Youth Voice Facilitator's Guide

Considerations-

Facilitating is different than teaching--Rather than giving instruction to the group, the facilitator asks key questions to create a dialogue among the students.

It takes time and practice-As you move through this process, it will get easier. Students as well as the facilitator will get more comfortable with this change.

Know your group of children- Some children will be more vocal, others will be shy, some will act bored and uninterested. A seasoned facilitator will be sure to get input from all the students.

You must create a safe place for children to share ideas Consider that calling on a shy student may only embarrass them, for example. Prepare other ways to get input from them like breaking them into smaller groups. Give disengaged students a specific task or job. Or remind vocal students to give others a chance.

Divide and conquer: Some children are more likely to share their thoughts when in a smaller group or in a pair. You can also assign each group a specific task based on interest.

Let them present their ideas to the larger group. Having them record their ideas on large flip chart paper and present them to the larger class makes it fun. It also reinforces literacy skills and promotes public speaking. In addition, it provides the remaining class a chance to be respectful and listen to others.

There are no bad ideas- This can be hard for some facilitators. Students may come up with an idea that is not practical or financially possible. Instead of just saying no, process out the idea with the students. For example, say they want to go to another country. Have them research how much that would cost and brainstorm how they would raise those funds.

Know how you will make decisions- Will you take a vote? If so, will it be a show of hands, a written ballot, a silent vote. Consider those children who will only vote what their friends vote or what they think others want. You can also use different techniques to narrow the options such voting on their top three choices using stickers, etc.

Be prepared to follow through.   The worst thing you could do is ask the students what they think and then completely disregard their ideas.   Yet helping them take their ideas to the next level will take time and effort. Be sure to factor the necessary planning time into your schedule

Review planning materials before you start and decide what where you are in the process and develop your questions for the session. Remember it is the process not the product.

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Getting Started

Before you meet with your group, review your planning materials and decide what information you need to obtain. It may take a few sessions for you to solicit input and come to a decision on the direction that your project will take. Then for best practice review the Service Learning Standards. How will you include all the components? Service Learning Standards and an example planning sheet can be found in the resource section of the website.

Brainstorming Ideas-Consider asking these questions to get started-

What is important to you?

Why is this important to you?

What do you hope to accomplish?

How will you make this happen?

What will be the challenges?

What is the Budget? Do you need to raise money? Will you raise money for others?

If so, how will you raise the money?

Are you working with a community partner? If so who?

Is there a need to leave the program/school? If so, how will you arrange for transportation?

What needs to be done each week to reach your goal?

Who is responsible for what?

Are there any other details you need to consider?

How will you monitor your progress?

What will you do to celebrate your success/review lessons learned?

Example Planning Sheet

Dates of Sessions: _____

Name of Instructor/Facilitator _____

Name of Club/Activity: _____

Estimated number of students participating_____

Grade Level of Students: _____   Days/Hours of Activities- _____

Supplies Needed and Estimated Costs: _____

Potential Field Trip: _____Transportation Needed? _____ Estimated Costs: _____

How many times will the group meet _____

Community Partners _____

Description:

_____
_____
_____

Program Goals
- _____
- _____
- _____

Related Curriculum Areas
- _____
- _____
- _____

Global Competencies
- _____
- _____
- _____

Reflection Activity_____

Weekly Task List

Week _____

Goals for Week
_____
_____
_____
_____

Supplies Needed
_____
_____
_____
_____

Space Needed (kitchen area, art room, large gym)

_____

Prep Needed
_____
_____
_____
_____

Who will be responsible for what?

_____
_____
_____
_____

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Service-Learning is...
a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities."

Service Learning Standards

- **Meaningful Service**
- **Link to Curriculum**
- **Reflection**
- **Diversity**
- **Youth Voice**
- **Partnerships**
- **Progress Monitoring**
- **Duration and Intensity**

For more information on Service Learning visit- www.servicelearning.org

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