

Winter 12-1-2001

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Paul Simon

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CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS FOUNDATION**SERVICE-LEARNING
NETWORK**

Winter 2001 (8:4)

**BREAKING THE AGE BARRIER:
MULTI-GENERATIONAL SERVICE-LEARNING**

This issue of *Service-Learning Network* explores a world where teachers, students, and community members break the age barrier in service to their communities. Former Illinois Senator **Paul Simon** offers images of intergenerational service from political *and* personal points of view. In *The Gathering of Elders*, **Stella Raudenbush** and **McClellan Hall** use an Indigenous model of community to celebrate the relationship between young and old. *Youth in Decision Making*, an in-depth study conducted at the University of Wisconsin, surveys the effects that young people can have on adults and organizations. **FYI** acknowledges the tragic events surrounding **September 11** with online lessons, research links, and service-learning project suggestions designed to provide students and teachers with coping and learning strategies. In **Program Profiles**, writer-educator **Wendy Schaezel Lesko** surveys projects where citizens of diverse ages work together. **Review Corner** looks at three publications designed to encourage collaboration across the generations. Rounding out this issue of *Service-Learning Network* is a list of upcoming service-learning **Conferences** and a **mini-catalog** of CRF's service-learning publications.

This issue of *Service-Learning Network* is made possible by a generous grant from the Ford Foundation

Images of Intergenerational Service**by Senator Paul Simon**

I claim no expertise in intergenerational service, but in my 72 years I have seen it and I like it. It's good for everyone. What are my images?

I think of Lillian Carter, the mother of President Jimmy Carter. Before her son became president, Lillian Carter volunteered for the Peace Corps in India. She helped people in India by providing selfless service, enriched her own life with that service, and provided an example to young and old of how to make their lives meaningful. During the Carter Presidency, I served in the U. S. House of Representatives where I chaired a committee interested in world food and population problems. I asked Lillian Carter to speak to our group. Her stories and colorful, candid language gave a lift to all of us. That was intergenerational service.

One important point about intergenerational service—both sides benefit. Younger participants learn understanding and concern for others. The more senior among us find our lives enriched by reaching out.

A baby is concerned only about itself. When you are three years old, what you receive gives you pleasure. But as you mature, what gives you pleasure is not what you receive, but what you can give. Intergenerational service is an opportunity to give to others, and in that strange way that humanity works, we become enriched as we give to others.

Other intergenerational examples occur to me as I sit at my manual typewriter, showing my age. (I do use a computer for research purposes.) I think of my four grandchildren and how they brighten my life. We learn from each other. I learn their songs, what they are studying in school. My eldest granddaughter commands a knowledge with the computer that is not part of my culture. She cannot imagine growing up in a world without television as I did. We learn from each other.

When I was a student, our college choir performed at a local nursing home. We enjoyed it, and I hope they did. As a result of that visit, I volunteered to help at the nursing home. The experience was not always pleasant, but I learned from the experience, and some of the nursing home residents appreciated having a young college student who read to them, played checkers, or simply visited with them.

Today, I teach at Southern Illinois University. In one of my classes, I ask the students to interview a minority citizen: African-American, Hispanic, Asian-American, Native American, Jewish, Muslim, disabled, or gay. Each time I do this, there are several students who say, "I had no idea about the kind of problems *they* face." I find the same experience when I assign students to help someone who faces complicated problems because of poverty. Service learning helps build understanding between the students and the people with whom they work. The students learn how *they* are connected to the people they are working with. Service learning can help bridge barriers that separate suburbs from the inner city, ethnic groups from one another, and divide us in other ways. The generational divide is one of those barriers. We are all richer when we overcome it.

The author of 16 books, Former Senator Paul Simon is currently a professor of public policy and journalism at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, Ill., where he heads the Public Policy Institute.

The Gathering of Elders: A Model for Community and Youth Development

by Stella Raudenbush and McClellan Hall

"A true community is in the hearts of the people involved. It is not a place of distraction but a place of being....It is a place where you go home to. The others in the community are the reason that one feels the way one feels. The elder cannot be an elder if there is no community to make him an elder. The young child cannot feel secure if there is no elder, whose silent presence gives him or her hope in life. The adult cannot be who he or she is unless there is a strong sense of the other people around."

—Malidoma Some, *Ritual Power,
Healing, and Community*

Like a stool with only two legs, a community is not complete if the circle of generations is not closed. Each generation and each member of that generation has a purpose in the life of the whole community, in addition to the purpose of the individual in the bigger picture. These roles should not be individual and hidden. Rather, these roles are intrinsically tied to the purpose of others and to the community as a whole. A person's health and well-being should be a matter of public concern.

For the last 10 years, we have convened The Gathering of Elders at the National Service-Learning Conference. We have listened to a survivor of the concentration camps who spoke about a world that young people today would have a difficult time imagining. We have heard a Native elder relating a story about his grandfather, long deceased, who visited him on a World War One battlefield and saved his life. In exchange, the surviving combat veteran dedicated his life to working with Native youth to preserve their tribal culture and language. Elders from other cultures have described how their faith—Christian, Muslim, Jewish, or traditional Indigenous—has formed the core of their commitment to service.

In traditional communities, the voices of the elders are part of daily life. Informed by traditional teachings and practices from both African-American and Indigenous cultures, we find that community elders can provide profound leadership, guidance, and support for healthy community life. Elders often serve as the intermediaries between the seen and unseen worlds, facilitating ceremonies and overseeing critical rites of passage for young people. They give valuable daily guidance to members of family groups and friends. They convene gatherings to help the community deliberate on important issues and serve as links to our cultural histories.

Each gathering of elders is organized around themes emerging from our efforts to build the service-learning movement over the last two decades. Traditional wisdom argues that service to others and to one's community is the glue that holds the community together. At the core of this perspective is the conviction that young people need a variety of adults to help them understand their place in the community. Although various cultural communities may define community and service in different ways, the essential qualities extend across cultures. By service, we mean the free and open sharing of time, talent, and resources. However, these reciprocal relationships may be defined by family, clan, or other connections. The elders from these communities are valuable resources who can help service-learning practitioners understand the dynamics of service in particular communities.

Regardless of the roots of our culture, the dialogue between youth and elders is critical to the survival of all our traditions, including the transmission of the service ethic. Elders are the key. Formal gatherings, storytelling, mentoring, visits to the nursing home, whatever we can do to facilitate this dialogue, it is our responsibility to do so. Our challenge is to create the opportunities for youth and elders to come together in meaningful ways.

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Youth In Decision-Making

A Study on the Impacts of Youth on Adults and Organizations

Young people can have powerful and positive effects on adults and organizations. It does not happen all of the time, of course. Sometimes, young people are not fully prepared or motivated to exert a strong influence on others. Sometimes adults are not responsive to the contributions of youth or try to exert too much control over decision-making. Sometimes organizations are not ready to create ways for youth and adults to work together. But when the right conditions are in place, involving youth in decision-making is a powerful strategy for positive change.

Processes of Change

Organizational effectiveness is a collective concept. It arises from the interplay of contributions made by diverse persons, including youth and adults. Synergy comes from difference and for this reason our analysis focuses on the differences between what youth and adults bring to decision-making.

Youth Contributions. Young people can be exemplary members of governance bodies, and their contributions may increase with age due to cognitive maturity and accumulated experience. There is a good fit between their stage of development and organizational needs. During adolescence, many young people are driven to explore issues of social justice. They are creating and experimenting with their own principles and political ideas, leading many to become involved in cause-based action. Consequently, in many organizations, the young people become the keepers of the vision. They are the ones who focus on the mission.

Young people often speak their minds and bring a fresh perspective to organizational decision-making. We have heard adults comment on how young people change the content and quality of discourse and procedure on governing boards, commissions, and other planning bodies. But adolescence is also a time for deepening relationships and intimacy with peers. Young people bring a first-hand knowledge of youth—their interests, concerns, fears, passions—that simply is not accessible to adults. They bring connections to other young people and can leverage the participation and skill of their peers.

Adult Contributions. Adults can also be exemplary members of governance bodies, especially when they are prepared and motivated to work collaboratively with young people. Adulthood is a time of productivity, a time to pass on one's knowledge and skill to the next generation. Feelings of community and connection again take on greater importance as adults reach mid-life. We were not surprised to find that the young people and adults in this study most often used words such as guidance and support when describing the contributions of adults. Young people especially value the lessons adults bring from other organizations; they often seek out the advice, instruction, and direction that adults can offer.

Many adults have institutional power that is not accessible to young people. With this power comes access and connections to a fuller range of human, community, and financial resources.

Adults bring these resources to young people and the collective governance body. By virtue of years of work experience, adults also bring a range of administrative and programming skills to the table. They can create organizational infrastructures for administration and programming. Such structure allows youth to concentrate their expertise, interest, and time on the more mission-driven and action-oriented aspects of the organization.

Synergy: Youth-Adult Partnerships for Effective Decision-Making. The mutual contributions of youth and adults can result in a synergy, a new power and energy that propels decision-making groups to greater innovation and productivity. We discovered that in this atmosphere, youth and adults become more committed to attending meetings and create a climate that is grounded in honest appraisal, reflection, and ongoing learning.

This synergy stems from the good fit between youth and adults who are in different stages of their lives and therefore have different interests, skills, and experiences to bring to the table. Organizational decision-making provides the venue for meeting the developmental needs of both adults and youth. Young people need the structure and mentoring that effective adults can provide. Adults find satisfaction in passing on their knowledge and experience to the next generation.

When the group is functioning well, these differences merge into a whole, for they are complementary. The organization profits as a result.

Positive Outcomes

From this study, we can conclude that involving youth in decision-making has positive benefits.

Youth Outcomes. This study did not explore the effects of decision-making on the youth themselves. This issue has been studied in the past, and results are conclusively positive. Involving young people in decision-making provides them with the essential opportunities and supports, challenge, relevancy, voice, cause-based action, skill-building, adult structure, and affirmation that are consistently shown to help young people achieve mastery, compassion, and health.

It is exactly these developmental opportunities and supports that should characterize shared decision-making between youth and adults in organizations. In the organizations that we studied, the young people prospered when decision-making had these qualities.

Adult Outcomes. Most of the adults we interviewed had never worked collaboratively with youth for a common goal over an extended period. This study demonstrates that adults benefit from working with youth in four primary ways.

1. Adults experienced the competence of youth first-hand, and began to perceive young people as legitimate, crucial contributors to organizational decision-making processes.
2. Working with youth served to enhance the commitment and energy of adults to the organization.
3. Adults felt more effective and more confident in working with and relating to youth.

4. Adults came to understand the needs and concerns of youth, and became more attuned to programming issues, making them more likely to reach outside the organization and share their new knowledge and insights. They gained a stronger sense of community connectedness.

Organizational Outcomes. Involving youth in decision-making helps change organizations for the better. Six positive outcomes were identified.

1. The principles and practices of youth involvement became embedded within the organizational culture.
2. Most organizations found that young people help clarify and bring focus to the organization's mission, and some organizations made this a formal role of youth.
3. The adults and the organizations as a whole became more connected and responsive to youth in the community. This investment and energy led to programming improvements.
4. Organizations placed a greater value on inclusivity and representation. They came to see that their programming benefits when multiple and diverse community voices are included in decision-making processes.
5. Having youth as decision-makers helped convince foundations and other funding agencies that the organization was serious about promoting youth development.
6. Including youth in decision-making led organizations to reach out to the community in more diverse ways, community advocacy, policy-making, and service.

Creating Conditions for Organizational Change

We stress that these processes and positive outcomes do not occur naturally and are not in the repertoire of most organizations and communities. There are many reasons why young people are rarely involved in organizational decision-making, ranging from cultural stereotypes to the lack of supporting policies and structures.

Nonetheless, the organizations in this study were successful in bringing the voices and ideas of young people to the governance table. As expected, some organizations were far more effective in this regard than others. Our research identifies the following conditions as being most likely to facilitate positive outcomes:

1. The top decision-making body in the organization needs to be committed to youth governance and youth-adult partnerships and must change its ways of operating accordingly. The data are clear: If a governance body is focused on vision and learning, there is room for young people to make substantial contributions. If it is more traditionally focused on rule making and management, then it is less likely that young people will have a significant influence on the board.
2. Organizational change is facilitated by an adult visionary leader, one with institutional power and authority, to strongly advocate for youth decision-making. Without this

leadership, traditional management structures and stereotypic views about young people are too powerful to overcome.

3. While an adult most often leads the initial change processes, the movement takes on greater power and influence as young people begin to organize and demand increasing participation in governance.
4. Adult views about young people are difficult to change, and this is true even for adults in governance positions. Change occurs when the organization offers three types of experiences to adults.
 - a) Adults perceived a good reason to work with youth. The governance work had to be purposefully oriented towards meaningful outcomes. Adult attitudes did not change when the decision-making was perceived as symbolic or tokenistic.
 - b) Adult attitude change occurs most readily when young people perform well in the boardroom, or in other places that adults regard as their turf. It is important for adults to witness youth succeeding in the nuts and bolts of organizational improvement.
 - c) Adults change their views of young people when they have the opportunity to observe youth engaged in community action that had real payoffs for community residents.
5. Organizational change occurs most rapidly when adults perceive the young people as effective decision-makers. For this reason, the young people who were nominated to take on key governance roles were selected carefully, just as the adults were. Most of the organizations had created a kind of scaffolding for youth to work their way up through the organization, engaging in a variety of leadership-building and decision-making opportunities.
6. According to developmental research, organizations begin change by first involving older youth in governance roles. Age matters. A 14-year-old differs significantly from an 18- or 19-year-old across multiple domains (cognitive, physical, societal, psychological, economic, and legal). The organizations in this study recognize this difference. While decision-makers ranged in age from 12 to 23, the majority fell between the ages of 17 and 21. The mean age of those whom the organizations chose to be their spokespersons for this study was 18 years. It seems that the organization, in their desire to ensure the early success of youth governance, have decided to begin with older youth and to eventually integrate younger adolescents into governance.

This article is abridged from the overall findings and conclusions of a larger study titled Youth In Decision-Making. The research was conducted by Shepherd Zeldin, Ph.D., Annette McDaniel, Dimitri Topitzes, and Matt Calvert at the University of Wisconsin—Madison. The study was commissioned by the Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development.

For more information, contact [Amy Weisenbach](#) and the [Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development](#), 7100 Connecticut Avenue, Chevy Chase, MD 20815; (301)

961-2972.

FYI: Resources for a National Tragedy

The destruction of New York City's World Trade Center and the attack on the Pentagon in Washington raise innumerable questions that can be dealt with in the classroom. Although the most recent terrorist attacks have the greatest impact on America, they are part of a long and tragic history of terrorism that has been developing around the globe for decades. In response to the need for teaching materials, Constitutional Rights Foundation (CRF) has prepared "[America Responds to Terrorism](#)," a new series of online lessons and resources designed for classroom use. We at CRF hope you find these resources useful during this time of national crisis. CRF's online lessons and terrorism links can be found at www.crf-usa.org. Just click on "[America Responds to Terrorism](#)." Other educators* have contributed to the list of service-learning project suggestions.

Online Lessons and Research Links

Online Lessons. Each CRF lesson consists of a reading, discussions questions, and an interactive activity.

Terrorism

- What is Terrorism?
- Terrorism: How Have Other Countries Handled It? How Should We?

Reactions to Tragedy

- Suggestions for Teachers
- September 11—How Did You Feel?
- Handling Controversy
- How Youth Can Help—Service-Learning Projects

Information and Disinformation

- Fact Finders—The Media During Times of Crisis
- Analyzing Rumors and Myths
- Press Freedom vs. Military Censorship

Civil Liberties in Wartime

- The Palmer "Red Raids"
- A "Clear and Present Danger"
- The Information Revolution: A Hypothetical Case
- Do We Need a New Constitutional Convention?

Islamic Issues

- Origins of Islamic Law
- Blasphemy! Salman Rushdie and Freedom of Expression

International Law and Organizations

- The United Nations: Fifty Years of Keeping the Peace
- Firestorms: The Bombing of Civilians in World War II

Terrorism Links. These links are arranged by subject matter to enable teachers and students to browse the mountain of information about terrorism posted on the Internet.

Lessons | The Attacks | Personal Stories | Rumors | Terrorism |
Bioterrorism | Middle East | Afghanistan | bin Laden | Maps | Islam |
Tolerance | Broadcast Media | U.S. Newspapers | International Newspapers |
Magazines | Other News Sources | Government | Government Reports |
Foreign Policy | Military Strategy | Think Tanks | Law | Civil Liberties |
Analysis and Opinion | Opinion Polls | Other Links |

CRF is currently developing additional lessons and resources and hope you will return frequently to **www.crf-usa.org** and "[America Responds to Terrorism](#)" as we continue to update this growing site.

Twelve Service-Learning Project Suggestions

1. Hold a teach-in. Using the social studies department and CRF's online lessons as a resource, hold school or community presentations and discussions about topics and issues related to terrorism. Topics could include the history, culture, and geography of the Middle East; a discussion of Middle Eastern attitudes toward the United States; the economic, political and social effects of globalization on the "have-nots" of the area; origins and character of the Taliban and the rise of Osama bin Laden; how our nation has dealt with previous attacks to its security; issues of security versus freedom, and more.
2. Hold a community town meeting. Have students brainstorm and research topics as a preparation for moderating discussions about terrorism-related issues.
3. Conduct a poster campaign. Make posters celebrating heroes including fire fighters, police, airline flight crews, postal workers, emergency medical personnel, nurses and doctors.
4. Write and conduct a survey. Determine how students or community members feel about America's response to terrorism and post the results at school and in the local media.
5. Build a quilt. Ask students to browse newspapers and the Internet for images from the Middle East. Give groups of students pieces of cloth on which to draw, sew, paint, or write. Completed pieces are sewn together into a quilt for display.
6. Draw a map. Create and display a giant map of the Middle East including national boundaries, terrain, cities, and resources. Research and write short descriptions of relevant information and crucial events and attach them to their geographical positions.
7. Design an art space. Create a space for students to paint, draw, and construct their thoughts and feelings about the events of September 11 and related subjects. Use the art space as a presentation forum and follow-up to classroom discussions, research projects, town meetings, or teach-ins.

8. Write a play. Following research and discussion about the Middle East, have students create a play about life in refugee camps in Palestine, Afghanistan, Pakistan, or other Middle Eastern countries. Present the play to the school and community.
9. Poems, journals and letters. Provide opportunities for written expression about terrorism, including journals. Identify issues and have students write letters of concern to local and national elected officials, local newspapers, or United Nations officials. Create a voluntary forum such as a reading or display for students to share their writings.
10. Gather oral histories. Talk to parents, grandparents, and others from older generations who have experienced previous national and international crises. Ask them to compare their past experiences to their impressions of the current crisis. Transcribe and display or dramatize oral histories.
11. Locate and arrange to meet with students, teachers, or community members from an Islamic school, advocacy group, or community center to learn about Middle Eastern culture.
12. Form a study group. Meet with other interested students on a regular basis to research and discuss issues surrounding September 11, terrorism, international relations, Middle Eastern politics and culture, civil liberties in time of war, and more. Create presentations or conduct mentoring sessions with younger students.

*See "Project Ideas: Afghanistan for Kids and Teachers," from [Oxfam America](#) . Oxfam has been providing humanitarian aid to Afghanistan since 1989.

PROGRAM PROFILE

Generations in Exchange

by Wendy Lesko

All the hard work is paying off. Methods for incorporating "real world" service with classroom work means that more students are connecting with the world at large. Real world interaction between school and the community breaks down the barrier of age segregation. Most educators accept the fact that school-community collaborations benefit young minds. Service-learning also benefits adult collaborators involved in advocacy projects. Intergenerational teamwork often succeeds in achieving concrete school and community change because age diversity generates a broader array of ideas and network of contacts. Young people learn, adults learn, and the community benefits. This interchange is reflected in the following profiles.

From School to Community

As part of a routine homework assignment, a team of high school students in Portland, Maine, visited local community health centers to learn about AIDS. Here they met adults and children living with HIV. Friendships blossomed between students and many of the centers' patients. The homework assignment grew into a project to dispel HIV/AIDS stereotypes. With

permission granted by the centers' HIV subjects, these students created a photography exhibit that traveled to many other public schools in Maine. Study stimulated outreach. Outreach brought intergenerational relationships that, in turn, created more study and further outreach.

Community mapping carries great potential for interactions with people of all ages. A Charleston, South Carolina, teacher suggested to his students that they survey a 10-block area near their downtown school. After counting and mapping 45 abandoned lots and dilapidated buildings, they drew up a survey and interviewed 50 residents of varying ages to seek recommendations for ways to improve the neighborhood. The students presented their findings to the City Council. This exchange resulted in the demolition of several hazardous buildings and stricter enforcement codes. The next year, the teacher's new students continued to pursue neighborhood revitalization with an inter-agency group of city planners.

Adults can learn a great deal about ingenuity and determination from children. An "Eco-Troop" of fourth and fifth graders in Florida grew fond of the scrub jay, an endangered species that is so friendly the bird will eat a peanut from an open hand. The students were determined to protect the scrub jay. Oblivious of the monumental difficulties involved in buying the land necessary to preserve the scrub jay's local habitat, they set to work. The school principal and their teacher brought the parents together with the children for weekly strategy sessions. Teachers and children refused to allow the adults to co-opt the agenda. Students, their parents, and local environmental groups made intergenerational presentations to the School Board, the Indian River County Commission, their congressman, and the secretary of the U.S. Interior Department. As an intergenerational group, the friends of the scrub jay were successful. Conversely, in the one instance where school administrators and parents made a presentation without the young environmentalists, their proposals were rebuffed. Ultimately, the Eco-Troop received a matching grant of more than \$200,000 from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. The Eco-Troop continues to raise funds and persuade private owners to sell their land for inclusion in this wildlife sanctuary.

School as Community

Intergenerational forums can also solve school-based issues. Controversy and troubles that boil up at school can be transformed into opportunities for intergenerational problem solving. An Oakland, California, teacher convinced students involved in gang activity that their input was needed to make the school safer. Meetings and informal gatherings between students and teachers revealed that a local citizen, a 65-year-old grandmother, would make an excellent security guard for the school because she was a symbol of moral authority. The school district hired her.

In Ohio, several parents wanted to ban a book used in high school literature classes. The principal believed that a collaboration between parents and students would address this controversial issue more effectively than the school administration acting alone. The student council at this school has input on all school committees, including hiring staff. The principal conducted seminars where students discussed the censorship issue. The student council then moderated evening seminars that included students, parents, school staff, and the district school board. The entire community emerged stronger as a result of confronting this controversy with an intergenerational committee.

In Maryland, state law mandates that every public school establish a school improvement

team including community members, teachers, parents, and student representatives. High school students serve alongside adults on every advisory, curriculum, and study committee that makes recommendations to the district board of education. Students also are involved with special task forces such as one focused on grading policy and another exploring alternative approaches for those students where traditional high school does not meet their needs.

Intergenerational Community Government

A powerful Minneapolis-area consortium makes sure that young people are involved with every step of the planning process of a multi-community youth center. The board of directors for this ambitious \$5 million project consists of 60 percent youth and 40 percent adults. Biweekly meetings, co-chaired by a youth member from each of the two largest high schools, serve as a forum for community input about the center's computer lab, performing arts space, a youth-run food-service business, career planning, medical and mental health services, and a 10-bed shelter for homeless youth. This five-year planning process demonstrates how adults and young people can interact responsibly for their mutual benefit and for the sake of the community. In the words of one former board member: "[The youth center] works for one reason: Everyone involved treats one another as equals."

These examples of intergenerational teamwork demonstrate how cross-pollination between the generations can produce an environment of mutual respect and success. Everyone—regardless of age—can be valued for their contributions. Instead of young people feeling alienated and disenfranchised, they can experience real connections with the broader community beyond their peer group. Working with youth serves to enhance adults' commitment and energy, and they also gain a stronger sense of community connectedness.

Wendy Lesko is Executive Director of Activism 2000 Project, Kensington, MD 20895; (800) KID-POWER.

Corporation for National and Community Service Senior Corps

The Senior Corps connects older Americans to volunteer opportunities in their communities. Its three main programs, the Foster Grandparent Program, the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), and the Senior Companion Program enable interested older Americans to find challenging, rewarding, and significant community service right in their own backyards.

Foster Grandparent Program Serving Children. Foster Grandparents devote their volunteer service to children with special or exceptional needs.

Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP). RSVP volunteers tutor children in reading and math, help to build houses, model parenting skills to teen parents and more.

Senior Companion Program. Senior Companions assist adults to live independently in their own homes or communities.

Seniors for Schools. Senior volunteers provide literacy services in elementary schools.

For more information, contact the Corporation for National and Community Service, 1201 New York Avenue, NW, Washington, DC, 20525. (202) 606-5000 or visit the SeniorCorps web site.

REVIEW CORNER

Young and Old Serving Together

Meeting Community Needs Through Intergenerational Partnerships

Tess Scannell and Angelea Roberts
Generations United, Washington, D.C., 1994.
ISBN 0-87868-566-9. 8 1/2" x 11", 110 pp.

In a society where members of different generations are fragmented, separated, and isolated from one another, intergenerational programs can bridge the gap. Traditionally, intergenerational programs cast members of each age group into separate roles: service provider or service recipient. Older adults tutor at-risk middle-school students. High school students read or do chores for the homebound elderly. Although such programs have proven beneficial, a growing number of community programs enable young and old to serve their communities together.

Young and Old Serving Together explores the area where intergenerational programs and community service overlap. How can intergenerational components enhance an existing community-service program? How can you organize a new intergenerational program where young and old work together to plan and implement service projects from the ground up? Once you get an intergenerational service project going, how do you keep it up and running?

Chapter One of *Young and Old Serving Together* offers a rationale for intergenerational service programs. Chapter Two provides a list of guiding intergenerational principles and best practice components. Chapter Three consists of a comprehensive needs assessment and planning guide. Successive chapters deal with implementation and sustainment issues such as recruitment, training, support, outreach, and evaluation. Two extensive case studies and tips from intergenerational experts and an appendix round out this useful guide.

For more information, contact Generations United, 122 C Street, NW, Suite 820, Washington, DC. 20001; (202) 638-1263.

Kids as Planners

A Guide to Strengthening Students, Schools, and Communities Through Service-Learning

Kids Consortium, Lewiston, Maine, 2001.
ISBN 0-9710990-0-6. 8 1/2" x 11", 120 pp.

Kids as Planners is based on a mutually beneficial premise. On one side, students who have ownership of their school experience are more likely to learn constructively and use the skills they need to be effective citizens. On the other side, teachers who invite students to be partners in the teaching process enrichen their lessons and carry a lighter planning load. *Kids as Planners* introduces methods to connect curriculum and academic standards with the untapped power and bountiful energy of young people. It also serves as a guide to forming authentic partnerships among schools, students, and their communities.

Kids as Planners evolved out of a program in Maine that uses a “town as text” model to engage students in local community planning. By engaging students in these efforts, communities benefitted, and education grew beyond the confines of the classroom, thereby allowing students to apply classroom learning to local needs.

The *Kids as Planners* publisher, an organization called KIDS Consortium, works with school districts and communities to provide such experiences. The KIDS model has spread to school districts throughout New England, providing financial support, technical assistance, and training for educators, youth workers, and community groups. Now in its second decade, KIDS Consortium is recognized nationally as a leading service-learning resource.

Kids as Planners demonstrates how service learning can meet educational reform objectives: standards-based learning, character education, and school-to-career initiatives. Designed in an accessible modular format, this illustrated guide uses case studies and “toolboxes” containing dozens of interactive methodologies to foster collaboration, explore options, and brainstorm to consensus. Project planning includes student-involved activities, community-involvement methods, and a section for integrating curriculum and state standards. Chapters on implementation, assessment and reflection, and recognition are followed by guidance for extending service learning into other classes, the school district, and the community. The final chapter provides a list of resources to enhance your understanding and practice of service learning. An appendix provides a series of reproducible worksheets.

For more information, contact KIDS Consortium, 215 Lisbon Street, Suite 12, Lewiston, ME 04240. (207) 784-6733.

Youth Infusion

Intergenerational Advocacy Toolkit

Wendy Schaetzel Lesko
Activism 2000 Project, Kensington, Md., 2001.
Loose-leaf binder, 186 pp. Handbook, 124 pp. VHS video, 17 min.

Youth Infusion begins with a simple, cutting-edge concept: By directly including young people who are affected by public policies, advocacy organizations enhance their credibility, capacity, and clout. This approach also empowers young activists by giving them a voice and forum to prove their strength to themselves and the larger community. In return, young advocates contribute insights, passion, and energy to issues that may have become stale to the adult world. *Youth Infusion* presents a strong argument for why and how organizations can collaborate successfully with the younger generation.

The Toolkit includes three resources. The *Intergenerational Advocacy Guide* uses a question-and-answer format to describe approaches that can be adapted to an array of advocacy campaigns, youth programs, and community organizations. Intended to provide help to those who are collaborating with young people or who wish to expand the role of young people as community problem-solvers, particularly in the public policy arena, this guide is a useful addition to educators seeking to create school and community partnerships.

Chapter I outlines the benefits and impact young people can have when they serve as agents for change. Chapter II moves to the nuts and bolts necessary to team young people and adults on advocacy campaigns. Chapter III maps out recruitment and outreach strategies, while Chapter IV provides a menu of skill-building activities focused on youth. Chapter V explores the challenges of group dynamics, staffing, youth-adult communication. An appendix features an array of reproducible handouts and relevant publications and web sites are listed in a resources section.

Influential Young Advocates, a 17-minute VHS video outlines the crucial role young activists can play in a wide range of public policy issues and is intended for staff development, trainings, retreats, and conferences.

Youth! The 26% Solution is a 120-page organizing-skills handbook with instructions on everything from organizing meetings, writing petitions, setting goals, and reaching out to the media and government officials.

For more information, contact the Activism 2000 Project, P.O. Box E, Kensington, MD 20895; (800) KID-POWER.

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