

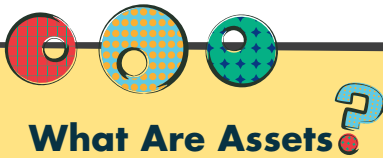


# Ideas for Educators

42 Ready-to-Use Newsletters for School Success

## 9. SERVICE TO OTHERS

Young person serves in the community one hour or more per week.



### What Are Assets?

Assets are 40 values, experiences, and qualities that help kids succeed.

**Service to others** is one of four empowerment assets.

48% of youth surveyed have this asset in their lives.\*

\*Based on Search Institute surveys of 148,189 6th- to 12th-grade youth throughout the United States in 2003.

- Research and create service-learning programs in classrooms.
- Build community service into graduation requirements.
- Link up with other schools in the district to have wider service opportunities available.
- Be an example of service to others.

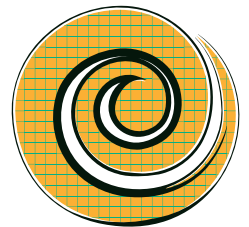
### The Worth of Responsibility

Students can all too easily float through their schools or the larger community and take minimal interest in their surroundings if those surroundings are created and maintained entirely by adults.

But if we offer even the most simple of ways for students to be responsible for their community, suddenly they are inquisitive and opinionated.

There is a wealth of opportunities we can give to our students when it comes to helping the various communities they're a part of. Keeping in mind what is age appropriate, we can draw even our youngest citizens into active service by:

- Being creative in our definition of community.
- Making service a part of every discipline.
- Providing service opportunities that draw adults and youth together.
- Working with real needs in real situations.



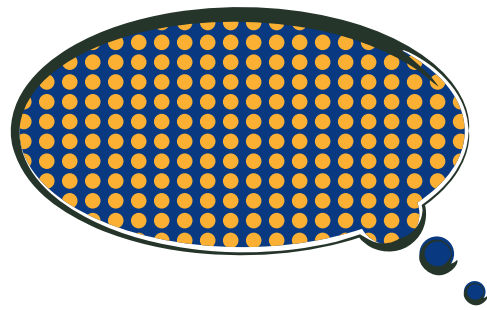
Draw on strengths: history students can maintain community monuments, art students can design and create public art works, English students can do literacy programs, and everyone can participate in making the school community a stronger, sounder place for learning. Try not to be too literal in your definition of community service; the more creative you are, the more exciting the opportunities can be.

## What Teachers Do Best

Service to others is one of the primary ways we connect to the world around us. Service takes us out of the familiar and comfortable and instead grounds us in something deeper and more meaningful. Is it any wonder that service-learning is such a hot topic as we think about how to engage our students?

For youth, this asset means giving them opportunities to actively serve others. That means they learn the value of sharing their talents, improving others, and developing their sense of connection to other people. Sound familiar? This asset sounds like the job description for someone involved in education. “Service to others” is your job.

As you reflect on service in your own life, explore how you can serve those who are outside



your work environment. Better yet, use service as a doubly powerful part of your professional life: partner with your colleagues and students in a service project. Not only will you benefit others in your service, but you’ll also foster the relationships that connect you in meaningful ways to the people in your life.