

CBO Resource Reviews

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There are many resources related to service-learning, which although not written for community based organizations (CBOs), may be of use as community based organizations seek to implement service-learning programs. Below are some resources, with explanations of how they might be useful to CBOs.

Hans Bernard, [The Power of an Untapped Resource: Exploring Youth Representation on Your Board or Committee](#), Association of Alaska School Boards, 2001.

This is a good and brief article that can help CBOs thinking about adding youth representation to their boards. The introduction lays out some benefits to engaging youth and lays the foundation for doing so effectively. The remainder of this 14-page booklet includes simple steps and checklists (formatted in bullets) for designing roles, recruiting, and training youth. The piece ends with a nice letter to youth that could be used as part of a welcome or orientation of a new young board member. This resource is available free of charge at www.aasb.org/PDFs/HansB_bklt.pdf

Rob Shumer, [Shumer's Self-Assessment For Service-Learning](#), Center for Experiential and Service-Learning, 2000.

This tool was designed to guide program staff through a reflection process that would identify areas of strength, as well as areas for improvement. Although the tools are designed primarily for school-based service-learning, community-based organizations engaged in service-learning on their own can still benefit from the tool. If you are not doing school-based service-learning, think in terms of your organization instead of a school and in terms of staff and other stakeholders, instead of teachers, administrators, and parents. The tool is broken into two parts an assessment and an in-depth analysis. This allows you to focus on a few key areas in-depth without spending a lot of time analyzing areas of strength or low priority. This analysis is intended to help guide your discussions with new and old service-learning partners, mobilize publicity and support for your program, and improve the overall quality of your program. At the end of the process there is a form to help develop and monitor an action plan based on the results of the assessment. This resource is available free of charge at: <http://www.servicelearning.org/filemanager/download/3/>

Tony Ganger, The YMCA Service-Learning Guide: A Tool for Enriching the Member, the Participant, the YMCA, and the Community, YMCA of the USA, 2000.

Although the title might make you think this is a resource only for YMCAs, this guide is valuable to any organization interested in community-based service-learning. The guide outlines three main components of the service-learning process: establishing learning objectives that are both broad and specific, performing meaningful service, and reflecting upon the experience so participants have a "snapshot" of what they have done. As you read through the guide Ganger provides real life examples and ideas (mostly from YMCAs) that make the concepts of the three components easy to understand. Additionally, the guide includes assessment tools to explore project quality and sustainability, and other tips and resources related to service-learning. There is a separate section on "Service-Learning YMCAs" which is the only section exclusively focused on YMCAs. However, this section as well as the rest of the publication can provide insight into the value of YMCAs (nice information if you are looking to partner with your local YMCA).

Millbrey McLaughlin, Community Counts: How Youth Organizations Matter to Youth Development. Public Education Network, (Spring 2000)

This publication highlights the fact that community based organizations (CBOs) can make a powerful difference in the lives of young people. This conclusion and others in the publication about the critical role CBOs play in the lives of young people is based on 10 years of research by the author.

The first section, "What Youth Achieve in Community Organizations," provides an overview of the need for CBOs to be involved in the lives of youth, as well as some statistics on the positive effects they have on youth. Of special interest to those engaged in CBO service-learning is the subsection on *Civic Responsibility*. This subsection highlights the ability of CBOs to impact young people's involvement in service and how this service involvement benefits both the community and young people. The second section "Effective Youth Organizations Are Intentional Learning Environments" highlights what those in community based service-learning already know; community organizations are educators. This section identifies four elements of intentional learning environments: youth-centered, knowledge-centered, assessment centered, and caring community. These terms and descriptions are similar to the things we already know about community-based service-learning, such as incorporating youth voice, setting learning objectives, completing

evaluations, and engaging in reflection. Finally the publication ends discussing ways the community can sustain strong youth organizations followed by recommendations for Community, Youth Organizations, Schools, Funders, and Policymakers. This resource is available free of charge at: <http://www.publiceducation.org/pdf/communitycounts.pdf>

Julie Reed and Christopher Koliba, Facilitating Reflection: A Manual for Leaders and Educators, 1995.

This manual provides valuable information on how to facilitate reflection in your program. After a brief overview of what reflection is, a significant amount of time is spent describing facilitation skills and group dynamics. This is helpful if you are inexperienced in that area, but the strength of this resource is its sample questions and activity ideas for reflection. The questions and ideas cover a spectrum of learning styles and group dynamics (on the website you can skip directly to sections IV and V). This resource is a great way to get new ideas and perspectives and start brainstorming your own creative ideas for reflection. This resource is available at http://www.uvm.edu/~dewey/reflection_manual/index.html