39. Donate time to community groups.
40. Repair roads, ditches, and potholes in community.
41. Plant flowers to beautify community.
42. Teach or aid with a crafts class.
43. Recruit citizens to join community associations.
44. Hold an afternoon dance for at a nursing home.
45. Go for a walk with a senior citizen.
46. Aid in building stage for local ballet group.
47. Shelve books at public library.
48. Assist therapeutic riding lessons at stable.
49. Receive EMS training.
50. Create nature trails in community.
51. Build railings at hospice.
52. Organize mixer for special populations in community.
53. Learn about and support local businesses.
54. Make cards for nursing homes residents.
55. Prepare a Teen Resource Guide for community youth.
56. Lend time to religious organizations in community.
57. Wash police vehicles.
58. Celebrate Amnesty Day.
59. Clean school cafeteria.
60. Assist elderly individuals during social events. Play games and sing songs with younger children.
61. Plant trees in community to celebrate Arbor Day.
62. Invite a Veteran to share their experience with you and a group.
63. Clean animal habitats.
64. Design and donate flower pots to community.
65. Prepare Rescue Squad vehicles for duty.
66. Enlighten community about programs and benefits that local Housing Authority offers.
67. Remove and repair local fences.
68. Uphold confidentiality in the local justice system by shredding confidential legal documents.
69. Create newsletter for local school.
70. Help businesses and individuals in your community recycle.
71. Appreciate the help of those around you.
72. Do yard work for senior citizens.
73. Help out a teacher in a local nursery school classroom.
74. Collaborate with local parent networks.
75. Preserve local bike trails.
76. Raise money for pregnant teen programs.
77. Participate in festivals to celebrate local cultures.
78. Interact with retired individuals in community.
79. Help attract citizens to community centers.
80. Adopt a highway.
81. Groom and care for local farm animals.
82. Staff weekend events at local Parks & Recreation facilities.
83. Make crafts with preschool children.
84. Decorate community for holidays.
85. Team up with local police department on tasks.
86. Get involved with local theatre group.
87. Help bring together community agencies for projects.
88. Create a child advocacy resource guide for community.
89. Put together informational packets for Family Resource Center.
90. Work on websites for local nonprofit agencies.
91. Help repair wheelchairs for disabled citizens.
92. Inform people in your community about important issues.
93. Learn to trust and develop relationships with adults in community.
94. Teach a senior citizen how to use a computer.
95. Befriend another volunteer.
96. Coordinate a book drive.
97. Salt sidewalks in front of Elderly homes.
98. Paint over graffiti.
99. Distribute organizational newsletters.
100. Thank individuals who provide youth the opportunities to serve the communities.

100 Ways to Make a Difference by in Your Community

Source: Youth Service America Tip Sheet (www.ysa.org)

1. Help teach a younger child to read.
2. Help cook and/or serve a meal at a homeless shelter.
3. Gather clothing from your neighbors and donate it to a local shelter.
4. Make "I Care" kits with combs, toothbrushes, shampoo for the homeless.
5. Pack and hand out food at a local food bank.
6. Adopt a "grand friend" and write them letters and visit them.
7. Visit senior citizens at a nursing home.
8. Rake leaves, shovel snow, clean gutters, or wash windows for a senior citizen.
9. Pick up groceries or medicine for an elderly person.
10. Go for a walk with a senior citizen in your community.
11. Deliver meals to homebound individuals.
12. Hold an afternoon dance for your local nursing home.
13. Teach a senior friend how to use a computer and the Internet.
14. Paint a mural over graffiti.
15. Invite local police officers to present a drug awareness or safety program.
16. Tutor a student that needs help learning English or another subject.
17. Organize a canned goods drive.
18. Clean up a vacant lot or park.
19. Organize a campaign to raise money to purchase and install playground equipment.
20. Plant flowers in public areas that could use some color.
21. Volunteer to help at a Special Olympics event.
22. Set up a buddy system for kids with special needs in your community.
23. Raise money for Braille books for visually impaired people.
24. Read books or the newspaper on tape for visually impaired people.
25. Bring toys to children in the cancer ward of a hospital.
26. Contact your local political representative about key issues.
27. Register people to vote.
28. Organize a public issues forum for your neighborhood.
29. Volunteer at a polling booth the day of an election.
30. Take a friend to the polling booths.
31. Vote.
32. Offer to pass out election materials.
33. Plant a garden or tree where the whole neighborhood can enjoy it.
34. Set up a recycling system for your home.
35. Organize a carpooling campaign in your neighborhood.
36. Adopt an acre of a rainforest.
37. Clean up trash along a river, beach, or in a park.
38. Create a habitat for wildlife.
39. Create a campaign to encourage biking and walking.
40. Test the health of the water in your local lakes, rivers, and streams.
41. Contact your local volunteer center for opportunities to serve.
42. Volunteer at your local animal shelter.
43. Help build a home with Habitat for Humanity.
44. Walk a neighbor's dog or pet sit while they are on vacation.
45. Teach Sunday school.
46. Learn to be a peer counselor.
47. Send a letter to one of America's veterans or overseas soldiers.
48. Volunteer at your local youth center.
49. Participate in a marathon for your favorite charity.
50. Become a candy striper at your local hospital.
51. Mentor a young person.
52. Serve your country by joining AmeriCorps.
53. Become a volunteer firefighter or EMT.
54. Donate books to your local library.
55. Donate clothes to the Salvation Army.
56. Start a book club in your area.
57. Adopt a pet from the Humane Society.
58. Hold a door open for someone.
59. Give up your seat on the bus or train to someone.
60. Donate your old computer to a school.
61. Give blood.
62. Coach a children's sports team.
63. Become an organ donor.
64. Teach a dance class.
65. Participate in Job Shadow Day (February 2).
66. Organize a project for National Youth Service Day (visit www.ysa.org/nysd).
67. Volunteer on a hotline.
68. Meet with local representatives from your area.
69. Don't drink and drive.
70. Listen to others.
71. Write a letter to the editor about an issue you care about.
72. Bring others with you when you volunteer.
73. Shop at local, family owned businesses.
74. Become a Big Brother or Big Sister.
75. Take a historical tour of your community.
76. Write a note to a teacher that had a positive effect on you.
77. Get together with some friends to buy holiday presents for a family at a shelter.
78. Recycle.
79. Drive responsibly.
80. Get CPR and First Aid certification.
81. Don't litter.
82. Shop responsibly.
83. Don't spread or start gossip.
84. Tell someone that you appreciate him/her.
85. Hold a teddy bear drive for foster children, fire victims.
86. Make a care package for an elderly or shut-in person.
87. Teach at an adult literacy center.
88. Sing for residents at a nursing home.
89. Befriend a new student or neighbor.
90. Baby sit.
91. Look for the good in all people.
92. Coordinate a book drive.
93. Donate money to your favorite charity.
94. Make quilts or baby clothes for low-income families.
95. Bake cookies and bring them to your local fire or police station.
96. Donate toys or suitcases to foster children.
97. When visiting someone in a hospital, talk to someone that doesn't have many visitors.
98. Around the holidays, visit the Post Office and answer some letters to Santa.
99. Start a neighborhood welcome committee.
- 100. Visit www.SERVE.net to find volunteer opportunities in your area.**

Chapter Five

Implementing Quality Community Service Opportunities

In this Chapter the elements of a high quality community service program are examined. Lessons learned from Virginia’s experience and other “best practice” tips and guidelines from credible sources are included. The information is intended to support quality programming.

Elements of a High Quality Program

What do effective community service programs for suspended and expelled students look like?

U.S. Department of Education Program Principles

U.S. Department of Education *Community Service Grant Program Draft Non-regulatory Guidance* issued in 2002 stated that effective programs are likely to:

- Be based on sound research and include an evaluation component;
- Feature a tracking system to ensure that students complete community service;
- Involve schools, community organizations, parents, and students in the design and implementation of the programs;
- Engage youth in meaningful and positive activities; and
- Provide troubled students with consistent support, opportunities, and skills for successful futures.

The *Guidance* further stated that, “To develop and implement programs that are aligned with these principles, every aspect of the community – businesses, youth serving organizations, law enforcement, mental health organizations, and religious organizations – must be active supporters.”

Corporation for National Service Quality Factors

According to the Corporation for National Service and the National Institute on Out-of-School Time, several factors should be present in order to have the maximum impact on the participant and community. The key elements of a high-quality program are as follows:

- Service should be sustained over a period of time (twelve weeks or more).
- Service should have identifiable results and help solve real community problems.
- Service should be structured to include preparation, action, and reflection.

White House Program Quality Hallmarks

Hallmarks of effective service programs have also been identified in *Students in Service to America: A Guidebook for Engaging America's Students in a Lifelong Habit of Service* (2002), a publication by the White House and co-sponsored by the Corporation for National and Community Service, the U.S. Department of Education, and the Points of Light Foundation. These hallmarks include –

- Service activities should be of sustained or significant duration.
- Teachers or after-school program coordinators or sponsors need to work with students in order to draw the connections between what the students are doing and what they should be learning.
- The service that students perform should have a strong connection to the curriculum they are studying or to their after-school activities.
- The relationship between service and democratic practices, ideas, and history should be made explicit in order that students see service as a civic responsibility.
- Project participants should reflect on their service.
- Students should have a role not only in executing the service project, but also in making decisions about its development.
- In order to ensure that service is really useful and strengthens community ties, strong partnerships with community groups based on mutually agreed upon goals, roles, and responsibilities are essential.

The experience of Virginia's Community Service Program for Suspended and Expelled Students certainly has demonstrated the validity of the general principles set forth by the U.S. Department of Education, the Corporation for National Service, and other experts. Beyond these general principles, however, the experiences of Virginia's local community service projects have provided valuable insights into the specific design and effective implementation of such programs. This Chapter will present some key insights that have emerged from the experiences of Virginia's community service projects.

Factors Influencing the Nature and Organization of Service Opportunities in Virginia

The duration of suspensions or expulsions, the design/schedule of existing alternative programs, the numbers of program participants, and the ages of participants were all found to influence the nature and organization of service opportunities found to be feasible.

Duration of Suspension or Expulsion

Some of Virginia's local community service programs were designed to serve students on short-term suspension (defined in Virginia as up to 10 days), some were designed to serve those on long-term suspension (defined in Virginia as 11 or more days), and some served students who had been expelled (defined as 365 calendar days). Clearly, the length of time students are suspended and are available for participation in community service affects how community service opportunities are developed and service is performed.

Short-term Participants

Students on short-term suspension were not in programs long enough to engage in the full process of selecting, planning, executing, and reflecting on community service projects – the “optimum” model of youth service typically articulated in the community service program literature. The brief duration in the program also limited the extent to which the participant can be oriented/trained for more complex tasks. Projects serving students on short-term suspension found that service in small work groups or “crews” and involving relatively simple tasks worked well with these students. Among the typical services successfully provided by these participants were washing school buses or police cars, raking leaves, pulling weeds, spreading mulch, clearing trails, washing windows in county facilities, trash pick-up, and clearing nature trails.

Another approach used with smaller groups of short-term participants, as well as in some programs serving those on long-term suspension, was to “take in” projects that could be completed at the program. Examples of these projects include copying, folding, and labeling newsletters for civic groups, preparing mailings, or preparing community awareness materials for county agencies and organizations.

Long-term Participants

Expelled students or those on long-term suspension remained in projects over extended periods of time, creating opportunities for extended service in community service sites. Projects serving these students used several approaches:

- Individual students were assigned to single service sites where they made a sustained, ongoing contribution to the organization. In several cases, the service led to job offers or service continued after the period of suspension or expulsion had ended.
- Small groups of participants performed a series of tasks in support of a large community activity such as working with the organizers of a walk-a-thon or festival to publicize the event, prepare participant materials, volunteer at the event, and perform clean-up.

Examples of Service Options

Three community service options are set forth in *Giving Back: A Community Service-Learning Manual for Youth Courts* (2002): volunteering, building your own, and “done in a day” projects. Although the manual is designed for use by Youth Courts, the service options described are options that might be considered by programs working with suspended and expelled youth.

Volunteering – Participants give their time, talents, and energy to a social-service or government agency that is already working to give back to the community. Volunteering . . .

- Takes advantage of existing community-service organizations.
- Develops ongoing partnerships with community agencies.
- Teaches about the purpose and methods of a community-service agency.
- Can be completed by individual respondents with minimum supervision.

To use this option, the sponsoring the court supervisors must compile a list of viable community-service agencies for respondents to choose from.

Building Your Own Action Projects – Participants plan and complete an action project that deals with a community problem they think is important. Action projects. . .

- Have the highest potential to develop citizenship skills and reinforce restorative justice principles.

- Require more supervision and are best planned and implemented with small groups of respondents.
- Can focus on the specific needs of respondents and their community.
- Develops ongoing partnerships with community agencies.

“Done in a Day” Projects – Participants perform court-mandated community service by participating in a series of short “Done in a Day” service projects. The Manual contains valuable information about organizing and implementing several dozen “done in a day” projects. Such projects. . .

- Can be completed by small groups or individual respondents with minimum supervision.
- Allow flexibility of schedules, transportation, and supervision.
- Help develop ongoing partnerships with community agencies. These partnerships can also improve youth court visibility in the community.
- Depending on sentencing dispositions, respondents may have to complete more than one project.

Coordinating or Integration with Alternative Programs and Services

For several Virginia programs, community service was a component added to an existing alternative program in which participants were already enrolled. This directly affected the scheduling of community service. In one case, the alternative program was an evening program and community service was performed during the day. In another program, extensive evening and weekend service was performed. Some programs set aside full days for service while others allocated limited periods of time within the alternative program day.

Ages of Participants

One local Virginia community service program was designed for elementary students and several were designed for middle school students who were as young as 11 or 12 years of age. Obviously, developmental levels of participants affect the feasible service options. In the program designed for elementary students, the program coordinator accompanied students to service sites and provided on-site supervision of their service.

Youth Service America (www.ysa.org) has developed very useful information about developmentally appropriate community service. That information is presented in the table below:

Developmental Stages and Appropriate Service	
Developmental Stages	Examples of Developmentally Appropriate Service
<p>Developmental changes occurring between the ages of 5 - 6 years</p> <p>Physical development: walk, run, hop, skip, and jump etc becoming physically independent, does not have complete hand-eye coordination and may have accidents. Experimenting with balance (bicycles)</p> <p>Language: speaks well, usually without too many errors. Loves to learn new words and meanings, knows nearly two times more than a 3-4 year old.</p> <p>Mental development: Group games; pretend playmates (imagination) can take simple directions, learning to write and simple math. Tips: assign household chores to help your child follow directions— children love to help.</p> <p>Emotional development: develop self-confidence, observe and compete with others, learn how to give and receive, feel more independent. Tips: Offer praise and reassure the child of their special talents.</p> <p>Special Service Qualities: 5-6 year olds love interaction, talking, learning and doing special tasks (i.e. personalized assignments with directions that build their self confidence)</p> <p>Special Needs: positive reinforcement, and to feel needed.</p>	<p>Recommended service:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Working with the elderly either through adopting a grandparent or visiting a retirement home. (Older people are lonely and would enjoy the company of a child and can teach the child through stories) ▪ Helping with fundraising efforts such as cookie sales—5-6 year olds can help make treats under adult supervision, they can also aid with sales as they learn simple math skills. Children can help organize cookies and make posters for such fundraising events. ▪ Digging holes and planting small flowers/plants for an environmental project. ▪ Picking up trash. ▪ This age group can do many things as long as the directions are simple and the task is easy. Children this age are more than willing to be of service. Please see them as a resource!

Developmental Stages and Appropriate Service	
Developmental Stages	Examples of Developmentally Appropriate Service
<p>Developmental changes occurring between the ages of 6 - 9 years</p> <p>Physical development: improved coordination and skill—begin to use adult tools (should be supervised)</p> <p>Mental development: know right from wrong; better understand cause and effect, increased language skills, increased memory</p> <p>Social Development: increased social-ability, need for relationships.</p> <p>Emotional Development: Daring and ready to try new things, taught to cope with difficulties, begins to think of others feelings. Tips: open conversation is essential to emotional development and realization of individualism.</p> <p>Special Service Qualities: Willingness to learn new things, increased memory and ability to follow directions, increased coordination.</p> <p>Special needs: Interaction with other people.</p>	<p>Recommended service for this age group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Projects that increase a child’s coordination, such as participating in an assembly line with small, light materials. (i.e. helping put things in emergency backpacks or survival kits for those in need from other counties—counting tooth brushes and bars of soap aid in math skills and build a child’s self confidence as they feel more needed.) ▪ Group service projects that require social interaction (1) rest homes (2) visiting the sick, (children this age are very prone to catching sickness, so extra precautions must take place.) (3) Playing with youth who are developmentally disabled. Youth are learning to have feelings and show compassion, this is a great activity for both emotional and individual development. <p>Caution: this activity must be under adult supervision in case of emergency, playing with adults who have disabilities is not recommended.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Visiting a human society. Shy children may prefer walking dogs, petting or playing with kittens or other animals in need, and feeding the animals. Caution: cleanliness is essential so that children do not catch or pass on sicknesses from other animals. Visit with officials at the shelter prior to exposing children to the animals. ▪ Draw, color and create pictures used for advertisements for service projects. ▪ Pick-up trash, collect recyclable materials and take them to a local recycling center. Cleanliness is key here.

Developmental Stages and Appropriate Service

Developmental Stages	Examples of Developmentally Appropriate Service
<p>Developmental changes occurring between the ages of 9-12 years</p> <p>Physical development: Taller, heavier, very good hand-eye-coordination. Note: just because a child looks bigger does not mean they should participate in physical labor! Specifically at this age, children’s bone structures are still developing and adjusting. Fragile bones are more susceptible to breaking at this age than any other—Be Careful!</p> <p>Emotional development: Cares about others (develops empathy) and personal responsibility.</p> <p>Mental development: Can think more abstract and can understand different perspectives to solve problems, begins to use logic. Tips: youth enjoy activities that utilize all five senses. Youth will also perform better when they understand the end-result, take time to have them hear, see and touch other areas of the service project so they can be of better assistance if something comes up.</p> <p>Special service qualities: Youth at this age are capable of most service except heavy manual labor. (Bones are very fragile due to current growth spurt period.)</p> <p>Special needs: Responsibility and trust.</p>	<p>Recommended Service:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Projects that empower youth through small—medium responsibilities such as, overseeing an assembly line, monitoring food, supplies, or the needs of other workers. Try to place the youth “in charge” of a specific section of an activity. ▪ Writing plays to be preformed at various shelters, homes; this will encourage writing and creativity as the child’s skill increases. ▪ Organizing bake sales, preparing food for bake sales, preparing signs/advertisements for such activities. (In the case of simpler service projects encourage your child to be in charge. If something goes wrong, make suggestions but DO NOT take the activity over, this is a time for learning, not perfection.) ▪ Working with leaders on making changes they see feasible and then help implement such changes on a grass-roots level. ▪ Youth at this age are pretty much capable of all types of service. Through encouragement and support they can accomplish their ideas. Begin training youth in the first-aid basics and emergency procedures so they can also be of assistance to others when something unexpected happens. This will also increase their sense of security and confidence as they serve in various situations. ▪ All information received at this age is a very important facet to the foundation they will build upon in later years. Be an example!

The Importance of Preparation, Action, and Reflection

The importance of preparing students for community service in advance of service and of reflecting on the service afterward has been clearly demonstrated to be a critical element of program effectiveness in Virginia. Program coordinators consistently reported that participants who had been prepared for service had not only a better understanding what was expected of them, but had a more positive attitude, performed higher quality service, and became more deeply invested in the contribution their service was making.

Preparation equips students with the knowledge and skills they need for service. This may include teaching students about their community, its needs and the importance of the service they perform. Preparation typically involved the following:

- Providing information about the service site organization,
- Providing information about the problems the organization addresses in the community,
- Describing the purpose of the project being worked on and the specific tasks to be performed,
- Setting clear expectations for behavior and performance,
- Providing relevant logistical information about schedule, transportation,
- Exploring of the expectations and assumptions of participants, and
- Providing opportunity for clarification/answering questions.

Preparation can be further enriched by having a speaker come in to teach students about the work of an SPCA before going to the service site or about poverty before going to a food bank. Students might research an issue related to the service sites such as environmental concerns before service at a recycling center.

Reflection involves thinking about the service performed and how it impacted the community. This contemplation and evaluation should occur throughout the service experience, not just at the end of the project. Reflection may be facilitated using guided questions, by having a classroom discussion, by writing in a journal, or even by preparing a skit.

Some discussion questions:

- How do you think our project made a difference? What more could we have done?
- How does it make you feel to help other people?
- What did you learn that you could apply to other aspects of your life?
- What can we do to follow up on our project? What more can we do about the issue we addressed?
- The best thing about today/the best part of the day was . . .
The most challenging thing about today was . . .
- Today I learned . . .

Creating a Positive Youth Development Setting

Youth Assets

Youth development advocates have developed several lists of the assets or characteristics necessary for positive youth development. A community employing a positive youth development orientation to creating community service opportunities for suspended and expelled students may find these lists of interest, particularly in defining the desired outcomes for such programs.

The Search Institute has developed an extensive list of personal and social assets that includes six general areas:

1. commitment to learning,
2. positive values,
3. social competencies (including planning skills and both interpersonal and cultural competence),
4. positive personal identity,
5. commitment to positive use of time, and
6. a sense of autonomy or “mattering.”

Connell, Gambone, and Smith (2000) propose three critical assets:

1. The ability to be productive,
2. The ability to connect, and
3. The ability to navigate.

Roth and Brooks-Gunn (2000) report consensus among some advocates and researchers on the following assets:

- Caring and compassion;
- Character;
- Competence in academic, social, and vocational arenas;
- Confidence, and
- Connection.

Features of Programs that Promote Youth Development

The Commission on Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education (CBASSE) has identified the features of positive developmental settings – those most effective in promoting positive youth development. Programs providing community service opportunities for suspended and expelled youth may consider these “best practice” features as they design and implement programming.

The features of positive developmental settings are described in detail in the publication *Community Programs to Promote Youth Development* (2002), available online at <http://www.nap.edu/books/0309072751/html/> The program features are outlined in the table below:

Features of Programs that Promote Youth Development		
Features	Descriptors	Opposite Poles
Physical and Psychological Safety	Safe and health-promoting facilities; and practices that increase safe peer group interaction and decrease unsafe or confrontational peer interactions.	Physical and health dangers; fear; feeling of insecurity; sexual and physical harassment; and verbal abuse.
Appropriate Structure	Limit setting; clear and consistent rules and expectations; firm-enough control; continuity and predictability; clear boundaries; and age-appropriate monitoring.	Chaotic; disorganized; laissez-faire; rigid; overcontrolled; and autocratic.
Supportive Relationships	Warmth; closeness; connectedness; good communication; caring; support; guidance; secure attachment; and responsiveness.	Cold; distant; overcontrolling; ambiguous support; untrustworthy; focused on winning; inattentive; unresponsive; and rejecting.
Opportunities to Belong	Opportunities for meaningful inclusion, regardless of one's gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or disabilities; social inclusion, social engagement, and integration; opportunities for sociocultural identity formation; and support for cultural and bicultural competence.	Exclusion; marginalization; and intergroup conflict.
Positive Social Norms	Rules of behavior; expectations; injunctions; ways of doing things; values and morals; and obligations for service.	Normlessness; anomie; laissez-faire practices; antisocial and amoral norms; norms that encourage violence; reckless behavior; consumerism; poor health practices; and conformity.
Support for Efficacy and Mattering	Youth-based; empowerment practices that support autonomy; making a real difference in one's community; and being taken seriously. Practice that includes enabling, responsibility granting, and meaningful challenge. Practices that focus on improvement rather than on relative current performance levels.	Unchallenging; overcontrolling; disempowering, and disabling. Practices that undermine motivation and desire to learn, such as excessive focus on current relative performance level rather than improvement.

Tips for Effective Service Projects in Out-of-School Time Programs

Source: *Service as a Strategy In Out-of-School Time: A How-To Manual* produced by the Corporation for National Service and the National Institute on Out-of-School Time. Available on-line at <http://www.etr-associates.org/>

Young people can find great satisfaction and wonderful learning opportunities in planning and participating in community service. Out-of-school time programs can be the perfect setting for service-learning. Regular service projects are transformed into service-learning by emphasizing the academic and social skills involved in planning and performing projects and by engaging children and youth in reflection on their work. Following are tips and project ideas to help you incorporate service-learning:

Choose Appropriate Projects: Younger children respond well to projects that have quick and tangible results and involve a lot of action (like picking up trash, doing a performance for elderly people, sorting food at a food pantry). Older children often enjoy longer-term projects that allow them to plan projects and get to know those they are serving.

Keep It Simple: Meaningful service-learning opportunities do not need to involve extensive planning, complicated transportation, or many materials. Projects can be simple, tangible and focused and can take place in walking distance from your site or right at your site.

Have Children and Youth Help Plan Projects: Involve children in brainstorming and researching project ideas. Discuss community needs and encourage youth to think about the resources and abilities they have that could meet needs they see. Younger children may need you to offer them concrete ideas and options about appropriate service projects. Older children can take more of a leadership role in brainstorming and researching ideas. Actively involve all young people in making phone calls, thinking about necessary materials, or dividing up work.

Develop Partnerships: Set up a partnership with a local volunteer center, community center, food bank, nursing home, homeless shelter or hospital. Invite a representative to come and talk with youth about the work of their organization and about the needs the organization tries to meet. Young people can "adopt" a group and develop meaningful relationships as they serve the same people again and again. Have youth suggest types of organizations they'd like to partner with and help them research potential partnerships. They can look at the yellow pages listings for social service organizations and ask parents and community members for ideas.

Be Persistent and Specific: Many service agencies and volunteer centers are not used to the idea of children and youth as volunteers. They may not readily have ideas about what young people can do to help. Be prepared to offer concrete suggestions of what your group can do. Be persistent. Invite representatives to come meet the children and talk about needs. Chances are, once service agencies meet the children and see the good young people can do, resistance will melt away.

Engage Young People In Reflection: Reflection is a key element during the process of planning and executing a project and after completing a project. Reflection can involve a special time set aside for group discussion and an ongoing process of capitalizing on the "learning moments" that arise. Ideas for reflection questions to be used in discussions:

- How do you think our project made a difference? What more could we have done?
- How does it make you feel to help other people?
- What did you learn that you could apply to other aspects of your life?
- What can we do to follow up on our project? What more can we do about the issue we addressed?

Celebrate Efforts: Regularly congratulate young people for their work. Make sure that organizations and individuals benefiting from your group's work express their thanks directly to the children and youth involved. Help young people see that the good feelings they get from helping others is part of their reward. On a daily basis, recognize young people who help each other, show courtesy and do things without being asked – all acts of kindness contribute the community and can be considered service-learning.

Steps to Planning a Service Project/Event

Source: Youth Service America's National Youth Service Day Toolkit. Available online at http://www.ysa.org/nysd/resource/nysd_resources_parent.cfm

Step 1: Create a Planning Committee

Event planning is an opportunity to ask the community to come together, to go beyond the usual networks and associations and forge powerful new relationships. Sometimes the most difficult part of community planning is recognizing who else should be involved. Most of us tend to rely on people and organizations we already know. While this is a good starting point, the project can go beyond being “another event on the calendar” if it pulls together people and groups in new ways. Bringing new groups together is not an easy task, therefore you must know the following information:

- How does your community traditionally organize itself? Where are its greatest assets?
- To whom do people look to for leadership?
- Who are well-connected people? Where do people gather?
- Who values young people and community service in you community?
- Who is usually involved n these projects? Who is not? Why not?

Create a list of key stakeholders in the community. How can you involve the following groups?

- | | |
|--|---|
| ▪ Local businesses | ▪ Athletic associations |
| ▪ Nonprofit organizations | ▪ Fraternal organizations |
| ▪ Elementary schools, high schools, and colleges | ▪ Media |
| ▪ Religious organizations and institutions | ▪ Large corporations (especially those who involve their employees) |
| ▪ Service Clubs (Rotary, Lions, Elks, Kiwanis) | ▪ Local government |
| | ▪ Neighborhood associations |

Step 2: Create a Common Vision and Purpose

After assembling the planning committee, discuss the vision for your event. Young people play a critical role in this process, so incorporate opinions from youth outside planning committee. Use the questions below to initiate the visioning process. Have young people and adults fill in the blanks. The answers will make a great basis for discussion.

Brainstorm to write a vision statement that determines your group's purpose for participation. For example: “We envision our event as an opportunity for every individual in the city to participate in a meaningful community service event. Our participation will foster a sense of civic responsibility and pride among everyone.”

Questions for visioning process:

- What talents and gifts do young people bring to the community?
- How do youths and adults view and interact with each other?
- What are the most important needs within your community?
- What resources or assets (programs, funders, etc.) exist to address these needs?
- If you had one day to celebrate service with your family, friends, and neighbors, what would you do?
- Who would you invite?

Step 3: Engage Young People as Planners

Events are an excellent opportunity for youth to “step up” and assist in the planning and implementation of a project. They allow youth to feel ownership over the project and will result in a higher commitment to see the project to completion. Be sure that while incorporating Youth as Planners into your project, you recognize the important dynamics that play into a successful Youth/Adult Partnership.

Step 4: Set Goals

Once you’ve assembled your planning committee, use your vision and purpose to set specific goals. Although your group might be very ambitious, try to limit your focus to just three major goals. Here are some examples:

- To improve the schools through youth service
- To recruit more people
- To highlight the accomplishments of young people
- To forge new community partnership
- To develop youth leadership in the community

Step 5: Picking Your Project (some categories for ideas are below)

- Hunger/Homelessness
- Senior Citizens
- School Activities
- Neighborhood Enhancement
- Politics and Government
- The Environment

Step 6: Set up a Planning Structure

After you decide what project to take on, determine what committee structures will best fulfill your needs. Create your structures based on the key questions: When? Where? How? Who? Materials? Cost? It is important to establish a structure that allows for youth voice. Consider the lines of communication, the process for decision-making, and the channels of accountability.

It is important to have a clear idea if who is doing what and when they are doing it. Your committee set-up depends on the size of your project, the amount of participants

for the project, how elaborate your goals are, and the project you choose. The best structures have multiple leadership positions so many talented people can work on a project at the same time. This also increases the capacity of the project to handle many volunteers. The following is a sample list of committee chairs:

- Overall Coordinator
- Fundraising Chair
- Special Projects Chair
- Public Relations Chair
- Evaluation and Record Keeping
- Recruitment Chair
- Logistics Coordinator
- Service-Learning Coordinator

Step 7: Creating Timelines

Create a Master Timeline

Work from the event backward when setting dates and create a structure from ongoing evaluation and accountability. For example, discuss the timeline at the beginning of each weekly meeting. If things are not on schedule, the group determines how to keep things on track and what additional support or resources might be needed. The most important things to remember when writing a timeline are to be realistic and remember each deadline affects many others. Each committee or sub-project should determine internal deadlines.

Create Realistic Budgets and Start Fundraising

Budgets should not exhaust your community's resources. Great things can be accomplished with very little money, but do not underestimate costs. Fundraising events are a great way to publicize the project and to gain community support.

Resources for Including Students with Disabilities

"Inclusion" refers to the active engagement of people with disabilities as service members and volunteers in all levels of national and community service.

Engaging Youth with Disabilities in Service: A Tip Sheet

Available from Youth Service America at www.ysa.org

Training Manual for Working with Youth Volunteers Who Have Disabilities. Available from Youth Volunteer Corps of America.

Effective Practices Guide to Creating Inclusive and Accessible Days of Service (2002). Available from the National Service Inclusion Project at <http://www.serviceandinclusion.org>

Examples of “Done-in-a-Day” Projects

Presented below are two examples of “Done-in-a-Day” projects found in ***Giving Back: A Community Service-Learning Manual for Youth Courts*** (2002). Although designed for use in Youth Courts, the practical guidance about planning and implementing community service activities and projects is of value to other organizations sponsoring community service programs. There are twenty-eight such “Done-in-a-Day” projects described in the publication. ***Giving Back*** can be accessed online at: http://www.crf-usa.org/YouthCourt/GivingBack_home.html/

“Done-in-a-Day” Example 1: Graffiti Paint-Out

Supervisor Guide

Description: Respondents paint over graffiti.

Purpose: Make the neighborhood a more attractive place to live.

Suggested hours of credit: 4–6 hours

Materials (tools and materials) needed: Paint, rollers, brushes, long handles, plastic buckets, rags, trash bags, ground cloths or plastic to cover floors and sidewalks.

Important! Wear old clothes.

People needed

Participants: 3–30 respondents, working in small groups of 3–5

Supervisors: 1 per small group

Transportation: Arrange transportation from a central meeting point.

Supervisor Prep

1. Locate graffiti problem areas. Make a list of locations.
2. Arrange for donations of paint, rollers, and other materials.
3. Arrange transportation.
4. Paint graffiti sites.
5. Make sure respondents clean up after their work.
6. When they have finished their project, respondents must complete the Stop and Think activity and write an accurate record of their Hours Completed.
7. Sign the supervisor Check Point.

Who to contact: graffiti abatement or control; park and recreation director; business owners, community organizations; gang-intervention agencies; law enforcement

Optional: Have respondents contact community groups and individuals. Learning how to reach out to the community builds civic-participation skills.

Comments: Get permission from owners to paint over graffiti on private, government, or commercial property.

Important! Graffiti may be gang-generated. Check with local gang-intervention agencies or law enforcement officers about safety and security issues.

Graffiti Paint-Out: Youth Instructions

Follow the Action Steps below to complete your Done in a Day project.

Before you begin, you will want to know:

- Tasks—What needs to be done step-by-step?
- Time Needed—How much time will each step take?
- Who Does What—Who is going to do each task?

Important! You may need to complete more than one project to fulfill your youth court assignment. Check with your supervisor.

Action Steps

1. Check with your project supervisor for graffiti locations, work schedule, and painting tools and materials.
2. You will be working with paint. Wear old clothes.
3. Paint out graffiti.
4. Clean up any spilled paint from the ground or sidewalks. Don't take away from the job you have done by leaving a mess!
5. When you have finished your project, complete the Stop and Think activity. Keep a record of the Hours Completed, the time you spent working on the project.
6. Have your supervisor sign the Check Point.

Stop and Think

- What did you do today?
- What did you learn about your community?
- What did you learn about yourself?
- If you worked as a team, did you work well together? Why or why not?
- How could you do this project better next time?

“Done-in-a-Day” Example 2: Senior Assistance

Supervisor Guide

Description: Respondents volunteer to help elderly residents with physical tasks that are difficult for seniors to complete—clean yards, wash windows, mow lawns, weed, haul trash, change light bulbs, do minor repairs, grocery shop, collect mail, shovel snow, split and stack wood.

Purpose: To aid seniors, connect kids to another generation, clean up the community.

Suggested hours of credit: 4–8 hours

Materials (tools and materials) needed: Rakes, shovels, gloves, trash bags, and weed-eater.

People needed

Participants: 2–20 respondents in groups of 2–3

Supervisors: 1 per group

Transportation: Arrange transportation from a central meeting point.

Supervisor Prep

1. Contact Office of the Aging or other human service agencies for a list of seniors requiring assistance.
2. Determine necessary tasks and notify residents of upcoming cleanup day.
3. Gather necessary tools and materials.
4. Arrange transportation.
5. Sweep, paint, haul heavy trash, clean yards, plant vegetation.
6. Make sure respondents clean up after their work.
7. When they have finished their project, respondents must complete the Stop and Think activity and write an accurate record of their Hours Completed.
8. Sign the supervisor Check Point.

Who to contact: Code enforcement officer, Office on Aging and other human service agencies, neighborhood associations, mobile home parks

Optional: Have respondents contact community groups and individuals. Learning how to reach out to the community builds civic-participation skills.

Comments: Provides a great opportunity to break down negative youth and senior stereotypes. Mobile home parks often have a high percentage of elderly residents.

Senior Assistance: Youth Instructions

Follow the Action Steps below to complete your Done in a Day project.

Before you begin, you will want to know:

- Tasks—What needs to be done step-by-step?
- Time Needed—How much time will each step take?
- Who Does What—Who is going to do each task?

Important! You may need to complete more than one project to fulfill your youth court assignment. Check with your supervisor.

Action Steps

1. Check with your project supervisor for the time, place, tools and materials you will need for a cleanup day.
2. You may be doing yard cleanup. Wear old clothes.
3. Sweep, paint, haul heavy trash, clean yards, plant vegetation.
4. Clean up after your work. Don't take away from the job you have done by leaving a mess of your own!
5. When you have finished your project, complete the Stop and Think activity. Keep a record of the Hours Completed, the time you spent working on the project.
6. Have your supervisor sign the Check Point.

Stop and Think

- What did you do today?
- What did you learn about your community?
- What did you learn about yourself?
- If you worked as a team, did you work well together? Why or why not?
- How could you do this project better next time?

Chapter Six

Evaluating Community Service Programs for Suspended and Expelled Students

This Chapter provides a basic model for evaluating a community service program for suspended and expelled students. The model can be adapted to meet local program needs.

Why Evaluate Your Community Service Program?

Programs that serve youth often are under-funded and under-staffed. They may operate “on a shoestring,” prompting questions about why their limited time and resources should be spent on evaluation. While these programs may comply with evaluation requirements of funding sources, they may question whether the money might better be spent on providing more services. These are important questions.

Here are some of the most basic reasons for conducting a program evaluation:

- 1. To document program activities and services.**
- 2. To provide information for program improvement.**
- 3. To demonstrate the effectiveness of program activities in achieving intended outcomes.**

Evaluation Understandings

Effective evaluation requires approaching evaluation as an integral part of the program planning and evaluation process. Although evaluation is often viewed as a complex and risky undertaking, the approach set forth here is one which emphasizes practicality and empowers program managers by providing them with information necessary for program improvement and to demonstrate results.

1. Evaluation is an integral part of program development and implementation.

Perhaps the most important evaluation understanding is that evaluation is most useful and effective when it is an integral part of the program development and implementation process. It is not an afterthought. Building evaluation into the program planning and implementation process from the beginning can help a program better define the outcomes desired and improves the likelihood of being able to measure them.

2. For outcome evaluation, the more precisely we can define the desired results, the more accurate and useful the evaluation will be.

The second evaluation understanding is that effective evaluation goes beyond measuring the activities (or process) associated with implementation to focus on outcomes being achieved. The more precisely we define the desired results, the more accurate and meaningful the evaluation will be.

3. Evaluation can be qualitative, as well as quantitative.

Increasingly, it is being recognized that evaluations that use both quantitative and qualitative, or “mixed,” methods can offer the strongest and most usable evaluation designs. The third evaluation understanding is that program evaluation means more than putting numbers on everything; a combination of numbers and narrative feedback provides the more complete picture.

4. Evaluation is an impartial process.

The fourth evaluation understanding is that evaluation is an impartial process. It is not intended or designed to determine “goodness” or “badness” but, rather, to “tell the story” and to compare actual implementation and results with intended implementation and results.

5. Evaluation is empowering.

The fifth evaluation understanding is that evaluation is empowering for program sponsors and managers. It provides information for continuous improvement and justification for continued funding.

A practical definition of “evaluation” is:

Evaluation is a systematic process of obtaining credible information to be used by interested persons for the purposes of program improvement and program assessment.

Several features of the definition merit closer examination.

“**Systematic process**” means that there is an organized, methodical approach employed. It is not an incidental, one-time, after-the-fact task tacked onto the end of a project but a process planned and implemented over a period of time.

“**Used by interested persons**” suggested not only that evaluation is intended to be used but that evaluation has a broad range of audiences who have differing interests and information needs including program personnel, parents, collaborating agencies and organizations, the community at large, and funding sources.

“**Purposes of program improvement and assessment**” connotes at least two major uses of evaluation – for program improvement and to demonstrate whether intended results are being achieved.

A Basic Model for Evaluating Community Service Programs for Suspended and Expelled Youth

Outlined below is a basic design for evaluating community service programs for suspended and expelled youth. The model includes the following elements:

1. An overview of key evaluation questions and related reporting forms.
2. Sample reporting forms that include an explanation of how the form is used.

Program/Evaluation Logic Model

The evaluation model reflects key components of the Community Service Program Logic Model seen on page 6 of this publication.

Assumption: That performing community service will provide suspended or expelled students with meaningful activities to occupy their time during their absence from regular school, will help them avoid negative behavior, and will teach them the value of service to others and to their communities.

- Outcomes for the Community:** Implementing a community service program will
- Strengthen interagency collaboration around community service for youth;
 - Increase opportunities for community service by youth; and
 - Community needs will be met through the service performed by youth.

- Outcomes for Youth:** Youth engaging in community service will
- Engage in meaningful community service activities, making productive use of their time out of school;
 - Avoid/reduce negative behaviors; and
 - Learn the value of service to others and to their community.

Overview of Key Evaluation Questions and Related Forms

The table below lists key evaluation questions and the instruments/forms used to answer the questions. Sample forms are also provided in this Chapter.

Key Evaluation Questions and Related Forms		
	Evaluation Questions	Forms/Instruments
Implementation Evaluation	1. What are the essential characteristics of program participants?	Participant Enrollment Form
	2. What types of service did program participants perform?	Service Log
	3. What are the program implementation successes and factors contributing to them?	Monthly Implementation Report
	4. What are the program implementation challenges and the strategies used to address them?	Monthly Implementation Report
Implementation & Outcome Evaluation	5. Did participants engage in meaningful service activities?	Service Log; Exit Report Participant Feedback Service Partner Feedback
Outcome Evaluation	6. Did participants learn the value of service to others and to community?	Participant Feedback Participant Survey
	7. Did participants avoid negative behaviors/improve behavior?	Participant Survey Student record review

The table below provides an overview of evaluation questions associated with the implementation (process) and the outcome components of the evaluation.

<i>Implementation Evaluation</i>	<i>Outcome Evaluation</i>
<p>Refers to the part of the evaluation that examines the development and implementation of the program. Questions typically asked include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To what extent do the activities and strategies match those described in the plan? If they do not match, are the changes in the activities justified and described? ▪ To what extent were the activities conducted according to the proposed timeline? By the appropriate personnel? ▪ To what extent are the actual costs of project implementation in line with initial budget expectations? ▪ What barriers were encountered? How and to what extent were they overcome? 	<p>Refers to the part of the evaluation that looks at what a program has actually accomplished in terms of its stated goals. Questions typically asked include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To what extent did the project meet its overall goals? ▪ Was the project equally effective for all participants? ▪ What components were the most effective? ▪ What significant unintended impacts did the project have? ▪ Is the project replicable and transportable? <p>For each of these questions, both quantitative data (data expressed in numbers) can be used.</p>

Overview of Reporting Forms/Instruments

In the table below are listed the community service program reporting forms and their purposes. On the pages that follow are the forms and directions for completing them.

Reporting Form	Purposes
Participant Enrollment Data	Documents characteristics of individual program participants from which profiles of participants can be derived; later, the relationship of demographic data to outcomes can be examined.
Participant Exit Data	Documents community service completion status.
Monthly Program Implementation Report	Numerical summary of students served, service sites, and hours of service; documents project successes/related factors and project challenges/strategies for overcoming them.
Monthly Community Service Log	Documents hours of community service by individual participant and by community service site.
Service Site Roster	Cumulative record of organizations providing community service sites; submitted at beginning, middle, and end of year.
Service Partner Feedback	Feedback from all organizations providing community service sites; gathered at after any “event” project or twice annually where ongoing service is being performed.
Participant Feedback	Feedback from individual program participants at completion of community service assignment; includes informational, satisfaction, and attitudinal items. Completed anonymously.
Participant Survey	Pre- and post-measure of participant views related to behavioral expectations and bonding to community. Completed anonymously.

SAMPLE FORM: Participant Enrollment Form

Date of Enrollment in Community Service: _____

Participant Data

Participant ID (###-###): _____ - _____ Male / Female *circle one*

Age (yrs.): _____ Grade level when last enrolled: _____

Race/Ethnicity (check one)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian or Alaskan
native | <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander | <input type="checkbox"/> White, not of Hispanic origin |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black, not of Hispanic origin | <input type="checkbox"/> Unspecified |

Current status (check one)

- Short-term suspension
- Long-term suspension
- Expulsion

School Disciplinary History

_____ Number of out-of-school suspensions during last 12 months enrolled

How would you characterize this student's current suspension/expulsion status? *check one*

- Result of offense(s) that are part of an established pattern of problem behavior.
- Result of offense(s) that are part of emerging/escalating pattern of problem behavior.
- Result of offense(s) that are considered isolated and out of character for the student.
- Other. Please describe: _____

Form completed by:

Name	Title	Date
------	-------	------

Directions for Completing the Virginia Community Service Program Participant Enrollment Form

Participant Enrollment Data Form

Data element	Definition / Explanation
Date of Enrollment in Community Service	Date student begins the <u>community service</u> assignment. Note: It is not the date the student enrolls in the alternative or academic program.
Participant ID	A unique number assigned by the local project; the number assigned to the student remains the same for that student regardless of the number of enrollments/exits. The format is to include 2 elements: the 3-digit locality code and a 3-digit code assigned to the student. The project must maintain a Key List that matches student names and numbers. All evaluation data will use the 3-digit code.
Male / Female	Circle appropriate choice.
Age	Participant age in years on the date of enrollment in community service.
Grade level	Grade level of student. If expelled, grade level when last enrolled in school.
Race/Ethnicity	The codes listed are those used by the Virginia Department of Education: American Indian or Alaskan native - a person having origins (ancestry) in any of the original peoples of North America, who maintains cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition. Asian or Pacific Islander - a person having origins (ancestry) in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asian, the Pacific Islands, or the Indian subcontinent. Included, for example, are peoples of China, Korea, the Philippine Islands, Samoa, and India. Black, not of Hispanic origin - a person having origins (ancestry) in any of the black racial groups of Africa. Hispanic - a person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish culture or origin (ancestry), regardless of race. White, not of Hispanic origin - a person have origins (ancestry) in any of the original peoples of Europe, North Africa, or the Middle East. Unspecified - a person who cannot be classified according to the definitions of any of the five racial/ethnic categories.
Current status	Select one status that best describes the student's status on the date of enrollment in community service.
Number of out-of-school suspensions during last 12 months enrolled	Number of out-of-school suspensions (not days suspended) during the past 12 months.
Pattern of problem behavior	Select one status that best describes the student's pattern of problem behavior.
Completed by	Name / title of person completing the form.

SAMPLE FORM: Participant Exit Record

Date of Exit from Community Service: _____

Participant ID (###-###): _____

Community Service Completion Status (check one)

- Successfully completed assigned/selected community service
- Partially completed assigned/selected community service
- Did not complete assigned/selected community service

Form completed by:

Name	Title
------	-------

Directions for Completing the Virginia Community Service Program Participant Exit Record

Participant Exit Record

Data element	Definition / Explanation
Date of Exit from Community Service	Date that student exits the <u>community service</u> assignment. Note: it is not the date the student exits from the alternative placement or other program/services.
Participant ID	A unique number assigned by the local project; the number assigned to the student remains the same for that student regardless of the number of enrollments/exits. The format is to include 2 elements: the 3-digit locality code and a 3-digit code assigned to the student. The project must maintain a Key List that matches student names and numbers. All evaluation data will use the 3-digit code.
Community Service Completion Status	Select the one status that best describes the exit status of the student.
Completed by	Name / title of person completing the form.

SAMPLE FORM: Monthly Implementation Report

Project: _____

Reporting Month of _____
(Month / Year)

I. Numerical Summary

Number of students enrolled in community service this month: _____

Number of students exiting community service this month: _____
(Note: Attach completed Participant Enrollment and Participant Exit forms)

Total number of students who performed community service this month: _____

Total number of community service sites used this month: _____

Total number of hours of community service this month: _____
(Note: Attach Monthly Community Service Log)

II. Implementation Progress

Project Successes: a) Describe major project accomplishments during the reporting period. b) What were the conditions/factors that contributed to successful project implementation?

Project Challenges: a) Describe events/conditions/factors that were challenges to project implementation during the reporting period. b) What strategies are planning to overcome these challenges?

SAMPLE FORM: Community Service Log

Project: _____

Reporting Month: _____ (Month / Year)

Participant ID #	Site	Type of Services Rendered	# Hours this month
	Add rows to table as needed		
Total # Students	Total # Sites		Total # Hours

SAMPLE FORM: Community Service Site Roster

Project: _____

Organizations Providing Community Service Site(s)	Types of community service assignments	Date added to roster	Date removed from roster

Directions for Completing the Community Service Site Roster

Purpose: The Community Service Site Roster is to serve as a cumulative list of organizations that have agreed to provide community service sites for suspended and expelled students.

Data element	Definition / Explanation
Organization providing community service site	The full name of the organization that has agreed to provide community service site(s) for students. Example: Jefferson County Department of Recreation.
Types of community service assignments	Enter a brief description of the types of community service opportunities that are available at the organization's sites.
Date added to roster	The date that the organization has agreed to begin having students from this program perform community service at their site(s). It is expected that the name of organizations will be added as projects develop more community service opportunities.
Date removed from roster	The date that the organization ceases to be a site for community service for students in this program. Note: organizations that are removed may later be re-entered on the roster.

SAMPLE FORM: Community Service Partner Feedback

Date: _____ Locality: _____

Agency/Organization Name: _____

Agency/Organization Contact: _____

Phone: _____

Please help us evaluate the Community Service Program for youth by responding to the following questions:

1. Please rate your satisfaction with the communication you have with the Community Service Program. *(select one)*

- very satisfied somewhat satisfied needs improvement

2. How well prepared to perform community service are the students sent to your site? *(select one)*

- well prepared somewhat prepared needs improvement

3. How would you rate the overall quality of work performed by students? *(select one)*

- excellent good fair poor

4. From your perspective, what benefits do you think that students gain from being involved in community service?

5. What suggestions do you have for improving the program?

SAMPLE FORM: Community Service Participant

Name: _____ Locality: _____

REMEMBER, YOUR RESPONSES ARE CONFIDENTIAL. ONLY THE PROGRAM EVALUATOR WILL SEE YOUR RESPONSES.

1. What types of community service did you complete? _____

2. Please rate how well you enjoyed your community service experience: (select one)

Did not like at all

Liked most of the time

Liked a little

Liked a lot

3. What was the best part of your community service experience? _____

4. What was the worst part of your community service experience? _____

5. How important do you think serving your community is? (select one)

very important

moderately important

not very important

6. Based on your experience doing community service, how likely are you to volunteer in the future? (select one)

will definitely volunteer

maybe

not at all likely to volunteer

PLEASE PLACE THIS SHEET IN THE ENVELOPE PROVIDED AND SEAL IT.

SAMPLE FORM: Community Service Participant Survey

Participant ID: _____

Check one: entrance survey
 exit survey

Please respond to each of the following by circling  your answer: **REMEMBER, YOUR RESPONSES ARE CONFIDENTIAL. ONLY THE PROGRAM EVALUATOR WILL SEE YOUR RESPONSES.**

I like my community.	NO!	no	yes	YES!
I'd like to get out of my community.	NO!	no	yes	YES!
If I had to move, I would miss my community.	NO!	no	yes	YES!
There are lots of adults in my community that I could talk to about something important.	NO!	no	yes	YES!
People in my community notice when I am doing a good job and let me know.	NO!	no	yes	YES!
There are people in my community who encourage me to do my best.	NO!	no	yes	YES!
There are people in my community who are proud when I do something well.	NO!	no	yes	YES!
How important do you think the things you are learning in school are going to be for your later life?	Very important	Somewhat important	A little important	Not at all important
During your last year of school, have your grades been better than the grades of most students in your class?	NO!	no	yes	YES!
I do the opposite of what people tell me, just to get them mad.	Very False	Somewhat False	Somewhat True	Very True
I ignore rules that get in my way.	Very False	Somewhat False	Somewhat True	Very True
I like to see how much I can get away with.	Very False	Somewhat False	Somewhat True	Very True
I often do things without thinking about what will happen.	NO!	no	yes	YES!
It is important to think before you act.	NO!	no	yes	YES!
How honest were you in filling out this survey?	Very honest	Mostly honest	Honest once in awhile	Not at all honest

PLEASE PLACE THIS SHEET IN THE ENVELOPE PROVIDED AND SEAL IT.

Analyzing and Reporting Evaluation Findings

The management and analysis of evaluation data have become more feasible with recent advances in technology. Using a personal computer (PC) and widely available software such as Microsoft Excel and Microsoft Access, SDFSCA program data can be gathered, maintained, and analyzed within the program office without total reliance on user-unfriendly “mainframe” computers and reliance on outside data specialists.

Microsoft Excel® is considered a “flat” database, taking the form of a single table or “spreadsheet” made up of rows and columns. Typically, the rows represent individual cases and the separate columns represent the various pieces of data collected on each case. Microsoft Access® is a “relational” database program that stores information in tables. A single database may have multiple tables which can be linked together. All the information about a single program participant can be stored in related tables in a single database and forms to simplify data entry can be created. Additionally, data can be analyzed and reports produced using Access®. Data from the Virginia Community Service Program cross-site evaluation were maintained in Access®. Analysis employed both Access® and SPSS®.

The basic evaluation design and instruments set forth in this Chapter will enable projects to report the following types of process and outcome findings:

Process Reporting

Using data from **Participant Enrollment Form**, program participants can be described by sex, age, grade level, race/ethnicity, number of suspensions in the past 12 months, and suspension/expulsion status upon entry to the program. Using data from the **Participant Exit Form**, the extent to which participants successfully completed, partially completed, or did not complete community service can be reported.

Using data from the **Community Service Log**, a program can report the numbers of community service hours performed each month by participant and by community service site. The types of service performed at each site is also documented. Total numbers of hours per quarter or semester or year can also be reported.

Using data from the **Monthly Implementation Report**, the program can report the numbers of participants entering and exiting the program each month, the numbers of sites at which services were performed each month, and the total number of hours of service performed. Additionally, by capturing descriptions of program successes, factors contributing to the successes, challenges, and strategies used to address challenges, a program can more systematically analyze the process of implementation and derive “lessons learned.”

Using **Participant Feedback** data, the program can report the participant ratings of how much they enjoyed their experience performing community service, how important they consider service to be, and the likelihood of their volunteering in the future. Participant comments on the best and worst aspects of the experience yield particularly rich descriptions of their perspectives on the experience. The feedback provides information useful for both process and outcome evaluation reporting. The feedback provides insights into whether the program is being implemented as intended and is providing meaning opportunities to its participants. Additionally, it provides insights into whether participants learned the value of service to others and to the community, key outcome measures.

Service Partner Feedback data are also useful for both process and outcome evaluation reporting. The feedback yields ratings for key aspects of implementation (i.e., communication, preparation and the quality of service) as well as suggestions for improving the program. Partner perceptions of what participants are gaining represent a valuable outside “community” perspective that may differ from that of the program staff.

Outcome Reporting

The **Service Site Roster** enables the program to keep an ongoing list of active community service sites. From the roster the program can easily determine whether, for example, opportunities for service were increased over the course of a program year.

The **Participant Survey** uses selected subscales from the Youth Risk Survey originally developed by Hawkins, Catalano, and Arthur (see Briney, et al., 2000) that assess rebelliousness, opportunities for pro-social involvement, rewards for pro-social involvement. Entrance survey data can be used to yield a “profile” of participants that can be compared with previous surveys of other youth populations. Entrance and exit surveys can be compared to assess change, a primary outcome measure. Survey findings may also be analyzed in light of demographic data and of hours/types of community service performed to examine relationships between participant characteristics, program interventions, and outcomes.

Additional Strategies for Demonstrating the Value of Youth Service to the Community

Demonstrating the value of a community service program for suspended and expelled youth can be critical to sustaining its funding. Most important are evaluation findings that can demonstrate that the program is being implemented effectively and that targeted outcomes are being achieved.

Several additional strategies might be considered.

Calculating the actual market value of service rendered.

Many programs that use adult volunteers cite the market value of the service hours rendered, typically using a figure of about \$18 per hour. Even reducing the per hour rate to half that used for an adult volunteer will produce some impressive values. For example, if the program participants perform 300 hours of service at \$8 per hours, their service to the community would have a market value of \$2400!

Calculating actual savings compared to previous costs.

Sometimes the service performed helps an organization to avoid expenses that they had previously incurred. For example, an organization that previously paid a commercial mailing service to print, collate, fold, and label their newsletter would realize a cost savings from the use of volunteer service. If the previous cost had been \$400, then an actual savings of \$400 could be cited.

Calculating service from a “value added” perspective.

Sometimes the service performed enables an organization to accomplish things that would not otherwise have been accomplished or that would have been accomplished at a much later date. In this case, because of service performed, a worthwhile community effort is able to move forward, serve more people, provide a higher level of service, or distribute more resources than would have occurred otherwise. Although placing a monetary value on the service is more challenging in this case, the increase in the organization’s effectiveness might be expressed as increases in the numbers of people served, amounts of resources distributed by the organization or improved conditions.

Chapter Seven

Evaluation Findings

In this chapter findings from the evaluation of Virginia’s Community Service Program for Suspended and Expelled Students are summarized. The evaluation design and methods, including samples data collection instruments, are detailed in Chapter Six.

Evaluation Logic Model

The evaluation logic model reflects key components of the program logic model seen on page 6 of this publication. The assumptions on which the program was designed and the anticipated outcomes at the community and youth participant levels are as follows:

Assumptions: That performing community service will provide suspended and expelled students with meaningful activities to occupy their time during their absence from regular school, will help them avoid negative behavior, and will teach them the value of service to others and to their communities.

Outcomes for Community: Implementing a community service program will

- Strengthen interagency collaboration around community service for youth;
- Increase opportunities for community service by youth; and
- Community needs will be met through the service performed by youth.

Outcomes for Youth: Youth engaging in community service will

- Engage in meaningful community service activities, making productive use of their time out of school;
- Avoid/reduce negative behaviors; and
- Learn the value of service to others and to their community.

Community Service Program Participants: A Profile

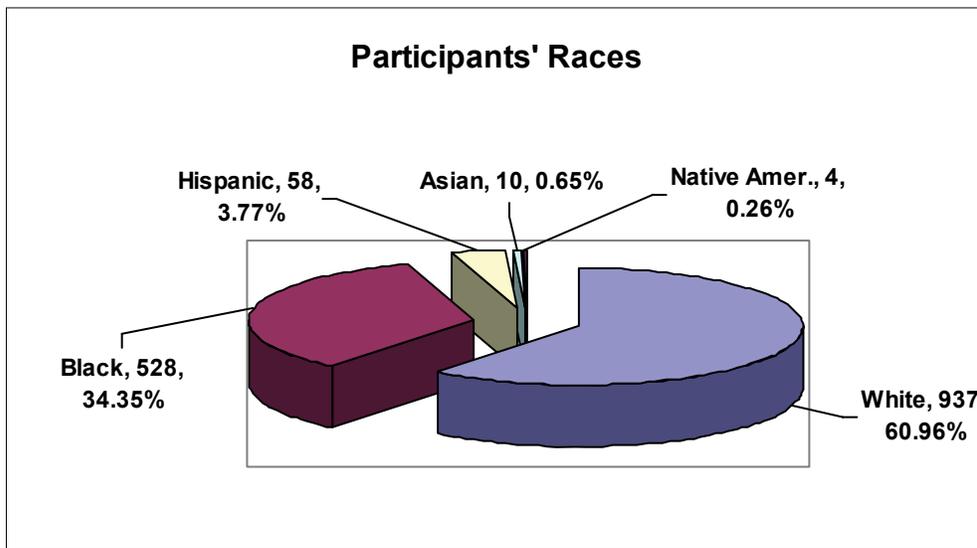
The demographic characteristics of students who participated in community service were largely a function of how communities designed their programs. The populations targeted as part of the program design served to define the grade levels of students and disciplinary status of program participants. For example, one program was designed for elementary students. Several programs served only middle school students, and others served only students who were either expelled or on long-term suspension. Two programs served only court-involved students. Nevertheless, it is useful in understanding how programs operated and outcomes achieved, to examine the characteristics of program participants.

Demographic Profile

A total 1607 students participated in funded community service programs. This unduplicated count includes all students in the fifteen programs that operated for the full two-year grant period as well as students from the three programs that operated only one year. There were disproportionate numbers of male participants across all sites and throughout the two project years. Seventy-two percent of participants were male and 28 percent were female.

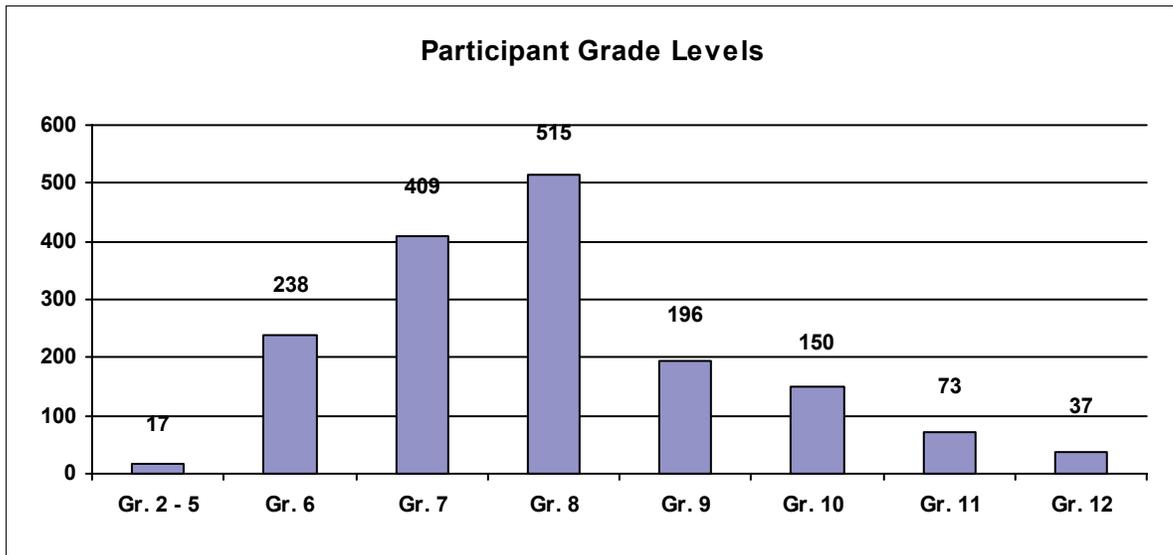
Racial representation appeared to reflect general local demographics. Of the 1559 participants for whom race information was available, 60 percent were white, 34 percent were black, 4 percent were Hispanic, and less than one percent were Asian and American Indian. Racial representation in individual programs appears to mirror the racial composition of schools. Races of program participants are represented below in Chart 7.1.

Chart 7.1. Community Service Participants' Races



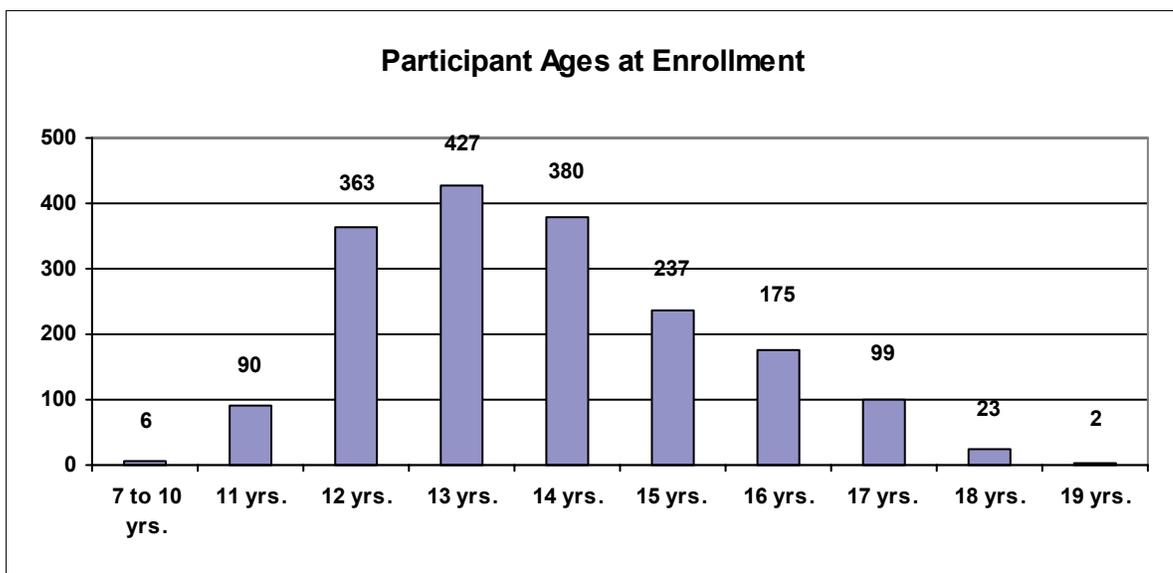
Grade levels of participants ranged from grade 2 to 12. Reflecting grade levels targeted in the program designs, a substantial majority (70 percent) of participants were middle school students, about 28 percent were high school students, and just over one percent were elementary school students. The highest numbers of participants were in grade 8 (514), followed by grades 7 (408) and 6 (238). The distribution of grade levels of participants is reported in Chart 7.2 below. The total number of grades reported exceeds the unduplicated count of participants because several dozen students were in the program more than once over a two-year period and were at different grade levels in the two years.

Chart 7.2. Distribution of Grade Levels of Community Service Participants



Reflecting the pattern of grade levels, participants ranged in age from 7 to 19 years. The highest numbers of participants were ages 13 (427) and 14 (380), followed by 12 (363) and 15 (237). The number of ages reported exceed the unduplicated count of participants because of students who entered the program more than once over a two-year period and were a year older at enrollment. The distribution of all participants are reported below in Chart 7.3.

Chart 7.3. Distribution of Ages of Community Service Participants



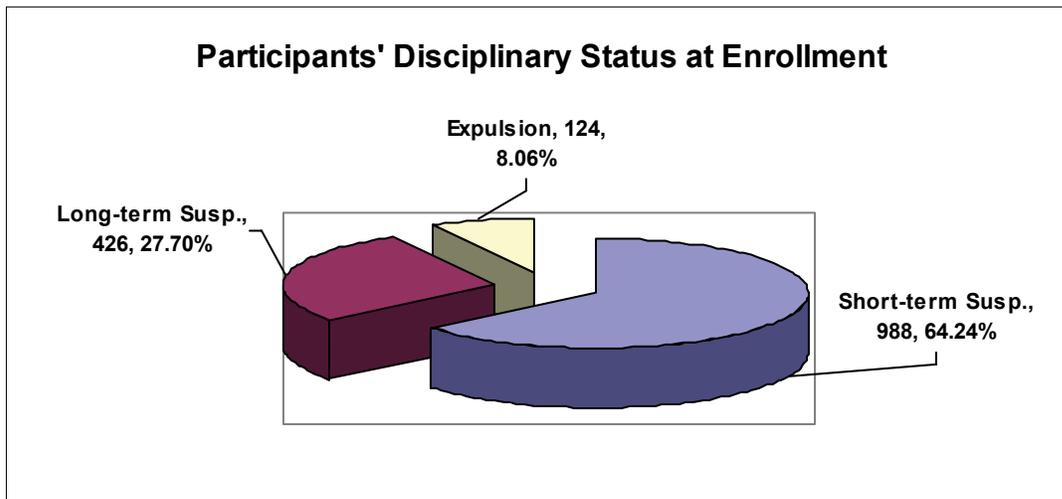
Disciplinary Profile

Upon enrollment in the community service programs, three indicators of disciplinary status and history were reported.

1. Whether the student status was (a) short-term suspended, (b) long-term suspended, or (c) expelled.
2. Whether the behavior that resulted in the disciplinary action was (a) part of an established pattern of problem behavior, (b) part of an emerging/escalating pattern of problem behavior, or (c) considered isolated and out of character for the student.
3. The number of school suspensions during the last 12 months of enrollment.

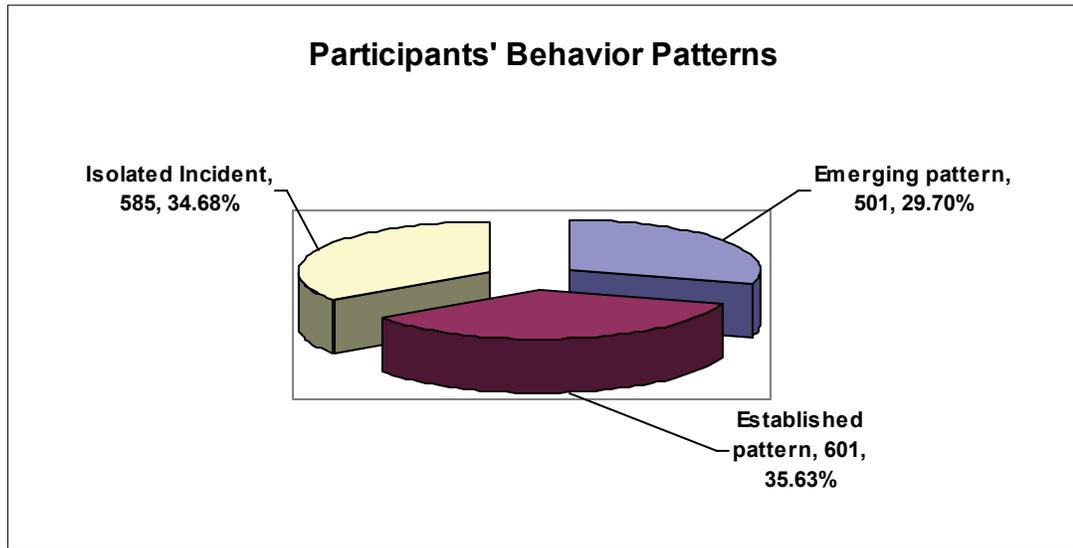
Of the 1581 participants for whom disciplinary status information was available, 62 percent were on short-term suspension, 27 percent were on long-term suspension, and nearly 8 percent had been expelled. Chart 7.4 summarizes participants' disciplinary status upon enrollment in community service programs.

Chart 7.4. Community Service Participants' Disciplinary Status at Enrollment



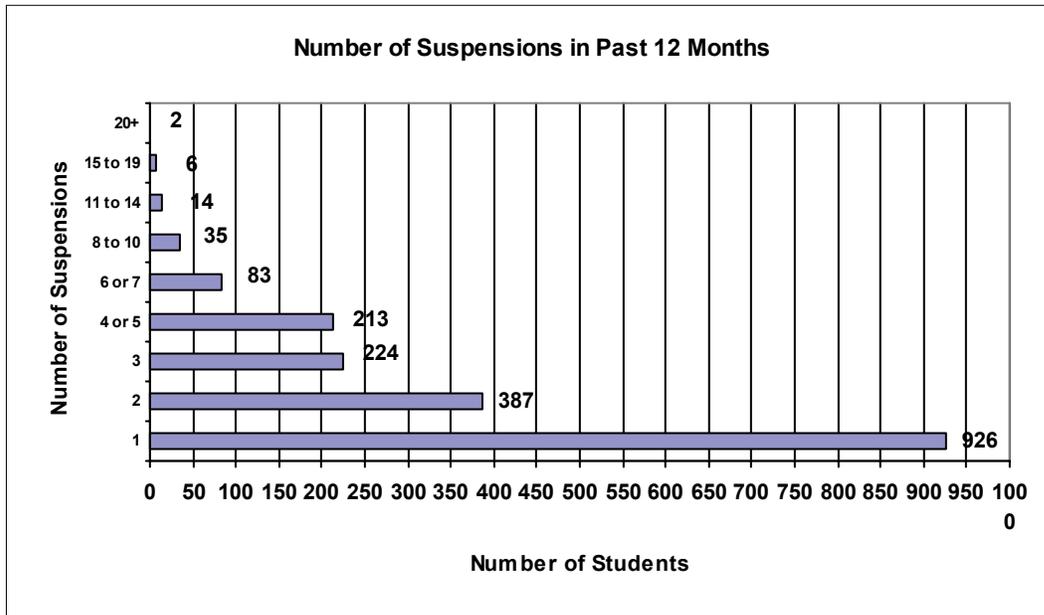
Behavior patterns reported for enrolling participants were nearly equally distributed across the three reporting categories. Just over one third were reported to have well established patterns of problem behavior, one third had an emerging pattern of problem behavior, and for slightly less than one third, the incident that resulted in their suspension or expulsion was an isolated, out-of-character behavior. Behavior patterns of program participants are summarized below in Chart 7.5.

Chart 7.5. Community Service Participants' Behavior Patterns



The number of school suspensions for participants in the 12 months prior to enrollment in the community service program ranged from none to 24 suspensions. Interestingly, nearly half had only one previous suspension, and more than 80 percent had three or fewer suspensions in the past 12 months. The distribution of numbers of school suspensions of all participants is reported below in Chart 7.6.

Chart 7.6. Distribution of Past 12 Month Suspensions for Community Service Participants



A closer examination of these discipline-related data reveals both predictable and unexpected findings. A predictable observation, students described as having an established pattern of problem behavior had an average 3.51 school suspensions in the past 12 months, those with emerging/escalating behaviors had an average 2.05 suspensions, and those whose offense behavior was characterized as isolated or out of character had an average 1.02 suspensions in the past 12 months. Average numbers of suspensions in the past 12 months by patterns of behavior are summarized below in Table 7.1.

Table 7.1. Average Suspensions for Community Service Participants by Reported Behavior Pattern

Behavior Pattern	Average Suspensions
Established pattern of problem behavior	3.51
Emerging pattern of problem behavior	2.05
Isolated, out-of-character behavior	1.02

When numbers of suspensions are examined in terms of disciplinary status, a less clear pattern emerges. Students on long-term suspension had the highest average number of suspensions (3.06), followed by expelled students (2.36) and students on short-term suspension (2.08). Average numbers of suspensions in the past 12 months by disciplinary status are summarized below in Table 7.2.

Table 7.2. Average Suspensions for Community Service Participants by Disciplinary Status

Disciplinary Status	Average Suspensions
Expelled	2.36
Long-term suspension	3.06
Short-term suspension	2.08

When average numbers of suspensions are examined in relation to patterns of behavior and disciplinary status, it was again observed that those whose misbehavior was characterized as an isolated, out-of-character incident had the lowest average numbers of suspensions and that those with established patterns of problem behaviors had the highest average numbers of suspensions. Interestingly, however, for students whose misbehavior was characterized as an isolated incident, those expelled had the lowest average suspensions (1.17), followed by those on short-term suspensions (1.18) and those on long-term suspensions (1.36). Students without substantial disciplinary records who have been expelled may reflect “zero tolerance” disciplinary policies that result in expulsions of students for very serious offenses such as firearms and drugs even if it is a first-time offense. Among those with established patterns of problem behavior, those on long-term suspension had the highest average number of suspensions (4.38), followed by those who had been expelled (3.35) and those on short-term suspension (3.17). Average numbers of suspensions in relation to patterns of behavior and disciplinary status are reported below in Table 7.3.

Table 7.3. Average Suspensions for Community Service Participants by Disciplinary Status

Behavior Pattern	Behavior resulting in suspension/expulsion reflects . . .		
	Expelled	Long-Term Suspension	Short-Term Suspension
Established pattern	3.35	4.38	3.17
Emerging pattern	2.17	2.25	1.98
Isolated incident	1.17	1.36	1.18

When patterns of behavior are examined in terms of disciplinary status, it was found that among those on short-term suspension, 35 percent had established patterns of problem behavior, 30 percent had emerging patterns, and for 36 percent the offense was viewed as an isolated incident. For those on long-term suspension, nearly half (48.33 percent) had established patterns of problem behavior, 29 percent had emerging patterns, and for 22 percent the offense was viewed as an isolated incident. Among those expelled, 44 percent had an established pattern of problem behavior, 32 percent had an emerging pattern, and for 24 percent the offense was viewed as an isolated incident. Again, the proportion of expelled students whose expulsion offenses were reported to be an isolated or out-of character incidents was a somewhat unexpected finding that suggests the possible effects of “zero tolerance” disciplinary policies. Percentages of participants suspended or expelled with behavior pattern types are summarized below in Table 7.4.

Table 7.4. Percentages of Participants Suspended or Expelled with Behavior Pattern Types

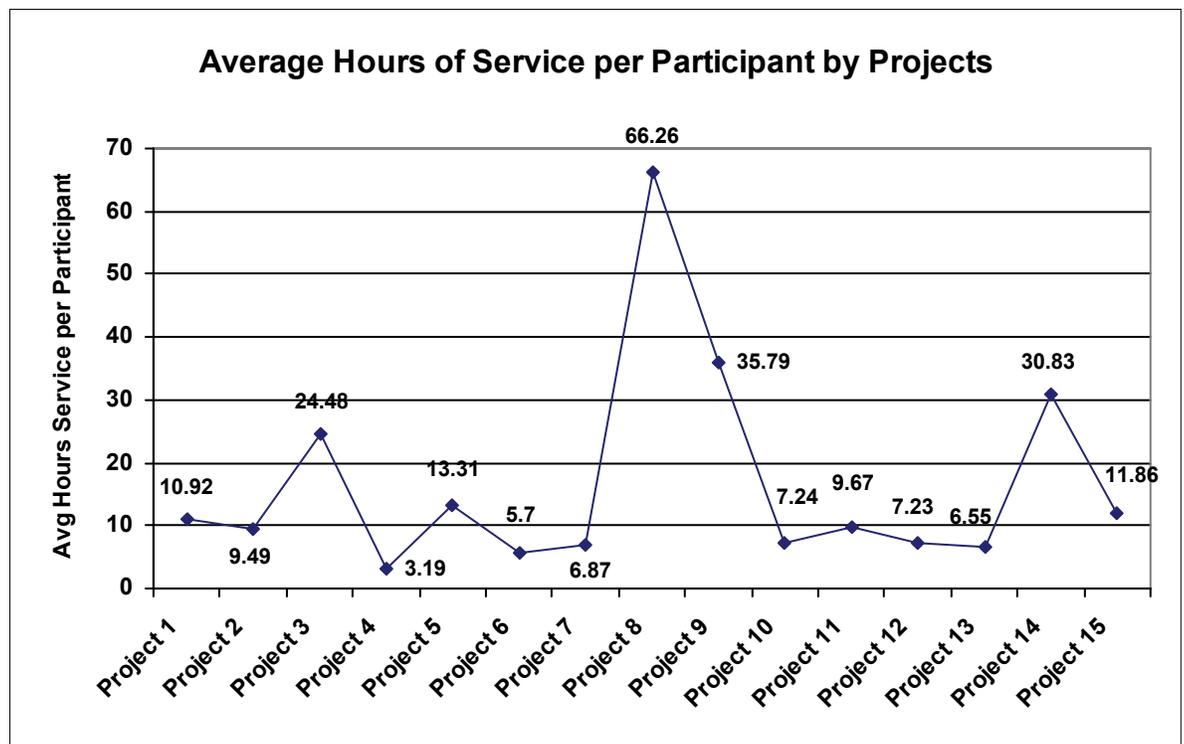
Disciplinary Status	Behavior resulting in suspension/expulsion reflects . . .		
	Established Pattern	Emerging Pattern	Isolated Incident
Short-term suspension (n=1339)	34.73% (465)	29.72% (398)	35.55% (476)
Long-term suspension (n=449)	48.33% (217)	29.40% (132)	22.27% (100)
Expelled (n=116)	43.97% (51)	31.90% (37)	24.14% (28)

Community Service

Participants in Virginia’s Community Service Program contributed a total 38,675 hours of service to their respective communities. The average number of hours of service contributed per participant was 24 hours. Across individual programs, the total numbers of service hours ranged from 265 to over 6000, and the average number of hours of service per participant ranged from 3.19 to 66.26.

Just as the demographic characteristics of students who participated in community service were largely a function of how communities designed their programs, the numbers of hours of community service contributed by participants were greatly influenced by program designs. For example, one program that created a full-day community service schedule for court-involved students served only 17 students but contributed over 6000 hours of service, with seven of the program’s students exceeding 400 hours of service each. Participants in this program averaged over 66 hours of service. In another program that added community service to the schedule of an existing alternative program, 76 students contributed over 2300 hours of service. The variations in total numbers of service hours and in average numbers of hours per participant are reflected below in Chart 7.7.

Chart 7.7. Average Hours of Service per Participant by Projects



Impact of Community Service on Participants

In accordance with the Community Service Program logic model, it is assumed that performing community service will (a) provide suspended and expelled students with meaningful activities to occupy their time, (b) help them avoid negative behavior, and (c) teach them the value of service to others and their community. These program impacts on student participants were examined from multiple perspectives using several methods of assessment. The perspectives and findings will be reported below.

Did performing community service provide suspended and expelled students with meaningful activities to make productive use of their time out of school?

As reported in the previous section, a total 1607 students performed a total 38,675 hours of service in fifteen communities across Virginia. The overwhelming majority of participants would have spent their period of suspension or expulsion excluded from any structured, supervised setting and at elevated risk of engaging in additional problem behaviors. In several communities that already provided students with an alternative educational program, the community service component that was added either increased the number of hours students were in supervised settings or enriched the existing alternative program.

Examinations of the nature of community service performed by students and of the rate of success in completing service demonstrate the quality and meaningfulness of community service opportunities in Virginia's programs. The service sites and types of service performed are listed in detail on pages 43 through 51 of this publication. The list reflects the variety of types of service performed and the diversity of community agencies and organizations that benefited from the service.

Of all participants exiting the program, nearly 85 percent successfully completed their service, seven percent partially completed their service, and only six percent did not complete their service. Almost every case of failure to complete service was due to a family move or other circumstance that was beyond the control of the student and prevented successful completion of service.

Table 7.5. Community Service Completion

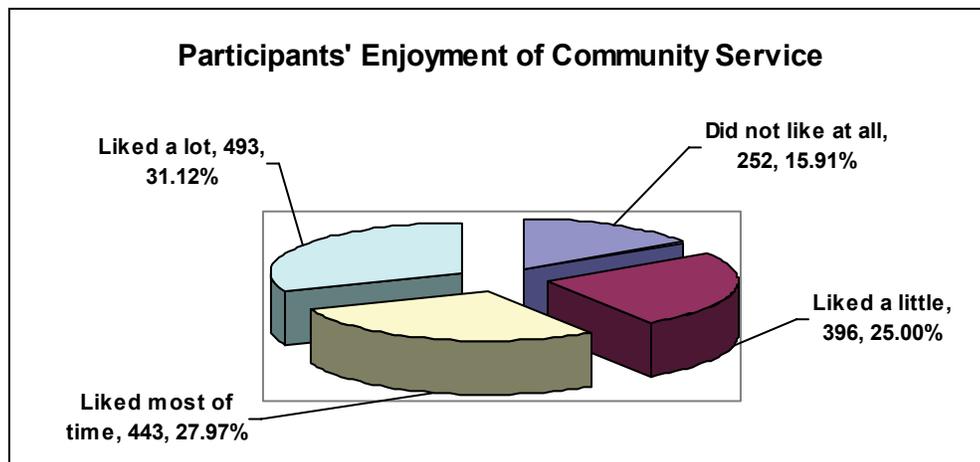
Community Service Completion Status	Average Suspensions
Successfully completed	84.73% (1642)
Partially completed	7.12% (138)
Did not complete	6.14% (119)

Did performing community service teach suspended and expelled students the value of service to others and their community?

Feedback from students who performed community service provides the most direct evidence of participants' perspectives on the value of service to others and to their community. Students who performed community service completed a one-page feedback form that asked them to report the type of service they performed, what were the best and worst parts of the service, and to rate their enjoyment of the service, the importance of community service, and the likelihood of their volunteering in the future.

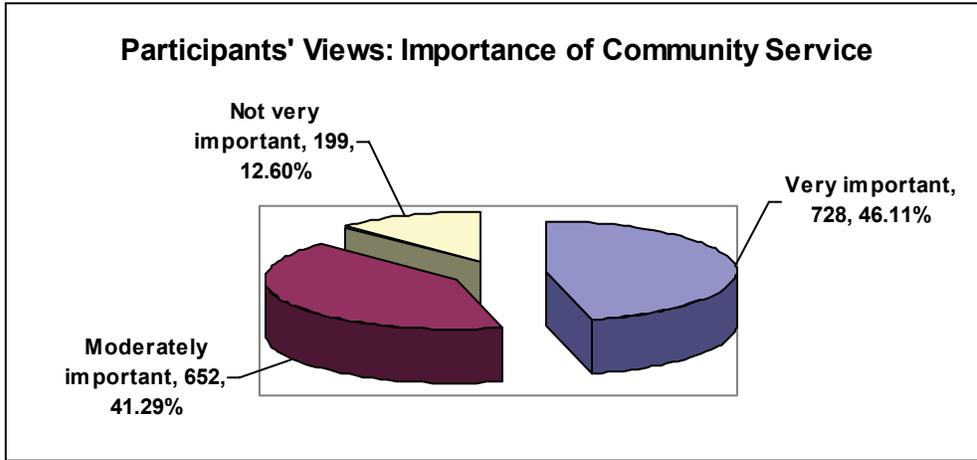
When asked to rate their enjoyment of community service, about 31 percent reported they liked community service "a lot" and 28 percent reported they like it "most of the time." One quarter reported they liked community "a little" and about 16 percent "did not like (it) at all." A closer examination of ratings of enjoyment revealed that those in rural areas rated enjoyment of community service higher than those from more urban areas, and that those serving court-involved students had generally lower, though not the lowest, ratings of enjoyment.

Chart 7.8. Community Service Participants' Ratings of Enjoyment of Community Service



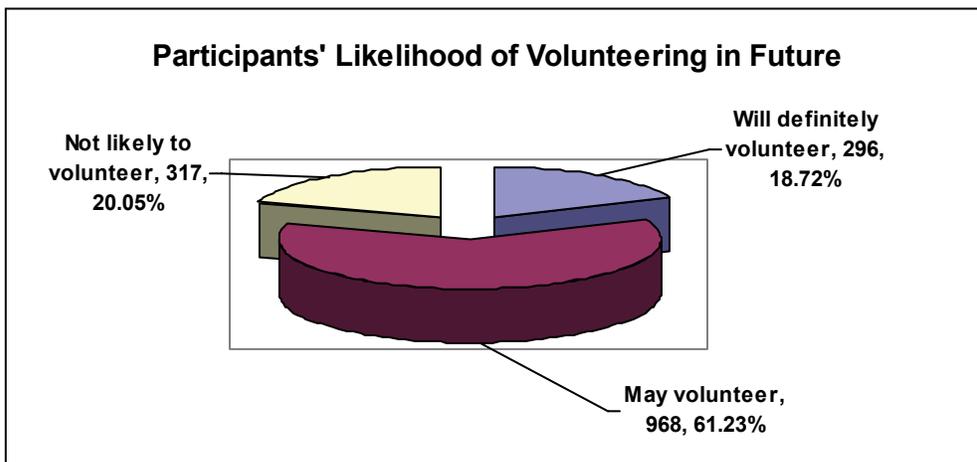
When asked to rate the importance of community service, 46 percent rated it "very important," 41 percent rated it "moderately important," and about 13 percent rated it "not very important." A closer examination of ratings of importance revealed that those in rural areas rated the importance of community service higher than those from more urban areas, and that those serving court-involved students had generally lower, though not the lowest, ratings of importance.

Chart 7.9. Community Service Participants' Ratings of the Importance of Community Service



When asked to predict the likelihood that they would volunteer in their community in the future, about 19 percent reported they would definitely volunteer, 61 percent predicted they may volunteer, and 20 percent reported they were not likely to volunteer.

Chart 7.10. Community Service Participants' Ratings of the Likelihood of Volunteering in the Future



Did performing community service help suspended and expelled students to avoid negative behavior?

Demonstrating whether performing community service helped students to avoid negative behavior presents a challenge inherent in the evaluation of any prevention program – demonstrating that a negative event or condition did not occur because of prevention efforts. Prevention research has demonstrated that effective prevention is aimed at reducing factors that increase the likelihood of youth engaging in problem behaviors (“risk factors”) and increasing the factors that reduce the likelihood of problems (“protective factors”). In designing the evaluation of the program, specific risk and protective factors most closely associated with the intended outcomes of the program were identified and included the following:

Risk factors:

Low neighborhood attachment
Academic failure
Low commitment to school involvement
Rebelliousness
Impulsiveness

Protective factors:

Opportunities for pro-social involvement
Rewards for pro-social

Program impact on these risk and protective factors was assessed using a one-page, 15-item questionnaire administered at enrollment and upon completion of community service. The instrument was designed to assess selected risk and protective factors and items were derived from the nationally normed Youth Risk Behavior Survey developed by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

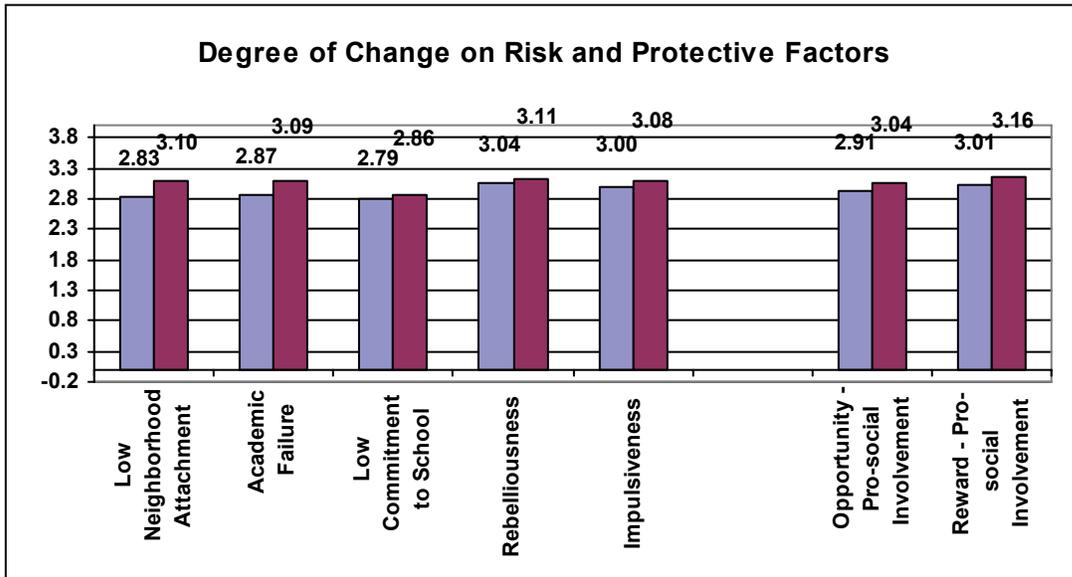
Pre-test scores were analyzed to produce a profile of community service participants and to compare the profile with findings from a statewide survey conducted in 2003. Although the 2003 survey failed to produce findings that could be generalized to all Virginia students due to low participation in one region of the state, it represents the best available data using comparable survey items. Community service participants, when compared to other Virginia students, were at elevated risk in terms of low neighborhood attachment and academic failure, but were at relatively lower risk on scores for low commit to school, rebelliousness, and impulsiveness. This finding is contrary to expectations for a program focusing on suspended and expelled students. On protective factors, there was also an unusual pattern of findings in which program participants were at levels comparable to other Virginia students on opportunities for pro-social involvement but at relatively lower levels of protection (and higher risk) on rewards for pro-social involvement.

Pre- and post-test scores were compared to assess change. The degree of change occurring between individual participant entrance and exit surveys was examined using a paired-samples t-tests that compared the means of survey responses. Positive change among program participants was found on thirteen of fourteen items; however, statistically significant positive change was found on only three variables:

1. Low neighborhood attachment
2. Rewards for pro-social involvement
3. Academic failure

Degrees of change on risk and protective factors are summarized below in Chart 7.11. Scores on all factors are adjusted so that the positive change can be displayed in a uniform manner on the bar chart. Positive change can be observed across all risk and protective factors with greatest positive change on scores reflecting improved neighborhood attachment, improved rewards for pro-social involvement, and a reduction in reported academic failure.

Chart 7.11. Change in Community Service Participants’ Scores on Items Measuring Selected Risk and Protective Factors



Impact of Community Service on Communities

In accordance with the Community Service Program logic model, it is assumed that performing community service will (a) strengthen interagency collaboration around community service for youth; (b) increase opportunities for community service by youth; and (c) meet community needs through the service performed by youth. These program impacts on communities were examined from multiple perspectives using several methods of assessment. The perspectives and findings will be reported below.

Was interagency collaboration in involved communities strengthened around community service for youth?

Interagency collaboration was clearly strengthened around community service for youth in involved communities. Programs were required to form collaborative partnerships as a condition of funding, and these partners are listed with the program descriptions on pages 36 through 42 of this publication. One barometer of interagency collaboration is the number of community service sites that were developed. Programs continued to develop community service sites throughout the two-year funding period and, between October 2003 and June 2005, increased the number of community service sites from 126 to over 500.

Beyond the number of community service sites developed, feedback from community service partners provides strong evidence of partner satisfaction with the community service programs and testimonial evidence of the value of service to both participants and communities.

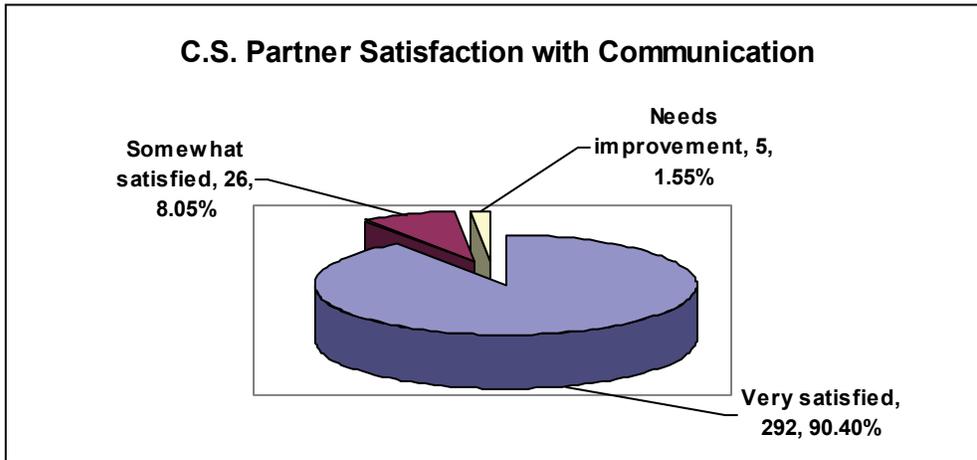
Community service partners were asked to complete a one-page feedback form asking them to rate the following:

- their level of satisfaction with the communication with the community service program,
- the level of preparation of students sent to their site, and
- the overall quality of service performed by the students.

Partners were also asked what they thought students gained from being involved in community service and suggestions for improving the program.

Overwhelmingly positive ratings were received from over 300 community service partners. More than 90 percent were very satisfied with communication with the program, 8 percent were somewhat satisfied, and less than two percent reported that communication needed improvement. Ratings of satisfaction with communication are reported below in Chart 7.12.

Chart 7.12. Community Service Partner Satisfaction with Communication



When asked about students’ preparation for community service, 77 percent rated students well prepared, 20 percent rated them somewhat prepared and less than three percent rated preparation as an area that needed improvement. When asked to rate the quality of service performed by students, more than half (54.66%) rated service quality “excellent,” 41 percent rated service quality “good,” 3 percent rated service quality “fair,” and less than 1 percent rated service quality “poor.” Community service partner ratings of students’ preparation and quality of service are reported below in Charts 7.13 and 7.14.

Chart 7.13. Community Service Partner Ratings of Students’ Preparation

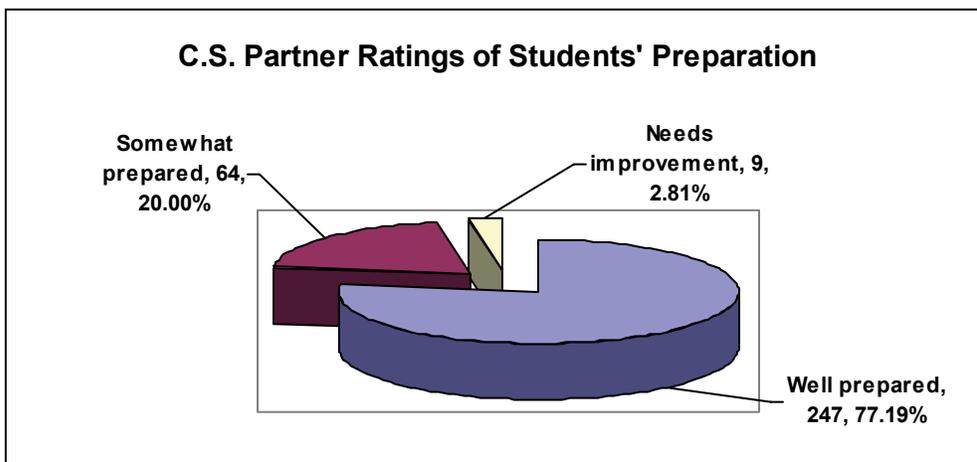
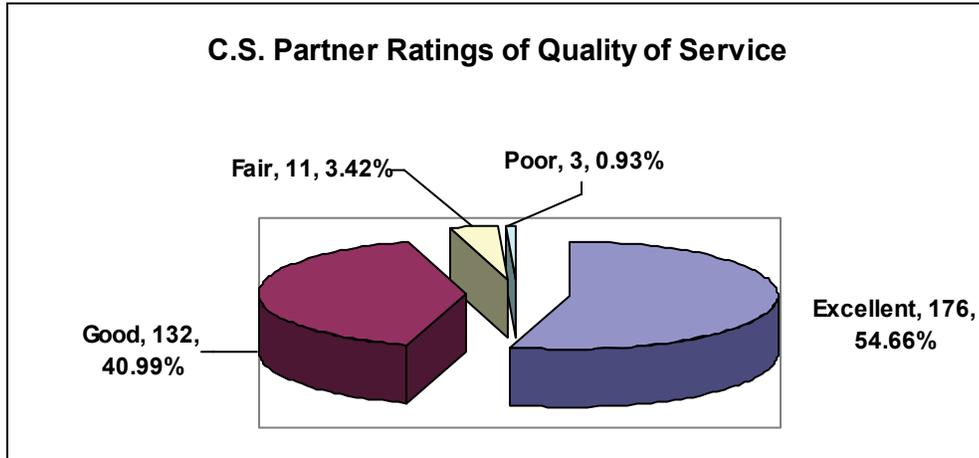


Chart 7.14. Community Service Partner Ratings of Quality of Service



Were opportunities for community service by youth increased?

There is strong evidence that opportunities for community service by youth were increased substantially during the project period. Youth in funded community service programs completed more than 38,000 hours of service and the number of community service sites increased from 126 to over 500. Feedback from community service partners was overwhelmingly positive, indicating that these sites had a very positive experience with participating youth and are likely to be receptive to youth performing community service in the future.

Were community needs met through service performed by youth?

More than 500 community organizations, including city and county offices and facilities, private-non-profit organizations, small businesses, and churches benefited from services of youth. Numerous examples of the services performed are listed on pages 43 through 51 of this publication. In most cases, the service performed by participants benefited communities in very direct ways through activities such as trash removal, landscaping, stocking food pantries, and collecting winter coats. In other cases, the service performed helped organizations to reduce expenses by performing tasks that the organization would otherwise have had to purchase such as those associated with printing, folding, labeling, and mailing a newsletter. In other cases, the service performed increased an organization's effectiveness by enabling the organization to serve more clients or to operate under improved conditions.

Conclusions

1. Statutory Goals Were Met

Virginia's Community Service Program for Suspended and Expelled Youth was successful in achieving federal statutory program goals. There is substantial evidence that the fifteen local community service programs did provide suspended students with meaningful activities to occupy their time during their absence from regular school; that participants were helped to avoid negative behavior; and that participants were taught the value of service to others and to their communities. Beyond achieving the statutory goals, there is strong evidence that programs were well run and highly valued in their communities. Programs experienced considerable success in engaging collaborative partners and in developing community service sites, and consistently received strongly positive feedback from community partners.

2. Local Models of Alternatives for Suspended and Expelled Youth Were Developed

In Virginia, where local school boards are authorized, but not required, to provide alternatives for suspended and expelled students, there are numerous communities where such students have no alternative programs or supervised settings while excluded from school.¹ Mounting community concern about such youth was reflected in the number of local community service programs that were sponsored by Offices on Youth, juvenile justice agencies, and other community-based organizations.

Virginia's fifteen local community service programs developed fifteen different models of alternatives for suspended and expelled youth. These models a) addressed needs that were locally identified and defined, and b) were the unique products of the collaborative efforts of local agencies, organizations, and individuals invested in their community's youth. As such, these programs serve as demonstration projects, providing valuable lessons for communities interested in creating alternatives for suspended and expelled students. Among the key lessons derived from Virginia's local community service programs were the following:

Lesson 1. A broad range of community-based agencies and organizations are willing to partner with schools and other organizations to provide suspended and expelled youth with alternatives that provided structure, supervision, and meaningful activities.

¹ See § 22.1-277.2:1., *Code of Virginia*.

Lesson 2. Although local programs may take many different forms, programs that are most effective adopt rehabilitative or developmental approaches, and provide or facilitate access to academic, counseling and parent involvement components in addition to community service.

Lesson 3. By creating opportunities for suspended and expelled students to serve as resources in their communities (rather than problems only), community service programs can achieve a “win-win” in which students develop in positive ways and communities receive tangible benefits of their service.

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Resources for Developing Community Service Opportunities for Suspended and Expelled Youth

Youth Service Organizations

Youth Service America

<http://www.ysa.org>

Youth Service America is a resource center and alliance of over 300 organizations committed to increasing the quantity and quality of opportunities for young Americans to serve locally, nationally, or globally. The site offers a listing of funding sources and access to the full text of the funding opportunities. Publications available for downloading include National Youth Service Day Service-Learning Curriculum Guide, National Youth Service Day Planning Tool Kit, and YSA Tip Sheets, a collection of short, useful bits of information that programs can use to strengthen their program's effectiveness, sustainability and scale.

ServNet

<http://www.servenet.org>

A service of Youth Service America, this site connects youth to volunteer opportunities in their local community

Learn and Serve America

www.learnandserve.org

This is a program of the Corporation for National and Community Service, providing funding and training support for service-learning programs in schools, community-based organizations, and higher education institutions. In its *school-based programs*, schools plan, implement, and expand service activities for elementary and secondary students. Schools also use Learn and Serve America grants for adult volunteer programs and teacher training. In its *community-based programs*, nonprofit community organizations implement, expand, and multiply service-learning programs in local communities. Participants are between the ages of five and seventeen and include students and youth who are not in school.

Points of Light Foundation

<http://www.pointsoflight.org>

The Foundation is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization devoted to promoting volunteerism whose mission is to engage more people more effectively in volunteer service to help solve serious social problems. The Foundation works closely with the Volunteer Center National Network. These organizations, which are found in over 500 communities, match volunteers with community groups seeking help. The Points of Light website leads to an index of the National Network of Volunteer Centers.

National Service Resource Center

<http://www.etr.org/NSRC/>

Sponsored by the Corporation for National and Community Service, the Center has online tools and training resources to strengthen volunteer or service programs including event calendars, effective practices, and a catalogue of printed publications and videos available on loan. The Resource Center's content is generated by a network of more than 20 training and technical assistance providers and serves as a learning exchange where individual programs can share their innovations and effective practices with others.

National Youth Court Center

<http://www.youthcourt.net>

The National Youth Court Center (NYCC) serves as an information clearinghouse and provides training, technical assistance, and resource materials to assist jurisdictions in developing and operating effective youth court programs.

Virginia Commission for National and Community Service

<http://www.vaservice.org/>

Address: Fifth Floor, 7 North Eighth Street, Richmond, VA 23219

Telephone: Toll free in VA: (800) 638-3839 Direct: (804) 726-7064

Email: info@vaservice.org

The Virginia Commission on National and Community Service (Commission) is the state arm of the Corporation for National and Community Service, which was created with the passage of the 1993 National Service Trust Act to engage Americans of all ages and backgrounds in community service. The Commission, in existence in Virginia for eight years, oversees the AmeriCorps program, and also discharges responsibility for the Unified State Plan, encompassing federal Streams of Service such as Senior Corps (Foster Grandparents Program, Retired Senior Volunteer Program, and Senior Companions), AmeriCorps VISTA, Learn and Serve, and other state volunteer networks.

Key Publications

Students in Service to America: A Guidebook for Engaging America's Students in a Lifelong Habit of Service (2002). Corporation for National and Community Service, U.S. Department of Education, Points of Light Foundation, and U.S.A. Freedom Corps. Access online at: <http://www.studentsinservicetoamerica.org/guidebook/index.html>

Giving Back: A Community Service-Learning Manual for Youth Courts (2002). The Constitutional Rights Foundation/Constitutional Rights Foundation Chicago (CRF/CRFC). The manual provides youth court coordinators with information on how to plan and implement meaningful community service projects to be used as sentencing options in their youth court programs. Included within the manual are twenty-six examples of projects that can be done in a day. Available through the National Youth Court Center, (859) 244-8193 or on the web site: www.youthcourt.net/

Active Citizenship Today (ACT) (2002). A step-by-step guide for teaching citizenship through service learning. The ACT curriculum consists of a *Handbook for Teachers* and a *Field Guide* that takes students through five units of study: 1) Defining and Assessing Your Community, 2) Choosing and Researching a Problem, 3) Examining Policy, 4) Exploring Options, and 5) Taking Action. Developed by the Constitutional Rights Foundation and the Close Up Foundation. Available through Constitutional Rights Foundation, (800) 488-4CRF or visit the web site at www.crf-usa.org/

Youth Development Information

National Youth Development Information Center

<http://www.nydic.org>

NYDIC website is a resource and information center, which provides useful definitions, resource directories and current news in the youth development field.

***Community Programs to Promote Youth Development*, ed. by Jaqueline Eccles and Jennifer Appleton Gootman. Board on Children, Youth and Families Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education. National Research Council and Institute of Medicine. National Academy Press, Washington, DC, 2002.**

Complete report can be read or ordered on the National Academy Press site at www.nap.edu/books/0309072751/html/.

The report offers authoritative findings and guidance to practitioners, policymakers, and researchers on the role of youth development programs to promote the healthy development and well being of young people. Most importantly, it lays out the key features of youth programs that contribute to young people's successful transition from adolescence to adulthood. An Executive Summary of the report can be downloaded from the National Academy Press Site at www.nap.edu.

Youth Development: Issues, Challenges and Directions, Public/Private Ventures(Eds.). Public/Private Ventures, Philadelphia, PA. 2000

Available online at <http://www.ppv.org>

This publication examines the state of the emerging youth development field, lays out key challenges it faces, and suggests directions to advance its growth and effectiveness. It contains nine separate articles including, "Cost and Financing of Youth Development," "Juvenile Justice and Positive Youth Development," "The Scientific Foundations of Youth Development," and more.

Service as a Strategy In Out-of-School Time: A How-To Manual produced by the Corporation for National Service and the National Institute on Out-of-School Time. Available on-line at www.etr-associates.org or by calling ETR Associates, Publications Department at 800-860-2684 x142.

Out-of-School Time Resources

AfterSchool.Gov

<http://www.afterschool.gov/>

A vast list of federal resources and ideas for after-school programs at this web site, including ways to plan, support, and conduct programs; community and organizational linkages; and how to keep current through the use of clearinghouses, government programs, listservs, newsletters, publications, research, and reports. There is also a related site for younger students and teenagers.

Afterschool Alliance

<http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/>

This non-profit organization is dedicated to raising awareness of the importance of after-school programs and advocating for quality, affordable programs for all children. The web site includes news, events, research, and resources related to after-school programs.

Key Service Learning Resources

The National Service-Learning Clearinghouse

<http://www.servicelearning.org>

Among the clearinghouse resources is a compilation of funding sources, including government organizations, nonprofit organizations, foundations, and businesses.

The National Service-Learning Partnership

<http://www.service-learningpartnership.org>

The Partnership is a national membership organization bringing together practitioners, administrators, policy-makers, researchers, community leaders, parents and young people to support K-12 service-learning.

Compact for Learning and Citizenship

<http://www.ecs.org/clc>

This nationwide coalition of chief state school officers, district superintendents, and others committed to service-learning in K-12 classrooms gathers and disseminates information, provides training and technical assistance, builds partnerships and networks, and serves as a national voice for creating high-quality service-learning opportunities for all students. The site has links to various issue areas, meetings, and publications.

National Youth Leadership Council (NYLC)

<http://www.nylc.org/publications.cfm>

The NYLC Essential Elements Publication site serves as a clearinghouse of information for service-learning, including news, events, online resources, and descriptions of publications. The Essential Elements Publications is a fee-based product that provides examples of programs from novice to expert.

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

http://www.nwrel.org/ruraled/learnserve/resources/SL_Toolbox.pdf

This service-learning toolbox provides information to help start your program and keep it going. It offers information in a narrative format along with work pages and checklists that help you personalize the information on starting and maintaining a program. The document is divided into four key areas: preparation (project identification and planning), action, formal evaluation, and online resources.

APPENDIX A. Virginia Community Service Program Advisory Task Force Findings

In early 2003, the Virginia Department of Education formed an advisory task force of school leaders and representatives from community agencies to advise the VDOE on best ways to use available Community Service Program funds. Tasks defined for the advisory task force were as follows:

- to define the needs of suspended/expelled students;
- to examine programs currently being used;
- to recommend the best ways of using the available federal funding in serving suspended/expelled students.

Findings

Who are suspended/expelled students?

It was the consensus view that there is no "typical" suspended/expelled student -- that students who are suspended/expelled come from all walks of life. Some are "neat kids who do dumb things," while others have a combination of troubling factors in their lives that contribute to an ongoing pattern of behaviors resulting in suspension/expulsion. It was noted that boys are clearly over-represented among students suspended/expelled and that a higher number of younger students are being suspended/expelled. Some Task Force members observed that "zero tolerance" policies and attitudes appear to be contributing to more suspensions/ expulsions.

What are the needs of suspended/expelled students?

Among needs identified by the Task Force were the following:

- involvement at the family and community level;
- individual attention;
- positive role models; and
- reintegration to schools such as support and opportunities to "catch up" academically.

Discussion repeatedly returned to ways that schools contribute, some felt unnecessarily, to suspensions/expulsions. Task Force members cited greater intolerance for misbehavior; some thought that the greater presence of school resource officers and "principals' knee-jerk reactions" contributed most directly to the intolerance. It was noted that Virginia law requiring principals to report every assault to law enforcement officials had driven many suspensions; however, recently enacted legislation (House Bill 2680) gives principals greater discretion in reporting to law enforcement authorities assaults that do not involve bodily injury.

Task Force members observed that although suspension and expulsion are intended as a punishment, they can become reinforcing to both the child and to the teacher for whom it can function as a "time out." It was recommended that training on "best practices" associated with the Community Service Grant program should include content examining (intended and unintended) purposes of suspension/expulsion as well as strategies for improving student behavior and finding alternatives to suspension/expulsion. Participants advocated for alternatives that keep students in school or alternative settings that allow them to stay connected to their education.

What is the range of services currently in use for these students? Are there gaps in the services? Community Service models operating in Virginia?

Programs being conducted in three areas of the state were presented. Descriptive materials about each were distributed. Highlights from each program and related Task Force discussions are summarized here.

S.W.E.A.T. and C.A.R.E. - Carol Blair, Waynesboro Office on Youth, presenting:

Students Working Effectively Against Truancy (S.W.E.A.T.) provides a structured and supervised environment during the school day for suspended middle and high school youth. The program is operated by the Office on Youth and was initially funded through a 3-year Title V Delinquency Prevention grant; the program has been in operation 5 years. Over 200 students were served last school year. Two key program goals are 1) to keep kids positively engaged and 2) to prevent future suspensions.

Contact with the program is parent-initiated, although probation officers typically require probationers who are suspended to attend. There are two program sites, one in Augusta County and one in Waynesboro. Students are required to have school work to complete. Program components are counseling, tutoring and community service. Community service sites include municipal sites such as Departments of Parks and Recreation, Public Works, a recycling center, and a food bank.

It was noted that the program was *highly individualized and flexible* to meet individual student needs. It is, therefore, very labor intensive. A few students have been placed at community service sites for entire days, particularly in long-term suspension situations.

Community Alternatives for Rehabilitation Education/Employment (C.A.R.E.) is for expelled youth referred by the school divisions. C.A.R.E. develops an individualized contract that may involve independently completing a curriculum packet to earn high school credit and/or assistance with getting a job or job preparation such as referral to Job Corps. Successful completion of the "contract" is used as evidence supporting reinstatement in school. Although C.A.R.E. does not currently have a strong community service component, the potential for it was evident. Both S.W.E.A.T. and C.A.R.E. are struggling with funding, currently using modest Community Crime Control funding and part-time staff. The Office on Youth would like to merge the two programs to create a day treatment program.

An important feature of these programs is that represent a *community response* to suspension and expulsion that are considered to be a *community problem*, rather than exclusively a school issue.

It was reported that in Newport News the "Stay Up While You're Out" program serves expelled and long-term suspended students. The program reportedly operates in churches and parents pay fees to support services.

Rehabilitation Plans - Jim DeHart, Danville Public Schools, presenting:

Individualized Rehabilitation Plans are designed for truant and suspended students. Approximately 80 long-term suspended students were served last year. Components of Rehabilitation Plans are used selectively in accordance with identified student needs and may include 1) counseling, 2) community service, 3) daily and weekly responsibilities at home, 4) Class Action class, and 5) an essay.

Advantages have been seen in having community service court-ordered; the disadvantage is that potential service sites are reluctant to take court-involved youth. In the Danville area the Danville-Pittsylvania Community Services Board had established and maintains a Community Service Bank to which youth are referred. The Bank is viewed as an important asset.

P.A.S.S. - Wendy Targos and Kristin VanTine, Chaplin Youth Center, Fredericksburg, presenting:

Positive Alternatives to School Suspension (P.A.S.S.) provides a structured learning environment for middle and high school students who have been placed on short-term suspension. The program is funded through a 3-year Drug Free Communities grant and served 136 from January 2002 through June 2002. Use of the existing Chapin group home facility during the day was identified as an advantage, allowing grant dollars to go into personnel and program rather than "place." Referrals are parent initiated, and probation officers typically require probationers to attend. The program is not academic, although they do use SOL curriculum packets. Counseling is individualized to address central issues; substance abuse and anger management are recurring issues. The program works actively with schools to reduce/extend the period of suspension, depending on student progress. A summer program includes the following:

Monday - Community Care - visits to rest homes, soup kitchen, etc.

Tuesday and Thursday - Classes and "Book Club"

Wednesday - "Hard work" service

Friday - Fun day

The Task Force again emphasized the importance of schools using effective, creative strategies with students -- strategies that provide new settings and alternative approaches to continuing their educational progress and rely less on excluding students from school. It was reported that in Fairfax budget constraints had reduced the number of alternative programs. Negative school administrator and teacher attitudes were seen as major challenges to the likelihood of success of students returning to home schools.

Why have a community service program for suspended and expelled students? What are the benefits? Drawbacks?

It was the consensus of Task Force members that community service can be a valuable experience for youth, serving to strengthen their "connectedness" to their community as well as providing a very positive activity to structure and occupy their time. It was suggested that beneficial effects can be further strengthened when community service experiences are tailored to individual students, even matching community service to the offense. One example given was of an artistic student who decorated a bulletin board in an adult home. In one case, a student who picked on special education students was assigned to work (under supervision) with younger special education students. The student chose to continue to volunteer beyond the period of his assignment. In another case, an incident that involved burning a student resulted in a community service assignment to a hospital burn unit.

No clear drawbacks were identified. It was noted, however, that community service opportunities are very locality-specific and best developed and coordinated at a local or small regional level. It was again emphasized that such programs are very labor-intensive and that funded projects must allocate sufficient resources to coordination functions.

What are components that a model program for community service would have? Cornerstones? Other essential features?

Cornerstones identified were --

- Partnerships involving schools, juvenile courts, and other youth-serving agencies and organizations, reflecting the perspective that suspended and expelled youths are a community issue requiring a community response;
- Coordination to operate the program and develop community service opportunities;
- Individualization of community service to individual students and circumstances to make it a meaningful experience;
- Replication of proven models, approaches, and practices;
- A tie-in of educational services and community service; and
- Evaluation to support effective program operation and demonstrate results.

The Task Force advocated required training for school personnel on "best practices" in community service programming, including more effective preventive approaches to reduce suspensions and expulsions.

It was suggested that the Community Service Grant program establish a framework for community service programming in Virginia that funded projects would be required to use. Components of the framework recommended included the following:

- program governance and policy;
- program purpose and target students;
- program components/services and operation; and
- evaluation plan.

What are the roadblocks for this plan? What would a division/agency need to implement a plan?

The Task Force identified some challenges that schools and communities may experience as well as areas that require further clarification.

The first challenge identified was differences in discipline policies and practices among local school divisions and the impact of these on the viability of community service associated with suspension and expulsion. It was recommended that the Community Service Grant program establish standardized operational definitions of suspension and expulsion that would apply across all funded projects.

The importance of opportunities for students to keep up academically was repeatedly emphasized. These opportunities might involve use of laptop computers and software (PLATO was cited) in alternative settings. The extent to which schools are willing to support students' continuing or keeping up with academics was viewed as a critical element and potential challenge to a community's efforts.

Another issue in need of clarification is whether schools legally can "require" students who have been expelled or suspended to perform community service as a condition of school reentry. It was suggested that community service opportunities (or "banks") are better developed and coordinated by community-based organizations to which schools refer students.

Virginia Community Service Program Task Force Recommendations

The Task Force developed recommendations about the features that funded community service projects should have and about how the Community Service Grant program should operate in Virginia. Recommendations about features of funded community service projects are as follows:

Funded projects should --

- involve collaborative partnerships among schools and community agencies and organizations that reflect the perspective that suspensions and expulsions constitute a community issue rather than exclusively a school issue;

- use proven program, approaches and practices that have been demonstrated to be effective;
- include academic, counseling and parent involvement components in addition to community service; and
- provide highly individualized services designed to ensure that the community service is a meaningful experience and achieves intended program goals;

The Community Service Grant program should --

- establish a programmatic framework that requires projects to specify governance, policies, operational characteristics, and evaluation features for funded projects;
- establish standardized definitions for suspension and expulsion that apply across all funded projects;
- provide mandatory training for funded programs on "best practices" in community service as well as strategies for improving student behavior and alternatives to suspensions and expulsions; and
- design a cross-site program evaluation that has common data elements.

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APPENDIX B. Youth Development Framework for Practice

Source: Community Youth Development Network. See <http://www.cnyd.org/framework/index.php>

The Youth Development Framework for Practice is at the core of all CNYD's work. The research-based framework was developed in partnership with Dr. Michelle Gambone of Youth Development Strategies, Inc. and Dr. Jim Connell of the Institute for Research and Reform and adapted from their Community Action Framework for Youth Development to reflect youth development in a youth-serving organizational context. Local youth workers, agency leaders and funders provided crucial input during the adaptation process. The Framework is a road map for youth workers, organizations and policy-makers that identifies desired long-term outcomes for young people and explains the youth development practices that need to be in place to achieve these outcomes. Specifically, the Framework focuses on five supports and opportunities that young people need to experience in a youth development program in order to move towards these positive long-term outcomes. Program effectiveness can then be measured by participants' experience of these five factors. The five supports and opportunities are:

Safety, so young people feel:

- Physically and emotionally secure.

Supportive Relationships, so young people can experience:

- Guidance, emotional and practical support
- Adults and peers knowing who they are and what's important to them

Meaningful Youth Involvement, so that young people can:

- Be involved in meaningful roles with responsibility,
- Have input into decision-making,
- Have opportunities for leadership, and
- Feel a sense of belonging.

Skill Building, so that young people can have:

- Challenging and interesting learning experiences which help them build a wide array of skills, and
- Experience a sense of growth and progress.

Community Involvement, so that young people gain:

- An understanding of the greater community, and
- A sense of being able to make an impact in their community.

The Framework then goes one step further by identifying the links between these supports and opportunities and the organizational practices necessary to support quality youth programming. The nine organizational practice areas are:

- Low youth to staff/volunteer ratios
- Safe, reliable, and accessible activities and spaces
- Flexibility in allocating available resources
- Range of diverse, interesting, and skill-building activities
- Continuity and consistency of care
- High, clear, and fair standards
- Ongoing, results-based staff and organizational improvement process
- Youth involvement
- Community engagement

APPENDIX C. The Risk and Protective Factors Framework

Source: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. See <http://www.health.org>

Among the most important developments in substance abuse prevention theory and programming in recent years has been the focus on risk and protective factors as a **unifying descriptive and predictive framework**.

A *risk factor* is an attitude, behavior, belief, situation, or action that may put a group, organization, individual or community at risk for alcohol and drug problems.

A *protective factor* is an attitude, behavior, belief, situation, or action that builds resilience in a group, organization, individual or community.

Risk and protective factors are conceptualized in *domains* that are defined as the spheres of activity or affiliation within which people live, work and socialize (e.g., self, family, peer, school, community, society).

Examples of Risk and Protective Factors in Major Life Domains

DO-MAIN	PROTECTIVE FACTORS	RISK FACTORS
Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Positive personal characteristics, including social skills and social responsiveness; cooperativeness; emotional stability; positive sense of self; flexibility; problem-solving; and low levels of defensiveness. ▪ Bonding to societal institutions and values, including attachment to parents and extended family; commitment to school; regular involvement with religious institutions; and belief in society's values. ▪ Social and emotional competence, including good communication skills; responsiveness; empathy; caring; sense of humor; inclination toward pro-social behavior; problem-solving skills; sense of autonomy; sense of purpose and of the future (e.g., goal-directedness); and self-discipline. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inadequate life skills. ▪ Lack of self-control, assertiveness, and peer-refusal skills. ▪ Low self-esteem and self-confidence. ▪ Emotional and psychological problems. ▪ Favorable attitudes toward substance abuse. ▪ Rejection of commonly held values and religion. ▪ School failure. ▪ Lack of school bonding. ▪ Early antisocial behavior, such as lying, stealing and aggression, particularly in boys, often combined with shyness and hyperactivity.

DO-MAIN	PROTECTIVE FACTORS	RISK FACTORS
Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Positive bonding among family members. ▪ Parenting that includes high levels of warmth and avoidance of severe criticism; sense of basic trust; high parental expectations; and clear and consistent expectations, including children's participation in family decisions and responsibilities. ▪ An emotionally supportive parental/family milieu, including parental attention to children's interests; orderly and structured parent-child relationships; and parent involvement in homework and school-related activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Family conflict and domestic violence. ▪ Family disorganization. ▪ Lack of family cohesion. ▪ Social isolation of family. ▪ Heightened family stress. ▪ Family attitudes favorable to drug use. ▪ Ambiguous, lax, or inconsistent rules and sanctions regarding substance use. ▪ Poor child supervision and discipline. ▪ Unrealistic expectations for development.
Peer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Association with peers who are involved in school, recreation, service, religion or other organized activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Association with delinquent peers who use or value dangerous substances. ▪ Association with peers who reject mainstream activities or pursuits. ▪ Susceptibility to negative peer pressure. ▪ Strong external locus of control.
School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Caring and support; sense of "community" in classroom and school. ▪ High expectations from school personnel. ▪ Clear standards and rules for appropriate behavior. ▪ Youth participation, involvement, and responsibility in school tasks and decisions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ambiguous, lax, or inconsistent rules and sanctions regarding drug use and student conduct. ▪ Favorable staff and student attitudes toward substance use. ▪ Harsh or arbitrary school management practices. ▪ Availability of dangerous substances on school premises. ▪ Lack of school bonding.
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Caring and support. ▪ High expectations for youth. ▪ Opportunities for youth participation in community activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community disorganization. ▪ Lack of community bonding. ▪ Lack of cultural pride. ▪ Lack of competence in majority culture. ▪ Community attitudes favorable to drug use. ▪ Ready availability of dangerous substances. ▪ Inadequate youth services and opportunities for pro-social involvement.

DO-MAIN	PROTECTIVE FACTORS	RISK FACTORS
Society/ Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Media literacy (resistance to pro-use messages). ▪ Decreased accessibility to alcohol, tobacco and other drugs. ▪ Increased pricing through taxation. ▪ Raised purchasing age and enforcement. ▪ Stricter driving-while-under-the-influence laws. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Impoverishment. ▪ Unemployment and underemployment. ▪ Discrimination. ▪ Pro-drug-use messages in the media.

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