



# DARE to EXCEL:

Creating home environments that help kids succeed at school

## What is Service Learning?

- Applying classroom knowledge to meaningful and needed services in the community.
- Opportunities for children to learn civic skills such as personal responsibility and positive social behavior.

## Research shows

- Students who engage in at least 1 hour of service learning activities per week are three and a half times more likely to have a desire to actively do school work and have a closer bond with their school as a whole.

## What you can do to help your child learn through service learning:

- Be a good example. Check with your child's school to find volunteer opportunities for parents.
- Talk with your children about the importance of being involved. Your actions and beliefs affect how children think and feel about other people.

Social group membership promotes tolerance and acceptance of different groups of people.

## PROVEN PARENTING PRACTICES

**Routines at home help kids learn**

**Learning at home helps kids learn at school**

**Setting limits with love helps kids learn at school**

**Good nutrition helps kids learn**

**Physical activity helps kids learn**

**Sleep helps kids learn**

**Community programs help kids learn at school**



## Family Friendly *VOLUNTEERING IDEAS*

- Go out and see if any of your neighbors need help shoveling snow, cleaning their house, or taking care of their animals.
- Help serve food at a local shelter with your children.
- Take time to play games or read books with the elderly.
- Go with your children around your neighborhood and pick up litter to help keep your community clean.
- Make cards or care packages to send overseas to U.S. Soldiers. If you don't know someone personally, check with friends or coworkers for addresses of soldiers.
- Ask your school if there is anything that parents or children can do to help out.



## *IMPACT OF SERVICE LEARNING IN YOUR COMMUNITY*

The experience of service learning for young people helps them begin to see the impact that they can create in their community and how much those activities mean to others. Service learning helps address certain needs in the community to make it a better place for everyone to live. Children also can start to learn that they, as individuals, can make a difference!

### **Benefits for children involved in service learning opportunities in their school:**

- Promotes healthy youth and adult partnerships.
- Encourages a sense of ownership and self-esteem.
- Lowers risky and/or problem behavior.
- Improves students' self-concept.
- Improves test scores and overall academic achievement.
- Develops leadership skills and confidence.



### **Community Improvement through SERVICE LEARNING**

Service learning provides children with the opportunity to have positive interactions with adults, which can help them feel more connected to their school and community and enhance their concern for others.

Parental attitude toward working with or helping others in the community guides a child's behavior (positively or negatively).

On their own, children may or may not have the motivation to do activities that help others. However, with the aid and support of parents and other adults, children can build self-esteem, a sense of accomplishment, and connectedness to those around them.

Children who have the chance to learn responsibility through helping others are more likely to actively work to improve their community as adults.

## **RESOURCES AND INFORMATION**

### **Operation Military Kids**

An organization for children who have deployed family members in the military. There are a number of ways that you can offer aid and support to these families.  
**[www.operationmilitarykids.org](http://www.operationmilitarykids.org)**

### **Reach Out Iowa**

Opportunities for young people ages 12 to 17 to become involved in service learning activities throughout Iowa.  
**<http://iowa4hservicelearning.ning.com>**

### **Learn and Serve America**

Children of all ages have the ability to make a difference in their community. Promotes service learning as a way of combining community service projects with classroom learning.  
**[www.servicelearning.org/ resources-parents-how-get-your-child-started-service-learning](http://www.servicelearning.org/resources-parents-how-get-your-child-started-service-learning)**