

LEARNING THROUGH ASSISTING

**Rhode Island Developmental Disabilities Council
Model Service Learning Project**

UNIT ONE:

Introducing *Learning Through Assisting* To Students

Introducing *Learning Through Assisting* To Students

TITLE: An Invitation to Serve: Introducing *Learning Through Assisting* to Students

ACADEMIC AREA(S):

1. Civic education
2. Diversity
3. Community awareness
4. Character education
5. Responsibility.

KEY WORDS: Service, community, experiential learning

TARGET AUDIENCE: Any age student

AT THE COMPLETION OF THIS UNIT, THE PARTICIPANT WILL BE ABLE TO:

1. Define developmental disability in general terms.
2. Explain how service or experiential learning is different from conventional learning, and how it is different from community service.
3. List and give examples of the elements of a service learning project:
 - a. *Preparation:* Student and agency needs assessment
Creating a proposal, securing administration support
Core learning
 - b. *Action:* Service schedules and commitments
 - c. *Reflection:* Options, rubrics for success and portfolio assessment
 - d. *Celebration:* Options and suggestions, goal setting

SUPPLIED MATERIALS:


1. Outline: Introducing *Learning Through Assisting*
2. PowerPoint: *Learning Through Assisting* Project Overview (reference website for current PPT)
3. Proposal: Developmental Disabilities Service Learning
4. Chart: Curricular Connections
5. Essay: Student Sample

OTHER RESOURCES:

- National Service Learning Clearinghouse. www.servicelearning.org. Learn and Serve America, Corporation for National and Community Service, May 3, 2005.
- Kaye, Cathryn Berger. *The Complete Guide to Service Learning*. Minneapolis, MN: Free Spirit Publishing, 2004.
- Fresher-Samways, Kathleen. www.learningthroughassisting.org. May 3, 2005. R.I. Developmental Disabilities Council.

OUTLINE: Introducing *Learning Through Assisting*


TIME	ACTIVITY
15 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review of service learning using textbook as a basis
15 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Get a read on the class for where they are with understanding the <u>kinds</u> of projects possible ▪ Give examples from NSLC website
15 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review the process: ▪ Needs assessment for both groups – analyze from examples above <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ (A) group ○ (B) group ▪ Match with academic curriculum objectives – What do they understand about the curricular objectives? ▪ Choose objectives on which to work ▪ Develop strategy for addressing objectives ▪ Plan implementation ▪ Implement ▪ Journaling and reflective writing - Portfolios ▪ Assess success (rubrics) ▪ Celebrate the product
30 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Present RIDDC Model - PPT
30 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Brainstorm the need this class has for service learning curriculum component ▪ What do students see as possibilities in this model that were NOT addressed in the last session? ▪ What of students' own needs may be met? ▪ What community need(s) may be met? ▪ What small “bites” are they willing to undertake?



Learning Through Assisting

A Service Learning Model from the Rhode Island Developmental Disabilities Council

Project of National Significance
Federal Administration on Developmental Disabilities



Learning Through Assisting

Objectives:

1. Understand service learning
2. Know about Learning Through Assisting
3. Be able to tell your program about LTA
4. Know how to start this project in your state

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Individual and Family Advocacy Committee

Service Learning objective background:

- Current HS students are in a 'contact gap' with relation to developmental disability
- Service learning is not well understood, but could have possibilities
- Opportunities to address the 'gap' seemed within reach

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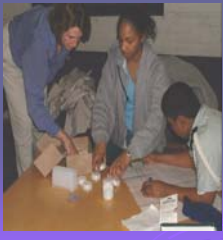
The Institute for Quality of Life

IQoL is an independent consultancy with a mission of research, advocacy and education for, by, and about people with disability.

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The Model

Hope High School – JROTC Cadets



Linked with Family Service for training Cadets and service opportunities with children with DD.



A Word About Army JROTC

Two-tiered mission

- ❖ High school completion
- ❖ Leadership development
- ❖ Requires service learning

Definition of Service Learning

A method students use to learn and develop through thoughtfully organized service



Definition of Service Learning

Student needs assessment.

 Personal growth



 Academic success

Definition of Service Learning

 Conducted in and meets community needs

Definition of Service Learning

- Conducted in and meets community needs
- Coordinated with an institution of higher education and community agencies or services

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Definition of Service Learning

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- Integrated into and enhances academic curriculum

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- Conducted in and meets a community need
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- Helps foster civic responsibility

Definition of Service Learning

- ☛ Conducted in and meets a community need
- ☛ Coordinated with an institution of higher education and community agencies or services
- ☛ Integrated into and enhances academic curriculum
- ☛ Helps foster civic responsibility
- ☛ Includes structured time for reflection

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Service Learning Assessment



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Learning Through Assisting

- ☛ Provides experiential learning opportunity for high school students linked with service agencies.
- ☛ Learn about developmental disabilities
- ☛ Interact with youngsters with developmental disabilities
- ☛ Positively influence attitudes and behaviors on integration and full inclusion

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Objective Benefits The Children



Children with developmental disabilities:

- 👉 Receive assistance participating in community-based activities
- 👉 Gain advocates in community through self-promotion
- 👉 Grow in the community

Objective Benefits The Students



High school students

- 👉 Gain knowledge in service environment
- 👉 Receive academic credits for alternative learning
- 👉 Find out about themselves
- 👉 Develop inclusive attitudes

Service

Eight weeks of two-hour service blocks

- 👉 Early intervention pool program
- 👉 Hospital waiting room
- 👉 Speech therapist aide
- 👉 Child care 1:1 support



- 👉 Therapeutic play
- 👉 Charter school swim program



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Getting Started in Your Community

- 👉 Contact local DD Council to explore resources and/or introduce your interest (www.nacdd.org)
- 👉 Contact state Department of Education, Service Learning resource person
- 👉 See what your Department of Special Education is doing for alternative learning
- 👉 Contact state community service agencies

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Make a Difference in Your Community




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Get Started in Your Community

Visit:

www.learningthroughassisting.org

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PROPOSAL: Proposing a *Learning Through Assisting* Project

STUDENT NAMES: High school youth

TEACHER: TBA

SCHOOL: TBA

PROJECT NAME: *Learning Through Assisting*. This is a model of the RI Developmental Disabilities Council and a Project of National Significance of the Federal Administration for Developmental Disabilities. It promotes knowledge about developmental disability and community inclusion for children with developmental disability.

NEED – Why this plan is needed: Present high school students have not grown up with inclusion classrooms. They are not aware of the inclusive potential for persons with disability, yet they are the people who will soon be voters, neighbors, and parents in our communities. They are also considering college study, and are not aware of career options open to them that are in high demand to staff inclusion classrooms. Young children in community programs are in need of trained young people who can assist them in participating in their activities. They are able to self-advocate by developing relationships with young people, but need the occasion to interact.

PURPOSE – How this plan will help: This plan matches high school students with community programs with the short term goal of increasing the number of participation opportunities available to children in those programs. In the long run it exposes teens to child development information that will assist them in their own parenting and family relationships, reveals career options, and allows the youngsters the opportunity to self-advocate as they relate to students and demonstrate that they are not pitiable, but much like everyone else.

PARTICIPATION - Who will help; what will they do?

Students: Learn about child development and provide service to youngsters with developmental disability in community programs.

Teachers: Will direct and support research and new/reviewed learning, facilitate group process, coordinate with community partners for technical concerns (scheduling, etc)

Other adults: Will act as resource information and technical assist, provide some content and some coordination support as needed.

Organizations or groups: Community organizations may act as sites for outreach, may contribute expert content or student mentoring.

OUTCOMES - What we expect will happen as a result of our work:

1. High school youth will learn about child development.
2. High school youth will provide service to children in the community.
3. High school youth will learn about careers in special education and allied health.
4. Children with disability will have increased participation in community programs (more 1:1).
5. Children with disability will self-advocate, demonstrating that they are not sick and pitiable, but capable and strong, with ability to make valuable contribution to the community.

How will we check our outcomes? – What evidence will we collect and how will we use it?

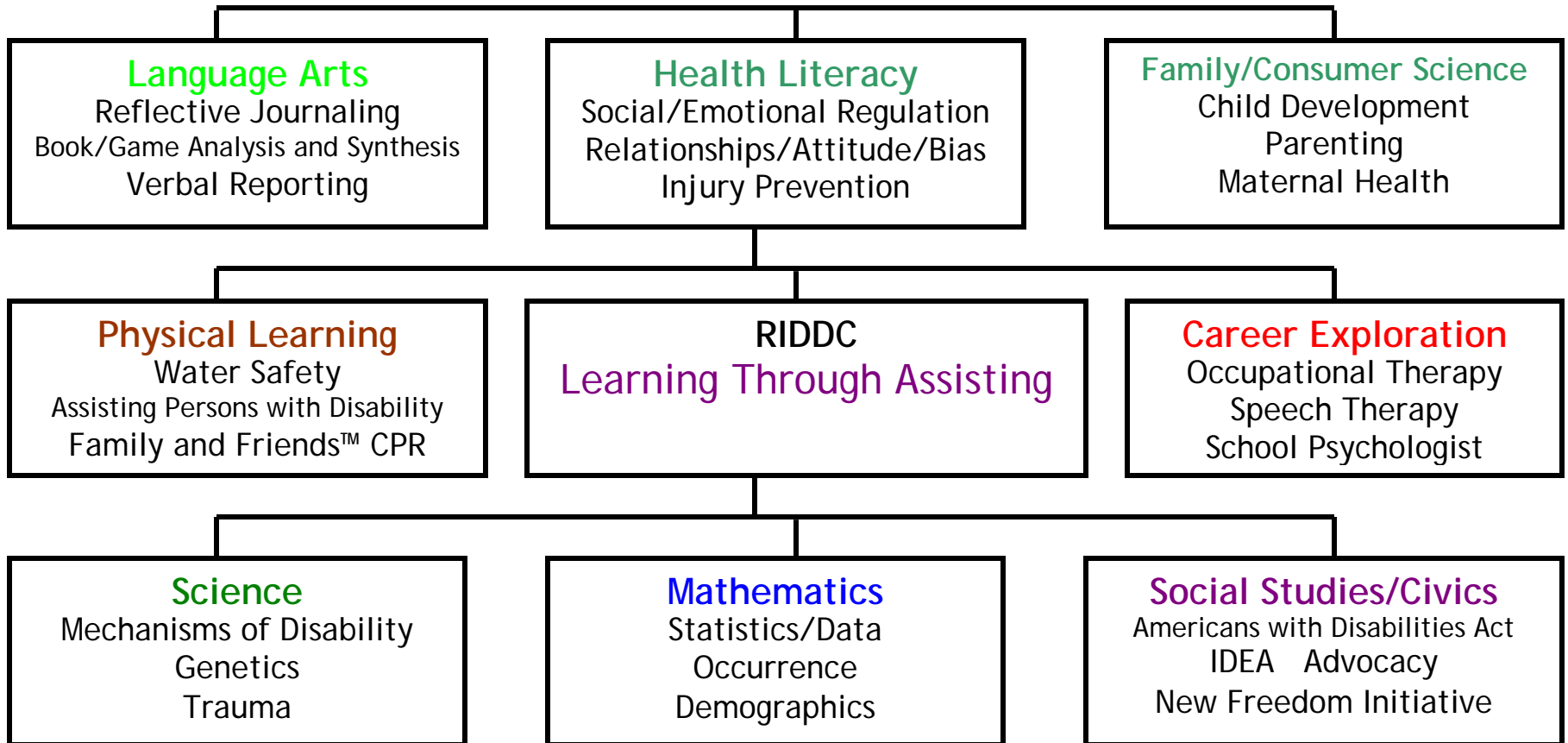
1. Pre- and post series evaluations for attitude change
2. Portfolio assessment of activities and service logs
3. Individuals will determine how/where to have an impact on the school and nearby geographic communities respectively. Agency feedback.

RESOURCES – What we need to get the job done.

1. Institutional support for service. Scheduling that is compatible with out-of-school placements, and/or after-school planning for younger children (older teens often work after school).
2. Professional staff in the school system: PT, OT, Speech Therapist, Psychologist to present child development modules and to follow up on professional guidance
3. Community resources to supply swim (or pet, or books and games), and CPR modules
4. Curriculum resources (manual), prepared power point presentations, book and game-making supplies
5. Administrative support and recognition, press access for visibility, bus passes or transportation as needed

CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS

Rhode Island Developmental Disabilities Council/
 JROTC Blue Wave Battalion, Hope High School
 Service Learning Model Project



ESSAY: Student Sample

RIDDC/JROTC - SERVICE LEARNING PROJECT PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT/ESSAY

There are many developmental disorders in the world... (for examples) There is ADD, ADHD, frontal lobe disorder, cerebral palsy, blindness, Down Syndrome; ...The one I know a little bit about is frontal lobe disorder. I know about it because a (fellow) explained to me what happened when he was in a car accident. He told me it affects his life in general and the people around him. He couldn't remember anything that happened to him after the accident, and he (Now) has a problem when he speaks because he says anything that comes to mind.

Three meaningful functions (affected for him) are: He can't control what he says, meaning sometimes he would say things that would hurt his family and friends and even to offend the opposite sex? (sic); He can't remember anything he has to do. They have to have notes around so he can remember what he has to do...He writes notes for the work he has to do at home, work or even school. Another effect is that he can't be organized. He always has a mess around his house and his job and it is hard for him to keep up with the cleaning. He has other people to keep him organized. The last effect I know about is that he can't do more than one activity at once because his brain is not that fast anymore like it is supposed to be.

I helped him until he started to remember a little bit. He started to remember 6 to 7 names and what happened to him. We helped him by showing him how to hold back with "wrongful"(ed.) words that will hurt someone he cares for. When I helped him I finally believed I did do something for someone beside myself. I helped him by being his friend and showing him I cared about him. I would be his long-term friend and he would feel that (he) has someone who cares for him.

My perceptions and feelings have changed in a big way (as a result of knowing this person), and for the best for me. I first thought that (a person with) frontal lobe disorder was just a person that was slow and dumb. But now I know why they are different and why they want to feel just like we do. They want people to treat them like a human being. I believe now I would respect anyone with a disorder because now I know that it is wrong to judge a person with a disorder without knowing him or her from the inside. (Now) I would change by helping them in any way I can. I would give them the chance to feel like a real person and show them that they are equal to me and they can live like a normal person when they are with me.

Students who get to know someone with a disability will get a changed point of view, and the student would be a better person that they were before, with a better feeling for themselves and somebody else.

The first academic area where we worked was psychology because we sat with him and helped him show us what things bothered him ...We helped him with trying to slow down the

things coming out of his mouth that would hurt his family. He helped me change the way I act with people with (disabilities) and other people as well...the second (“academic” area we worked on) was responsibility because he relies on us to help him learn new things like we helped him learn words he didn’t know or remember. He also gave me a chance to make him smile. It was a great responsibility to keep (him) happy and make him feel like he is a real person.

The way I feel about all this is like something I have never felt before. I never knew what it was like to help (anyone) but myself and now I know and feel it was all for the best and it was a good cause. So when people ask me what it is like working with someone with a disorder I am going to tell them “it’s like working with a normal person”. So when they ask me why I did this I will also tell them because everyone always needs someone to be a friend. So now I am going to leave this program and school with a new way of looking at things and a new way of life. I am proud to be in a program like this to learn how to have a new way to look at things and how to treat people with proper respect.

Joshua Diaz

With Kathleen Fresher-Samways, ed.