



Youth4Education Take-Action Toolkit

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Youth4Education Take-Action Toolkit



How To Use the Take-Action Toolkit

This Youth4Education toolkit was created to help you take action on the education issues that matter most to you. Doing something about a big issue like education equity can seem overwhelming.



- Where do I start?
- How do I know what to do?
- How long will it take?
- Will it work?
- Do I need to do it alone or can someone help me?

With these questions and many more in mind, it can be easy to feel stuck. But there is a strategy that can help you start moving: that strategy is **service-learning**.

At NYLC, we define service-learning as an approach to teaching and learning in which students use academic knowledge and skills to address genuine community needs. Simply put, that means service-learning is a way for you to use what you have learned (and what you will learn along the way) to figure out what's going on and join with others to make a change in society.

Youth4Education is focused on advancing education equity. By carrying out a service-learning project in your school or community you lead the way in creating education change in the world. We built this toolkit for you to use alongside your Youth4Education service-learning project so that you can carry out an excellent project to advance education equity throughout your year of service and beyond.

We hope that the resources in this toolkit will help you:

- Understand the Youth4Education campaign.
- Talk to others about Youth4Education.
- Discover the root cause of the education issue you want to focus on.
- Find peers and adults who want to join you in your service-learning project.
- Plan activities and meet project deadlines to complete your service-learning project.
- Publicize and share your progress and success stories with others in the service-learning community.
- Find the resources you need to complete your service-learning project.
- Get excited and ready to Serve. Learn. Change the world.®

We value your efforts in Youth4Education and we thank you for joining with us in a commitment to advance education equity for all. Together, we can create a more just, sustainable, and peaceful world with young people, their schools, and their communities through service-learning.

If you find this toolkit useful and you would like to provide feedback on what works, what doesn't work, and ideas about how we can make it better, email Hannah Reece at hreece@nylc.org.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Youth4Education?

Youth4Education is a youth-led campaign to advance education equity. It is a movement of young people coming together to stand up to the injustices they and their peers face in their learning. It is a platform for youth to say that everyone deserves a quality education — that everyone deserves a safe, supportive space to learn and grow to their fullest potential.

Why focus on education equity?

Nearly everywhere you look, not all youth have the same access to quality education. Here are some facts:

Globally:

- Fifty-eight million children around the world do not attend school; disadvantaged youth are particularly affected.
- Education inequity costs governments around the world \$129 billion per year.
- 10% of global spending on primary education is lost on poor-quality education that fails to support teachers and fails to ensure that all children, regardless of their circumstances, are in school and learning.
- As of 2011, 250 million children — 130 million of whom are in school — were not able to read, write, or do simple arithmetic.
- One in four young people in poor countries is unable to read a single sentence. With this many children and young people not learning basic skills, they lack what they need to get decent employment and lead fulfilling lives.

Nationally:

- 1.2 million youth will drop out this year. That is one dropout every twenty-six seconds.
- When the decision to drop-out is made, a chance for a life in poverty more than doubles.
- 81% of U.S. dropouts say they would have been more apt to persist in school if they had been offered opportunities for real-world learning, such as service-learning.

In nearly every school, ones just like yours, students:

- Lack affordable transportation to and from school.
- Cannot afford necessary supplies.
- Lack basic needs like food or housing, making it difficult to complete coursework.
- Face discrimination in school.
- Have difficulty identifying with content and remaining engaged in their learning.

How does Youth4Education work?

Youth4Education is a collaborative effort that involves NYLC, youth passionate about advancing education equity through service-learning, adult allies, and community partners. Through combined efforts, Youth4Education participants engage a diverse body of youth by taking active leadership roles in their community through service-learning, in order to address issues that affect education equity, ultimately advancing education equity and youth voice.

Reference: data.unicef.org/education/overview.html

Who is in charge of Youth4Education?

Youth4Education is a youth-led initiative of the National Youth Leadership Council, a nonprofit organization dedicated to developing young leaders, supporting educators, and advancing the field of service-learning. More information about NYLC may be found at www.nylc.org.

Although NYLC oversees Youth4Education, most of its leaders are youth.

- **Youth Advisory Council:** The Youth Advisory Council is a team of servant-leaders from all across the United States recognized for their dedication to youth leadership, service-learning, diversity, and educational achievement for all. The YAC advises NYLC on its programming and brings valuable youth perspectives to its work.
- **Lead Activists:** Lead Activists are youth from across the nation who are formally-recognized by NYLC as leaders in advancing education equity through service-learning. They receive support from NYLC to create, in partnership with their chosen adult mentor, a service-learning project (engaging at least ten of their peers) to advance education equity in their community.

How can I get involved?

- **Youth Participants:** Young people have the most at stake when it comes to education equity. This issue affects youth, and therefore it is essential that youth step up and make their voices heard. We encourage any youth interested in advancing education equity in their schools and communities to join Youth4Education. To start, you can:
 - » Take the Youth pledge at Youth4Education.org.
 - » Like Youth4Education on Facebook and follow NYLC on Twitter.
 - » Launch conversations with your friends, teachers, and relatives about education equity.
- **Adult Allies:** Youth4Education is about advancing education equity through service-learning and about youth having a voice in their own education. However, in today's society, it is typically adults who hold positions of power. Therefore, it is important for adults to partner with youth in their mission to advance education equity. To start, you can:
 - » Take the Adult pledge at Youth4Education.org.
 - » Like Youth4Education on Facebook and follow NYLC on Twitter.
 - » Launch conversations with youth in your life about education equity. Ask and truly listen to what they think is stopping education equity from existing in their schools.

Vocabulary

Refer to this list of common terms in Youth4Education as needed.

- **Adult Allies:** People who do not identify as youth themselves, but support Youth4Education’s mission to advance education equity through service-learning and youth voice. These are any adults who support youth in their Youth4Education efforts, by whatever means they see fit.
- **Adult Mentor:** Adults committed to formally support Lead Activists or other youth in completing their service-learning project to advance education equity.
- **Campaign:** Defined by the Oxford English Dictionary as an “organized course of action to achieve a particular goal.” For example, Youth4Education is not a club or program where everyone is doing the same activities. It is also not just a name or title. Youth4Education is an organized movement of youth taking steps individually-tailored to their skills, talents, and passions in order to address barriers preventing their communities from achieving education equity.
- **Community Partners:** Organizations and businesses within the community who work alongside Youth4Education members in their efforts. NYLC has guidelines for what good partnerships look like as part of the K-12 Service-Learning Standards for Quality Practice.
- **Education Equity:** The concept that education should elevate all youth to the same level of knowledge and access to opportunities. It is more than just equal distribution of funds and resources, but a just opportunity for all youth. Education inequity, then, is the absence of such justice.
- **Generator School Network:** An online community of youth and adults committed to providing and advocating for high-quality service-learning experiences for young people around the world. The GSN is home to The Generator, a project-planning tool to guide the creation of new and innovative service-learning projects in the GSN. It also houses the National Service-Learning Clearinghouse, the nation’s largest digital library of service-learning research, data, tools, and materials, at gsn.nylc.org.
- **IPARD:** A student-centered inquiry model for completing a quality service-learning project. Using this model, project team members will identify goals and objectives for their projects and align them with assessments. See graphic on page 35 for more information.
- **K-12 Service-Learning Standards for Quality Practice:** Used to guide project team members in creating a quality service-learning project, the eight Standards are Meaningful Service, Link to Curriculum, Reflection, Diversity, Youth Voice, Partnerships, Progress Monitoring, and Duration and Intensity. Learn more at nylc.org/standards.
- **Lead Activists:** Youth formally-recognized by NYLC as leaders advancing education equity in their own communities. Lead Activists receive support from NYLC throughout the 2015-16 year as they complete a service-learning project centered around education equity.
- **National Youth Leadership Council:** A national nonprofit organization located in St. Paul, Minn. For over 30 years, NYLC has transformed classrooms, empowered teachers, and captivated students by leading the way in providing high-quality, dynamic service-learning content to schools districts, classrooms, out-of-school programs, and everything in between. NYLC programs and services develop young leaders, support educators, and advance the field of service-learning.

- **Service-Learning:** An approach to teaching and learning in which students use academic knowledge and skills to address genuine community needs. Picking up trash on a river bank is **service**. Studying water samples under a microscope is **learning**. When science students collect and analyze water samples, document their results, and present their findings to a local pollution control agency — that is **service-learning**.
- **Youth Advisory Council:** A team of servant-leaders recognized for their dedication to youth leadership, service-learning, diversity, and education equity. The YAC advises NYLC on its programming and brings valuable youth perspectives to the organization's work.
- **Youth Participants:** Youth who are not YAC members or Lead Activists but are committed to Youth4Education's mission to advance education equity.
- **Youth4Education:** A youth-led campaign to advance education equity, sponsored by the National Youth Leadership Council. On social media platforms, Youth4Education content must incorporate its official hashtag, **#Youth4Ed**.



What is Service-Learning?

Service-learning is an approach to teaching and learning in which students use academic knowledge and skills to address genuine community needs.



What is Service-Learning? Volunteering at a center for newly-arrived immigrants is *service*. Reading about the history of U.S. immigration and presenting an oral history on an immigrant family is *learning*. When students create a set of interview questions about immigrant experiences to identify the needs of families, use the information to partner with local community-based organizations, and develop a set of resources for new Americans — that is *service-learning*.

All service does not look the same. Different service-learning projects call for service that is direct, indirect, or a form of advocacy.

Direct Service

Projects that bring individuals face-to-face with those who are being served. For example, visiting residents in a nursing home or peer mediation.

Indirect Service

Projects that benefit a cause or group but do not necessarily involve any contact. For example, town restoration or organizing a march against neighborhood violence.

Advocacy

Projects that have a kind of activism on behalf of a specific cause or social issue; projects that encourage action or create awareness of issues of public interest. For example, promoting teen driver safety or disaster preparedness.

To learn more about service-learning, visit nylc.org/service-learning.



K-12 Service-Learning Standards for Quality Practice

The K-12 Service-Learning Standards for Quality Practice were developed by the National Youth Leadership Council with funding from State Farm Companies Foundation. Working from a base of 20 years of professional wisdom and practice, NYLC worked with other leaders in service-learning and engaged RMC Research Corporation to ensure that the standards included the strongest evidence-based elements of effective practice. Then young people, teachers, school and district administrators, community members, staff from community-based organizations, policy-makers, and others interested in service-learning participated in panels across the United States to strengthen the language of the standards their indicators. For more information, visit www.nylc.org/standards.

Meaningful Service

Service-learning actively engages participants in meaningful and personally-relevant service activities.

Indicators:

1. Service-learning experiences are appropriate to participant ages and developmental abilities.
2. Service-learning addresses issues that are personally relevant to the participants.
3. Service-learning provides participants with interesting and engaging service activities.
4. Service-learning encourages participants to understand their service experiences in the context of the underlying societal issues being addressed.
5. Service-learning leads to attainable and visible outcomes that are valued by those being served.

Link to Curriculum

Service-learning is intentionally used as an instructional strategy to meet learning goals and/or content standards.

Indicators:

1. Service-learning has clearly articulated learning goals.
2. Service-learning is aligned with the academic and/or programmatic curriculum.
3. Service-learning helps participants learn how to transfer knowledge and skills from one setting to another.
4. Service-learning that takes place in schools is formally recognized in school board policies and student records.

A close-up photograph of several hands of different skin tones holding a colorful paper airplane. The airplane is made of various colored paper scraps (red, yellow, blue, green) and is being held in a way that suggests it is about to be launched. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green.

K-12 Service-Learning Standards for Quality Practice

Reflection

Service-learning incorporates multiple challenging reflection activities that are ongoing and that prompt deep thinking and analysis about oneself and one's relationship to society.

Indicators:

1. Service-learning reflection includes a variety of verbal, written, artistic, and nonverbal activities to demonstrate understanding and changes in participants' knowledge, skills, and/or attitudes.
2. Service-learning reflection occurs before, during, and after the service experience.
3. Service-learning reflection prompts participants to think deeply about complex community problems and alternative solutions.
4. Service-learning reflection encourages participants to examine their preconceptions and assumptions in order to explore and understand their roles and responsibilities as citizens.
5. Service-learning reflection encourages participants to examine a variety of social and civic issues related to their service-learning experience so that participants understand connections to public policy and civic life.

Diversity

Service-learning promotes understanding of diversity and mutual respect among all participants.

Indicators:

1. Service-learning helps participants identify and analyze different points of view to gain understanding of multiple perspectives.
2. Service-learning helps participants develop interpersonal skills in conflict resolution and group decision-making.
3. Service-learning helps participants actively seek to understand and value the diverse backgrounds and perspectives of those offering and receiving service.
4. Service-learning encourages participants to recognize and overcome stereotypes.



A close-up photograph of several hands holding and manipulating colorful, crumpled paper in shades of red, blue, yellow, and green. The hands are positioned as if they are in the middle of a craft project or a collaborative activity.

K-12 Service-Learning Standards for Quality Practice

Youth Voice

Service-learning provides youth with a strong voice in planning, implementing, and evaluating service-learning experiences with guidance from adults.

Indicators:

1. Service-learning engages youth in generating ideas during the planning, implementation, and evaluation processes.
2. Service-learning involves youth in the decision-making process throughout the service-learning experiences.
3. Service-learning involves youth and adults in creating an environment that supports trust and open expression of ideas.
4. Service-learning promotes acquisition of knowledge and skills to enhance youth leadership and decision-making.
5. Service-learning involves youth in evaluating the quality and effectiveness of the service-learning experience.

Partnerships

Service-learning partnerships are collaborative, mutually beneficial, and address community needs.

Indicators:

1. Service-learning involves a variety of partners, including youth, educators, families, community members, community-based organizations, and/or businesses.
2. Service-learning partnerships are characterized by frequent and regular communication to keep all partners well-informed about activities and progress.
3. Service-learning partners collaborate to establish a shared vision and set common goals to address community needs.
4. Service-learning partners collaboratively develop and implement action plans to meet specified goals.
5. Service-learning partners share knowledge and understanding of school and community assets and needs, and view each other as valued resources.



A close-up photograph of several hands holding and working with colorful, crumpled paper in shades of red, blue, yellow, and green. The hands are positioned as if they are in the middle of a craft project or a collaborative activity.

K-12 Service-Learning Standards for Quality Practice

Progress Monitoring

Service-learning engages participants in an ongoing process to assess the quality of implementation and progress toward meeting specified goals, and uses results for improvement and sustainability.

Indicators:

1. Service-learning participants collect evidence of progress toward meeting specific service goals and learning outcomes from multiple sources throughout the service-learning experience.
2. Service-learning participants collect evidence of the quality of service-learning implementation from multiple sources throughout the service-learning experience.
3. Service-learning participants use evidence to improve service-learning experiences.
4. Service-learning participants communicate evidence of progress toward goals and outcomes with the broader community, including policy-makers and education leaders, to deepen service-learning understanding and ensure that high quality practices are sustained.

Duration and Intensity

Service-learning has sufficient duration and intensity to address community needs and meet specified outcomes.

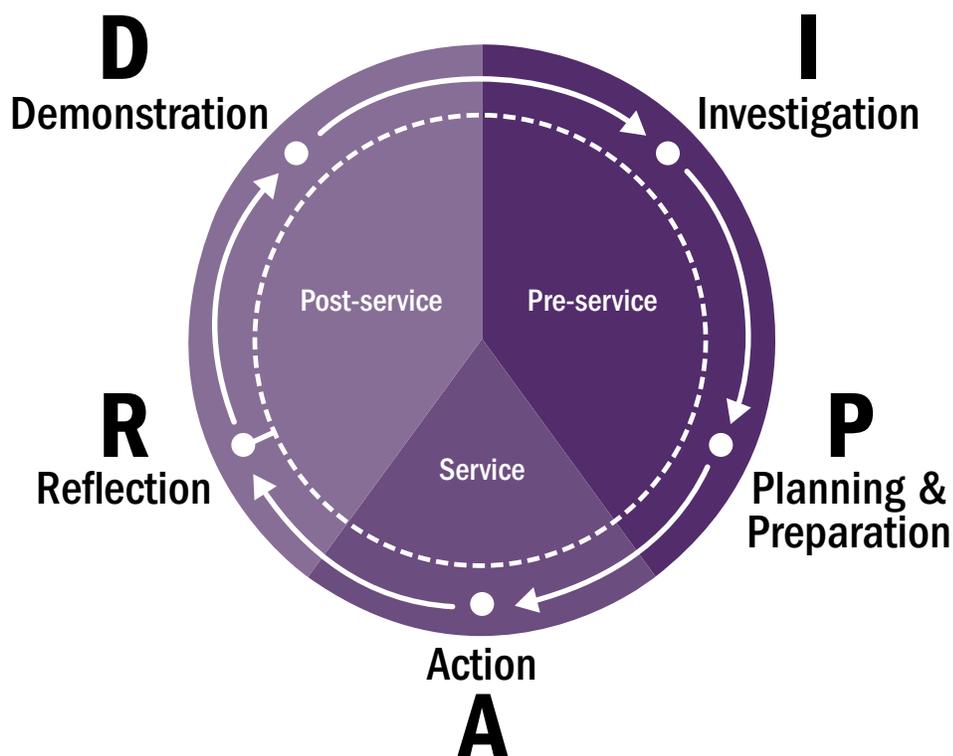
Indicators:

1. Service-learning experiences include the processes of investigating community needs, preparing for service, action, reflection, demonstration of learning and impacts, and celebration.
2. Service-learning is conducted during concentrated blocks of time across a period of several weeks or months.
3. Service-learning experiences provide enough time to address identified community needs and achieve learning outcomes.



The IPARD Framework

The IPARD framework represents the student-centered inquiry model in a service-learning project. Prior to the activities in this framework, educators and project organizers have identified student goals and objectives aligned with assessments.



Investigation & Inquiry

Through research and inquiry, participants and partners identify a genuine community need and its root-causes.

Planning & Preparation

Based on initial research, participants identify a realistic and meaningful service project with clear goals, timelines, roles, and follow-up activities.

Action

Project participants implement the plan through direct, indirect, or advocacy-based service. Throughout the act of service, participants collect evidence of their project and its impact.

Reflection

Through a variety of cognitively challenging activities, reflection takes place at every stage of the cycle to assist in understanding the connection between what is being learned and the action taken.

Demonstration & Celebration

Participants showcase learning and community impacts to stakeholders and supporters while making recommendations for sustainability and expansion.

Youth-Adult Partnership Contract

Use this process to set expectations between yourself and your Adult Mentor. At the end of this process, a Youth-Adult Partnership Contract will be created to guide the relationship toward success in completing your Youth4Education service-learning project.

The Process

1. Print two copies of the Youth-Adult Contract.
2. Before your first meeting, both you and your Adult Mentor must complete the contract individually. For questions you feel unable to answer, respond with what you think the answer might be or simply write N/A. Be sure to discuss these questions in particular during your joint review period.
3. Jointly review and discuss each person's answers and reach agreement.
4. Print a new copy of the contract with the agreed answers.
5. Both you and your Adult Mentor must sign and date the contract.
6. One month after your first meeting, check in to discuss how the partnership is going and if changes need to be made to the contract.
7. You are responsible for keeping the contract and reviewing as necessary.

<p>What type of assistance does the Youth Participant want from his or her Adult Mentor for the service-learning project?</p>	
<p>What expectations does the Youth Participant have of the Adult Mentor? See the Partnership Expectations on page 19 of this toolkit for thought-starters.</p>	
<p>What expectations does the Adult Mentor have of the Youth Participant? See the Partnership Expectations on page 19 of this toolkit for thought-starters.</p>	
<p>How often will you meet?</p>	
<p>When and where will you meet?</p>	
<p>For how long will you meet?</p>	
<p>Who will be responsible for scheduling meetings?</p>	

<p>How will you decide what to discuss at meetings?</p>	
<p>Who will be responsible for keeping meetings on track?</p>	
<p>What is the best way to contact the Youth Participant?</p>	
<p>What is the best way to contact the Adult Mentor?</p>	
<p>If problems arise, how will they be resolved?</p>	
<p>Are there any concerns that the Youth Participant wants discussed and resolved?</p>	
<p>Are there any concerns that the Adult Mentor wants discussed and resolved?</p>	

Youth Participant — Print Name

Signature

Date

Adult Mentor — Print Name

Signature

Date

Partnership Expectations

Use this list as thought-starters; keep in mind it is far from exhaustive. The important thing is to own your expectations for this partnership and communicate them often and clearly to create an authentic youth-adult partnership.

- Be critical of ideas, not me
- Accept and value that I am different from you
- Have realistic expectations
- Seek out and be receptive to feedback
- Tell me when things aren't working
- Keep an up-to-date journal
- When we meet, give your full and undivided attention
- Take risks
- Don't look to me for all the answers
- Be responsible for your learning and actions
- Keep your commitments
- Tell me how I can be more helpful
- Be willing to try new things
- Be open and honest with me
- Participate as a partner in the process
- Be willing to change your mind
- Be willing to consider alternatives
- Try to understand all sides of an issue
- Listen to and understand me
- Openly disagree without being disagreeable
- Trust me
- Recognize me
- Collaborate with me in the process
- Set goals and actively work toward accomplishing them
- Take appropriate actions
- Do what you say you will do
- Practice new skills
- Do not have any hidden agendas
- Help me figure things out for myself
- Give me the space to be myself
- Help make our discussions positive
- Be supportive
- Offer help
- Be flexible
- Discuss issues in a specific, descriptive, nonjudgmental manner
- Don't point blame
- Be willing to ask questions and gather information
- Be patient
- Allow for and give me choices
- Honor when I think the relationship needs to be terminated
- Consider different opinions
- Actively seek feedback from others

Using the Generator School Network

The Generator School Network (GSN) is an online community with thousands of youth and adult members dedicated to changing the world through service-learning. It is the leading resource for convenient project-sharing, service-learning professional development, and networking. Membership is always free. Also housed in the GSN is the National Service-Learning Clearinghouse, the nation's largest digital library of service-learning resources.

Follow the steps below to join the GSN, start planning your project using The Generator (a project-planning tool in GSN) and join the GSN Youth4Education group.

How to join the GSN

Step 1: Visit gsn.nylc.org.

Step 2: Click JOIN in the top right corner.

Step 3: Follow prompts to complete necessary information. When finished, click "Create GSN account."

Step 4: Click PROFILE on the top right corner to tell the rest of the GSN a little about yourself and include a picture if you like.

Step 5: Welcome to the GSN! You're now ready to explore projects happening across the nation, join groups like Youth4Education, and access resources to aid you in completing a service-learning project.

At the top of the GSN, you'll notice six sections. **HOME** is the GSN homepage, which includes a dashboard highlighting recent site activity. **CLEARINGHOUSE** is your portal to the nation's largest library of service-learning resources, the National Service-Learning Clearinghouse. **LEARN** is a separate library of professional development resources generated by NYLC and its partners, made specifically for GSN members. **PLAN** is where you create your own project* or browse member projects. **CONNECT** is where you can start a discussion, create a group, share resources, and more. **BADGES** show how to earn and recognize members' achievements, online and offline.

*The Generator tool under PLAN is where you will create and plan your individual project to track your progress for Youth4Education.

How to plan your service-learning project in the GSN

- **Step 1:** Join the GSN.
- **Step 2:** Log into your GSN account.
- **Step 3:** Watch this video to learn a bit about the PLAN section of the GSN: vimeo.com/48815512. When you are finished with the video, click PLAN from the GSN homepage.
- **Step 4:** Scroll down to "Create New Project" and click "Generate Project."
- **Step 5:** Fill in the Details section with your project name, the grade level with which you are working, any school subjects that correlate to your project, and the service areas of your project. Be sure to include "Achievement Gap" as one of your service areas.
- **Step 6:** Congratulations on starting your project! Each quarter of the cycle, you will need to fill out different parts of your project in the PLAN section of the GSN.
- **Step 7:** Access your project at any time by clicking PROFILE on the GSN homepage.

If you get stuck or have questions on what your completed project page should look like, you can check out Promise Fellow Emily's example page here: gsn.nylc.org/projects/892.

How to join the Youth4Education group on the GSN

- **Step 1:** Join the GSN.
- **Step 2:** Log into your GSN account.
- **Step 3:** From the homepage, select CONNECT.
- **Step 4:** Select “See All Groups” and locate Youth4Education in the listing, or search “Youth4Education” from the search sidebar.
- **Step 5:** Click “Request to Join” once on the group page.
- **Step 6:** Follow steps to send request to join the Youth4Education group. Your request will be sent to Hannah Reece.
- **Step 7:** Once your request is approved, you will receive an email in your GSN inbox to join the group. You must check this GSN inbox (not the email you used to sign up) and click on the embedded link to join the Youth4Education group. Once your group membership is confirmed, you will be able to connect with other Lead Activists, see what others are up to with their service-learning projects, discuss and share strategies, and collaborate on additional projects if you so choose.
- **Step 8:** Access the group at any time by clicking PROFILE on the GSN homepage.

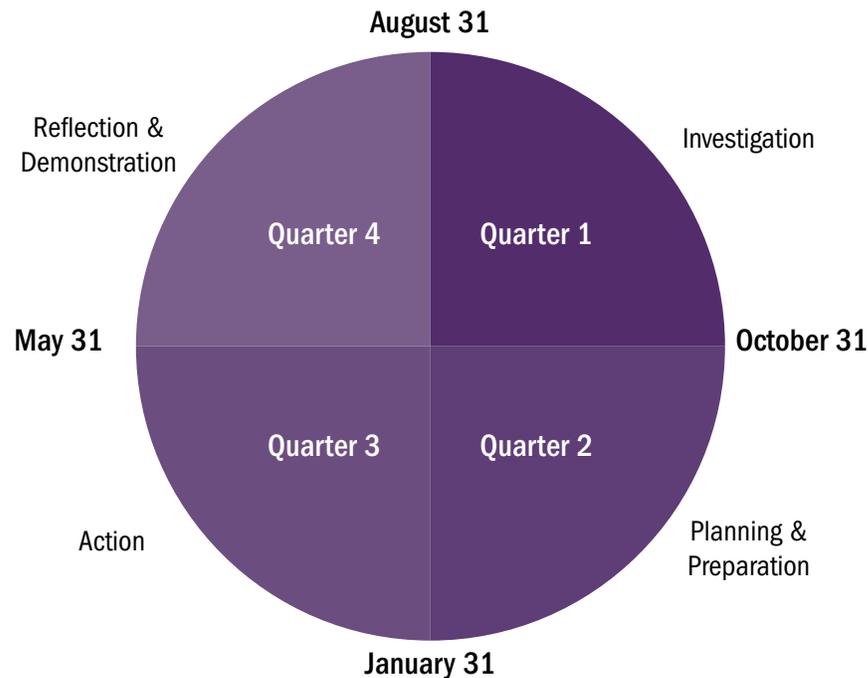
Project Checklist

Start here to begin your journey. Complete the action items on this checklist, in the order listed, to get you on your way to creating a quality service-learning project to advance education equity.

- Watch a video on Youth4Education at ny.lc/1MXmivS.
- Visit Youth4Education.org to take the #Youth4Ed Pledge.
- Like Facebook pages and Follow on Twitter:
 - National Youth Leadership Council at facebook.com/nylcorg.
 - Youth4Education at facebook.com/youth4education.
 - @nylcorg at twitter.com/nylcorg.
- Watch a video about the Generator School Network at ny.lc/1MeC1bl.
- Watch a video about the Generator, a project planning tool designed to guide your service-learning practice, at ny.lc/1QarLNA.
- Join the GSN at gsn.nylc.org.
- Join the Youth4Education group in the GSN.
- Create a new project using the Generator in the GSN to plan and keep track of your progress
- Read the Youth4Education Service-Learning Cycle to understand how to complete a service-learning project to advance education equity.
- If you have an adult supporting your project, set up a meeting with him or her to discuss the Youth4Education FAQ and Vocabulary. Establish expectations for the youth-adult partnership.

Youth4Education Service-Learning Cycle

Find below an example of the Service-Learning Cycle over a year. Each quarter could, however, represent any range of time — several weeks or even a full year — depending on the length of your project; so, the dates may vary.



Quarter 1: Investigation

This quarter is focused on exploring what you want yourself and others to get out of your service-learning project as well as investigating the education needs you want to address in your community.

Readings

- Project Checklist*
- Youth4Education FAQ*
- Vocabulary*
- Using the Generator School Network*
- What is Service-Learning?*
- Ways to Identify Needs*

Activities

In The Generator (the project-planning tool in the PLAN section of the GSN), create your individual project. Once your project is set up, complete these parts of the project:

- Identifying Desired Results
- Determining Acceptable Evidence
- Investigation and Inquiry

In the Youth4Education GSN Group, upload these documents. Make sure to include your name.

- Root Cause Analysis Worksheet* (Complete, scan, and upload to your GSN project page.)
- Youth-Adult Partnership Contract* (Print out three copies of the contract. You and your adult mentor should each fill one out before you meet. When you meet, each share what you wrote and come to an agreement to fill out the third contract together. Upload the third contract to the GSN. Contact Hannah Reece at hreece@nylc.org for alternative options.

Professional Development

Information about monthly professional development and learning opportunities will be provided in the Youth4Education GSN Group. Each month's learning opportunity may be delivered via the GSN, conference call, webinar, or other communication platform.

Impact Story

Impact Stories are a great way to incorporate reflection throughout your service-learning project. Your Impact Story can be an essay, a video, blog post, photo presentation, Zine or comic, poem, or any other format of your choice that answers the following questions:

1. At this point in your service-learning process, what community do you envision serving? What community need are you trying to address?
2. Why is serving this community and addressing this need important to you?
3. Explain why you think others would be interested in participating in your project. How do you envision others seeing themselves and finding meaning in your project?
4. How do you think members of the community will view your project? What do you think they will get out of it?

Quarter 2: Planning and Preparation

This quarter is all about planning out your service-learning project and making sure you are ready to start your project next quarter.

Readings

- Transforming Community Needs Into Service-Learning Projects*
- Creating a Budget*
- K-12 Service-Learning Standards for Quality Practice*

Activities

In The Generator, access the project you've created and complete these parts of your project in the GSN:

- Planning and Preparation

In the Youth4Education GSN Group, upload these documents. Make sure to include your name.

- Budget*

Professional Development

Information about monthly professional development and learning opportunities will be provided in the Youth4Education GSN Group. Each month's learning opportunity may be delivered via the GSN, conference call, webinar, or other communication platform.

Impact story

Your Impact Story can be an essay, a video, blog post, photo presentation, Zine or comic, poem, or any other format of your choice that answers the following questions:

1. What is your personal definition of youth voice?
2. Do you think youth voice is important? Why?
3. At this point in your service-learning process, what voices of youth have been incorporated?
4. Will other youth voices be elevated during your service? How?

Quarter 3: Action

This quarter is where the meat of the project happens. You know what education issue you want to address. You've planned what you're going to do about it. You've gotten your team together. Now it's time to go out and make a difference! YOU GOT THIS!

Readings

- Project Checklist*

Activities

In the Generator, locate the project you've created and complete these parts:

- Action

Professional Development

Information about monthly professional development and learning opportunities will be provided in the Youth4Education GSN Group. Each month's learning opportunity may be delivered via the GSN, conference call, webinar, or other communication platform.

Impact story

Your impact story can be an essay, a video, blog post, photo presentation, Zine or comic, poem, or any other format of your choice that answers the following questions:

For all of these questions you may consider age, race, ethnicity, political views, community in which they live, academic or physical ability, etc., but challenge yourself to focus on the unique perspectives of each individual and not make sweeping generalizations or assumptions based on stereotypes.

1. How do perspectives differ among those implementing the project?
2. How do perspectives differ within the community you are serving?
3. How do perspectives differ between those implementing the project and the community you are serving?
4. In what ways have diverse perspectives been an asset to your service-learning project? In what ways have they been a challenge?

Quarter 4: Reflection and Demonstration

In this final quarter, you should be wrapping up your service-learning project. This quarter is about reflecting on what happened during the course of your project and demonstrating what impact you had on others.

Readings

- Project Demonstration Examples*

Activities

In the Generator, locate the project you've created and complete these parts:

- Reflection
- Demonstration and Celebration
- Self-Assessment

Professional Development

Information about monthly professional development and learning opportunities will be provided in the Youth4Education GSN Group. Each month's learning opportunity may be delivered via the GSN, conference call, webinar, or other communication platform.

Impact Story

Your impact story can be an essay, a video, blog post, photo presentation, Zine or comic, poem, or any other format of your choice that answers the following questions:

Reflect on your whole project.

1. What was this process like? Did you meet your goals?
2. What was one of your biggest successes? How did you make it happen?
3. What was one of your biggest struggles? What did you do about it? What happened?
4. How did your project help advance education equity within the community where you worked? What was the impact? How do you know?
5. What is your biggest takeaway from completing your Youth4Education project?

GO DEEPER

At this point, you've finished your service-learning project for Youth4Education. Great!

But it doesn't have to stop here.

Going deeper may mean moving from one type of service to another, such as from direct service to advocacy efforts, especially since you've gained a better understanding of the underlying issues that affect education equity.

Moving forward, the new challenge is to figure out what else you can do to continue to advance education equity beyond this one service-learning project. The choice is yours! You've got the tools and the knowledge to make change happen.

We have confidence that you will continue to **Serve. Learn. Change the world!**®

Factors of the Achievement Gap

Below are five factors of the Achievement Gap provided to help you to start thinking about the root causes of education inequity. As you go through this list of factors, ask yourself the question beside each item. These are definitely things you could put on your Root-Cause Analysis — it is by no means a comprehensive list, but it is a great tool to evaluate your own school and to discover what issues underlie education inequity within your school.

1. The Individual

- **Stereotyping:** What stereotypes do you see at your school?
- **Academic attitude:** Are students motivated to succeed?
- **Goal-setting:** Do students set career goals? How many students plan on going to college after high school?
- **Peer group influence:** How does peer group influence affect a student's academic attitude?

2. Home and Family Background

- **Health and environment factors:** How does having an illness affect a student's ability to achieve? Does your school have access to home-bound teachers? How does working a job affect a student's ability to achieve? What other environmental factors can you think of?
- **Parental involvement in school:** Are parents involved in their children's education at your school?
- **Parental education level:** What kind of families do students from your school come from?
- **Books, reading, and language in the home:** Do students have access to books? Are there programs for ESL students?
- **Summer and after-school learning programs:** Do students have access to after-school programs and summer school?
- **Neighborhood effects:** How does community safety affect your school? Is your community safe?
- **Student mobility:** Can students easily go from a low achievement level to a high achievement level? What is required to make that jump?
- **Cultural and social capital of parents & family:** Are families more likely to vote in your community?

3. Teacher

- **Effective teaching:** Are teachers passionate about what they teach? Do they actively seek to help students understand the material?
- **Teaching experience:** What kind of experience do your teachers have?
- **Expectations:** Do teachers expect students to pass or fail based on past performance?
- **Culturally-responsive instruction:** Are teachers tailoring their lessons to all learning styles? Are students responding to the instruction?

4. School

- **Rigorous curriculum:** How rigorous is your school's curriculum?
- **School resources:** Do you have a guidance counselor? What is the ratio of students to guidance counselor? What resources are available to students?
- **Supportive administration:** Is your school's administration open to student voice?
- **Academic tracking:** How many students are dropping out each year? How many students are failing classes each year? Does your school have a GPA ranking system?
- **Class size:** How large is the average class size? How does this affect a student's ability to achieve?
- **Extracurricular activities:** Is student involvement encouraged at your school?
- **School climate:** What is the atmosphere at your school like?

5. Larger Systemic and Infrastructure Factors

- **Institutional racism and classism:** How are these issues manifested in your school?
- **Poverty:** Are any students on scholarship or assisted food programs?
- **Government legislation:** From where does your school get its funding? Have there been problems with gerrymandering in the past?

Youth4Education Take-Action Toolkit

Ways to Identify Needs

Conduct Surveys

Participants can design surveys for a variety of groups to gather information on what people see as important issues in their community. Creating survey questions, deciding how to administer the survey, collating the resulting information, analyzing what the data shows, and deciding how to act on that data can provide important real-world experiences for participants. Audiences they might consider surveying include:

- Other students in the school.
- Teachers and other school staff.
- Community members or community organizations.

Collaborate with Existing Programs

Find a partner who is already working to address a need in your community and offer your assistance. Existing programs may have the structure, resources, and contacts to help you develop a successful project. These may include:

- Community education.
- Parks and recreation boards.
- Service organizations such as the Kiwanis, Lions, Elks, NAACP, American Association of University Women, and more.
- Department of Natural Resources.
- Nonprofit organizations.
- Local government agencies.

Identify Key Public Issues

What are the important issues facing your city, state, nation, or world? Participants can list some of these issues by reviewing headlines and articles in the local newspaper or other media. Comparing local headlines to national and international headlines in papers of record such as the New York Times or Washington Post can help participants find issues of local and global importance, and see connections between what's happening in their community and what's happening in the rest of the world.

Conduct Interviews with Local Leaders

Invite community elders and leaders into your classroom or group meeting for interviews or discussions with participants to explore topical areas or intergenerational or intercultural issues. Through preparing thoughtful questions, recording the information they learn, and analyzing what they've heard, participants may find areas of need they can address as well as partners to help in their work.

Conduct Focus Groups

Convene a small group of students, community members, and/or others and facilitate a discussion on what people see as important issues in their community. Ask questions similar to those you would ask in a survey, but phrase them to allow more open-ended responses. Make sure not to influence the conversation, but use follow-up questions and prompts to keep discussion organic and lively. Record responses for later analysis.

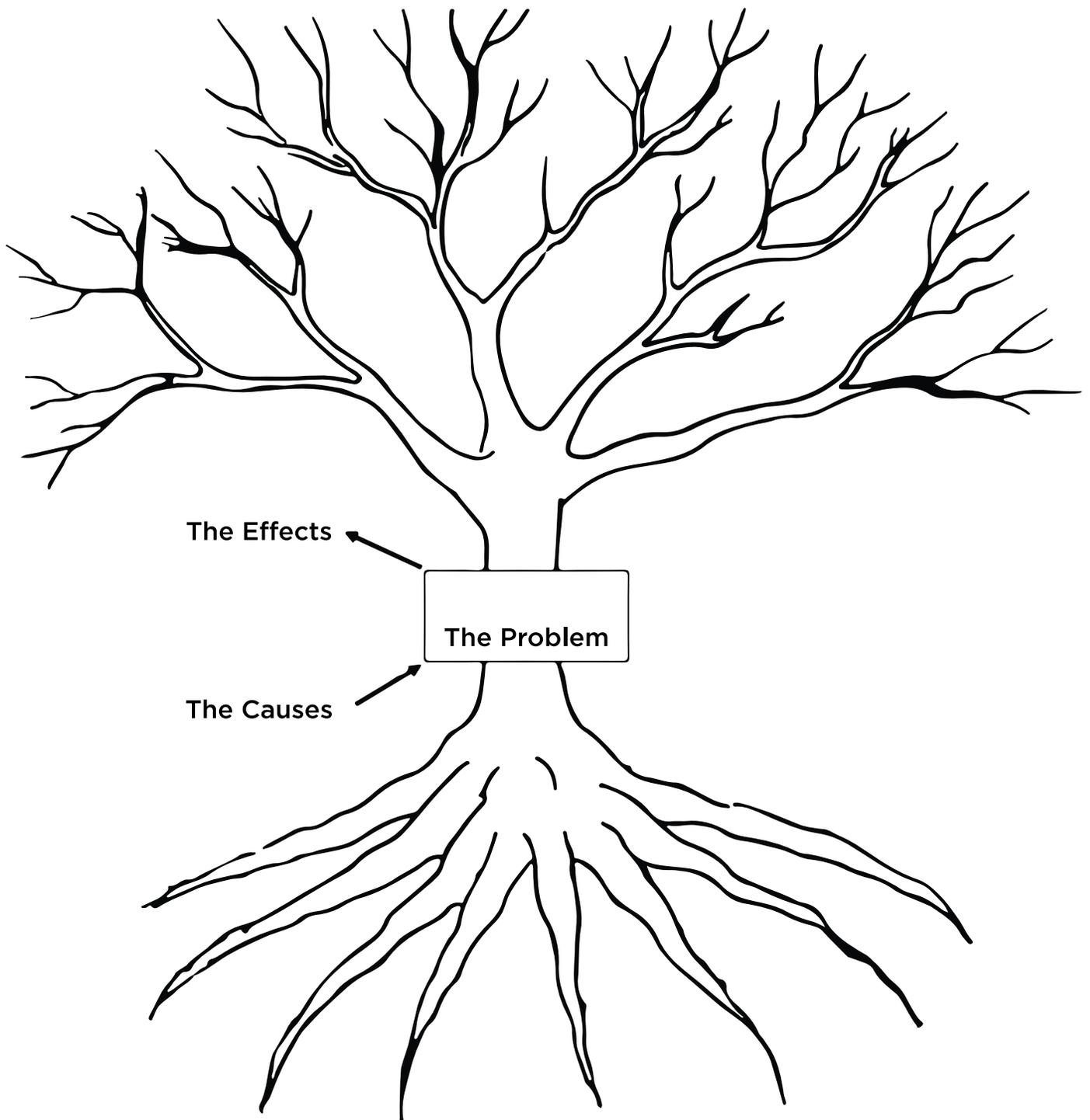
Root-Cause Analysis Worksheet

The Root-Cause Analysis Worksheet is designed to help you think past surface-level project ideas and to start thinking about the core issues that you want your project to address. This toolkit contains two worksheets for you to fill out: one for the problem and one for the solution.

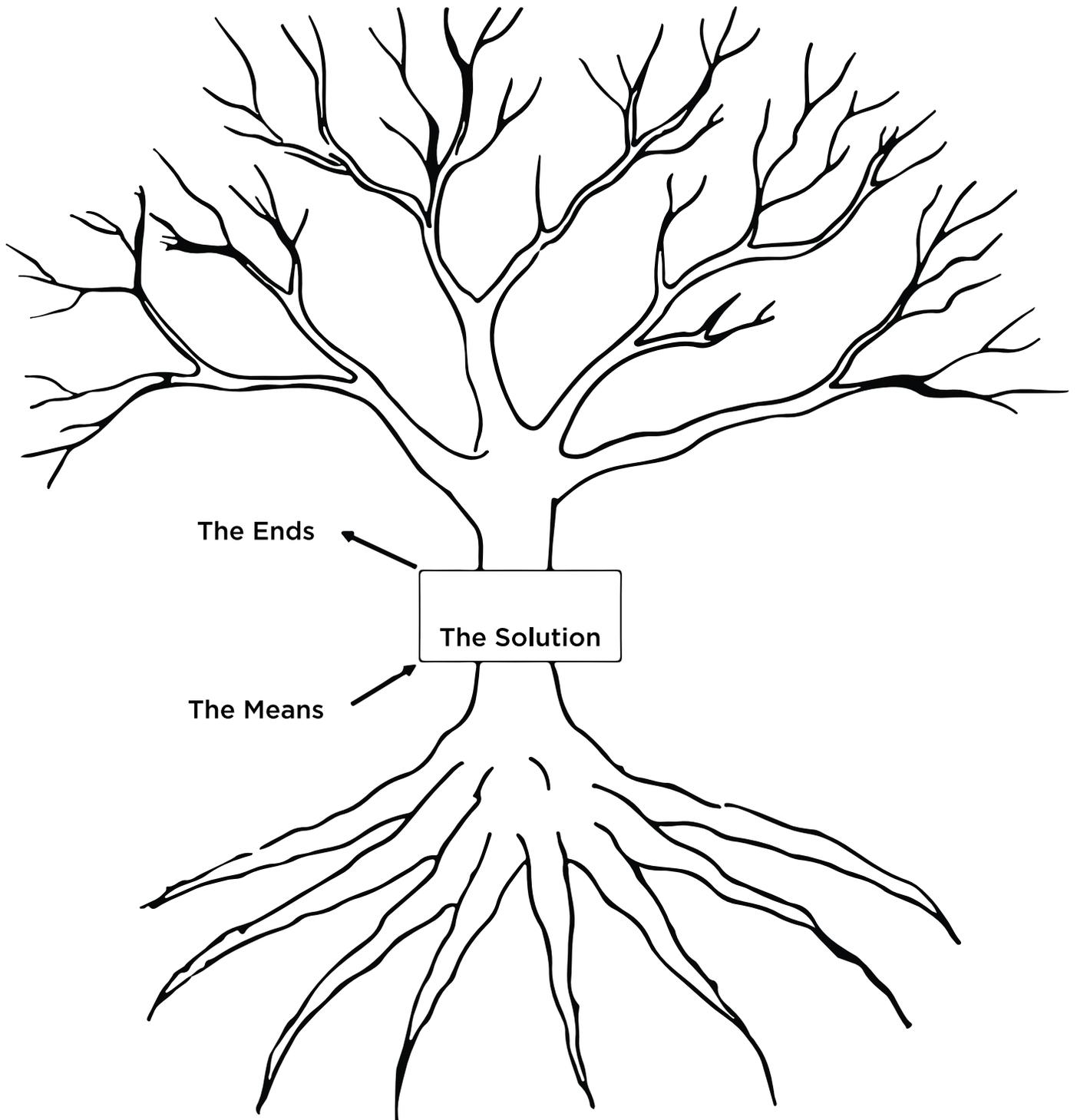
1. Read through the five factors of the Achievement Gap.
2. Start with the Problem Tree and write the problem you want to address in the center of the tree. For Lead Activists, this problem might be “education inequity in my school/district.”
 - Example: “The landfill is too full.”
3. Move up to the branches of the tree. Ask yourself why the problem is something you want to change. What are the effects of the problem? **Be thorough and specific.**
 - Example: Effects of the landfill being too full...
 - » The trash smells and looks bad.
 - » The land the landfill is on is unusable.
 - » Local air and water is being polluted.
 - » The quality of life is declining within the community.
 - » Cost of trash disposal services is rising.
 - » The cost of living in the community is rising.
4. Move down to the roots of the tree and ask yourself what is causing the problem and why. Again, **be thorough and specific.** Keep searching for the why.
 - Example: Causes of landfill being too full...
 - » Lack of recycling in community.
 - » Lack of education about recycling.
 - » Lack of effort or incentive to recycle.
 - » Lack of access to recycle bins.
 - » Lack of funding from city government.
5. Continue to the Solution Tree, and start at the branches. Fill in things that you would like to see happen from your project. Many of the branches from the Problem Tree can be spun into a positive. Ask yourself what your community should look like.
 - Example: Effects of project addressing landfill being too full...
 - » Land is utilized to maximum potential.
 - » Air and water quality is improved.
 - » Quality of life has risen.
 - » Trash disposal services drop.
 - » Cost of living drops.
 - » Community as a whole improves.
6. Move to the roots of the Solution Tree and start writing your ideas for how to reach the end. These should be actionable items that address all causes you have already found in your Problem Tree. Keep asking yourself how you will get there.
 - Example: The means to reverse the negative effect of the landfill...
 - » Implementing the “Reduce, Reuse, Recycle” awareness campaign within local community organizations and schools.
 - » Adding access to recycle bins.
 - » Applying for county and federal grants.
 - » Implementing energy efficient appliances.
 - » Lobbying for subsidies for energy efficient products.

7. Finally, if you have a name for your project, label the Solution Tree with it. It is important to remember that **the best solutions are complex**. An ideal project looks at the issue holistically and develops actionable items to reverse the many causes (both specific and systemic) of that issue.
8. Upload your problem and solution worksheets to your project page in the GSN!

The Problem Tree



The Solution Tree



Transforming Community Needs Into Service-Learning Projects

After participants have identified genuine needs in their community, the next step is to consider how they can address that need through a service project, and how they can connect that project to their overall learning goals. Participants are guided in this process by the knowledge of the learning goals they must achieve and the facilitation of a brainstorming and decision-making process. The chart below gives some examples of how needs can be transformed into projects with both a service and a learning component.

Community Need	How It Was Identified	Service Connected to Learning Goal	Learning
Local hospitals experience a shortage of blood.	Story in the local news.	Students help run blood drives for the Red Cross, and create educational materials and presentations for peers, family, and community members on the importance of blood donation.	Biology of blood matching, persuasive writing and speaking, organizational skills.
Bridging the age divide between older students and younger students in an elementary school.	Classroom discussion on community.	Sixth-graders collect information about younger students through interviews and create “buddy books” to foster positive relationships between the grades.	Writing and conducting interviews, working on collaborative writing projects, improving interpersonal skills.
Contemporary community lacks awareness of the stories of local veterans who served in conflicts.	Local historical society presented need and asked students for assistance.	Eighth-graders visit with local members of the American Legion and gather information about serving the country in times of war. Students create documentaries about soldiers’ lives that are archived at the historical society.	War and other armed conflicts in U.S. history, connecting individual stories of service to larger historical events, conducting interviews, creating narratives that combine historical information and personal stories.
Community is diversifying and lacks understanding of new cultural and ethnic groups.	News article on the increase of immigration and personal stories of conflict in the community.	Seventh-grade students study immigration in geography class, compare Census statistics with a survey of their community, and involve community partners in creating a showcase of ethnic and cultural groups.	Students address geography and social studies standards, learning about the immigrant groups in their community and the cultural traditions.
Voter registration is low.	Statistics released from the Secretary of State’s office and classroom discussion.	After learning about voting trends and patterns in civics class, high school students design a voter registration drive. Students plan the campaign and partner with the League of Women Voters to increase awareness about upcoming elections.	Understanding the elements of the election process, persuasive writing and speaking, cooperative learning and collaboration skills.

Creating a Budget

This worksheet will help you create a budget for your service-learning project. Keep in mind that each service-learning project is unique when it comes to its own needs and expenses; do not feel that your project has to incorporate all the resources suggested for consideration.

Start by answering these questions.

1. What resources do you need for this project? Consider space, supplies, recruitment materials, etc., and list them here.

2. What resources do you already have for the project?

Demonstration Examples

Demonstrating your work is an important component of service-learning. It will help you solidify your learning, understand the importance of your contribution, and become further engaged and invested in your community. It is also an opportunity for you, your peers, your adult mentors, and other community partners to celebrate your joint work.

The possibilities for demonstrating your work are endless! But in case you're wondering what you could do, here are some ideas to get you started. Feel free to use these or add your own.

- Public service announcements
- Skits
- Videos
- Multimedia presentations of data and images
- Poster board displays showing the evolution of the project
- Posters or ads designed to raise awareness
- Murals
- Books, articles, or personal essays
- Spoken word performance
- Songs, raps, or other musical interpretations
- Persuasive speaking
- Educational materials
- Fact sheets on the issues
- Websites or social media campaigns dedicated to the issue
- Guest appearances on local media
- Poetry
- Creating logos or other images to display on shirts, water bottles, hats, etc.
- Organizing a petition
- Creating a proclamation or declaration
- Holding an information fair
- Inviting students and community members to hold a conference

Project Timeline

Provide a description of the activities during each quarter of your service-learning project. Activities may include planning meetings, developing materials you will use in your project, marketing or advertising an event or educational information, presenting an event or celebration, and more.

Quarter 1 Activities and Deadlines

Date(s):	
Date(s):	
Date(s):	
Date(s):	

Quarter 2 Activities and Deadlines

Date(s):	
Date(s):	
Date(s):	
Date(s):	

Quarter 3 Activities and Deadlines

Date(s):

Date(s):

Date(s):

Date(s):

Quarter 4 Activities and Deadlines

Date(s):

Date(s):

Date(s):

Date(s):