

Guidelines for SSU Service Projects

1. **Remember you represent SSU!!** As an SSU student, you represent the University to the organizations and individuals you interact with. Remember to be courteous and mature at all times especially when working with children because they look to you as role models. Please remember that young children have a much wider view of what a curse is, so watch your language. Also, make sure you dress appropriately for the location you are going into. What is ok on a college campus is not always appropriate elsewhere. Your presence in the community is vital to determining the respectability of SSU's efforts in the community, as well as the quality of your own experience.
2. **Realize you are stepping into an entire community when you serve!** As a service-learner you are expected to know the community you will be working with. You must recognize that you are not just walking into a classroom when you do your service-learning. You must consider everything that follows you and everything that follows the students into that classroom. There are many ways to accomplish this task:
 - Be perceptive
 - Attend and be attentive to all training sessions
 - Talk to people, including those in the community as well as other SSU students and volunteers
 - Visit the library
 - Learn the history of the site and the cause you are working in
 - Check out www.sonoma.edu/cce
 - Travel around the community
3. **All communities are different!!!** It is important to learn about the community and the people in it, before making assumptions. Make an effort to learn about the existing strengths of the community as well as the needs. With these issues come very strong people and communities with valuable commitments, traditions, values and pride. In addition, the problem may be deeper and more complex than you realize, and you may not get the whole story. This community may be very different than the one you come from, but it is important not to assume a problem before you know all the information, or because things are not done the way you are used to.
4. **Be Consistent and Flexible!** Things will never go exactly how you plan in a volunteer situation. Try to be patient, helpful, accepting, and versatile to what needs to be done. Remember that people are counting on you to be there; not only volunteers, but people in the community as well. This will greatly help the project to run smoothly and as planned.
5. **Recognize your boundaries!** If you find yourself in an uncomfortable or difficult situation, simply excuse yourself and find someone who has the expertise to deal with such a problem. If you are volunteering and feel more needs to be done for this child or situation, approach your instructor or mentor with ideas to institute a program to deal with that issue instead of trying to do it individually. You can actually sometimes do more harm than good. If the idea is a good one, instituting a program insures that all members of the community are provided that opportunity and that the project will last beyond your time in the institution.
6. **Stay involved!** If you enjoyed your project and want to stay involved, or want to try something different, contact JUMP (Location : Student Union, Phone : 707.664.4277, Email : jump@sonoma.edu)
7. **Share your experiences!!** Make sure you tell your friends and get them involved too!!