



Enhancing Community Engagement for Individuals with Disabilities

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Hello! I'm...

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The slide features decorative elements in the corners: a large flower and leaf branch in the top-left, a leafy branch in the top-right, and a leafy branch in the bottom-left. The background has soft, wavy shapes in shades of pink, blue, and white.

*“Go confidently in the direction of
your dreams, live the life you have
imagined.”*

— Thoreau



Measurable Outcomes:

1. Understanding the need

Participants will increase their understanding about the need to increase community engagement for transition aged youth with disabilities.

2. Current Strategies

Participants will examine the current strategies being utilized in their district regarding community involvement.

3. Positive Outcomes

Participants will understand that increased community involvement is directly correlated to improved transition outcomes.



Table of Contents

Section 1- Importance of Recreation and Leisure

Section 2- Finding a “Third Place”

Section 3- Service Learning



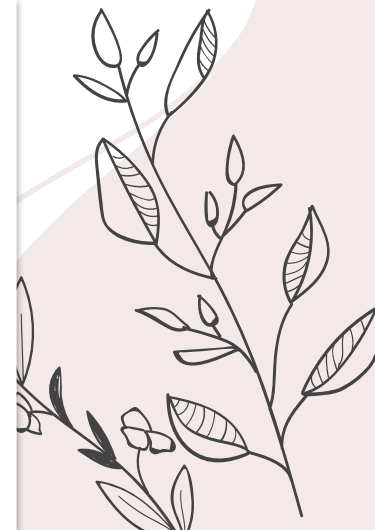


What brings you joy?





My Joy



Alumni Picnic



Many interns had jobs, but are not doing anything else.



Did you know?

People with disabilities are often not included in civic engagement practices and are often patronized or dismissed.



57%



20%



65%



34%

Of respondents reported experiencing barriers to civic engagement.

More than 20% of respondents identified inaccessibility as a barrier to civic engagement.

Of respondents strongly agreed that it is important to have leaders in government who identify as having disabilities.

Of respondents indicated that “othering” as it pertains to another aspect of their social identity made them feel unwelcome or invisible in civic engagement spaces.

<https://www.nationalcivicleague.org/making-civic-engagement-easier-for-people-with-disabilities/>

Community Life Engagement

How people access and participate in their communities outside of employment.

- volunteer work
- postsecondary, adult, or continuing education
- accessing community facilities such as a local library, gym, or recreation center
- participation in retirement or senior activities;
- anything else people with and without disabilities do in their free time





Part One

Community & Leisure Surveys





Universal Design for Learning

“When thinking about transition planning, teachers must not only consider the importance of employment activities and community living, but they also **must address the importance of recreation and leisure activities** in an individual’s life”.

– *Thoma, Bartholomew & Scott,
Universal Design for Transition*



Leisure Interest Assessment

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www.rossassessments.org

Descriptions & Purpose: Developing an understanding of leisure interests for each client, both current interests and potential new interests is an important aspect for creating programs and activities that clients will enjoy and participate in both during treatment and upon discharge from the facility. The purpose of this assessment is to determine those leisure interests and to also develop new interests that the client can enjoy during their treatment and also upon their discharge, ensuring a greater quality of life throughout their leisure lifestyle.

Instructions: The assessment is divided into two sections. For both sections, clients will have a pairing of pictures, or a pairing of words, where they will choose one from each pair. For Section 1, participants should place an "X" next to the activity that they would prefer to participate in, or the activity that they would most likely participate in if the choices are activities they have never engaged in. For Section 2, participants will choose the picture of the activity that they are most interested in or the activity that they prefer over the other pictured activity. Each picture will have a corresponding letter (A, B, C, D, E, F, or G). Whichever letter corresponds to the picture they chose, write it down next to the number that corresponds with the group. (Example: Group #1, picture C was chosen. Write: 1. C)

Remind your clients that there is no wrong or right answer. Have them answer based on their initial reaction towards the pairings of words or photos. Often, the longer it takes for clients to choose, the greater chance for skewed or inaccurate results. If both options are activities that they have never participated in, remind them to choose the activity that they would most likely participate in out of the two options.

Scoring: Once all questions have been answered, total up the number of times each letter was used for each section.

Example:

A	B	C	D	E	F	G
12	5	9	11	6	8	3

Authentic Assessment

- Formal and informal assessments
- Picture based if possible
- Guided reflection of activities and outings
- Encourage families to facilitate leisure activities

Preferences for Leisure Attributes (PLA) Assessment

Assessment ▾ Results Attribute Matrix About



Play Golf

Neither

Go Swimming

LEISURE / RECREATION	Level of Independence	Environments Performed
LIFE AWARE		
1. Demonstrates the ability to self-manage behavior during leisure events	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3
2. Demonstrates the ability to use technology	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3
3. Demonstrates the ability to use a phone independently (text and/or call)	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3
	Total ___ out of 15 = ___%	Total ___ out of 9 = ___%

RATING KEY

Level of Independence:

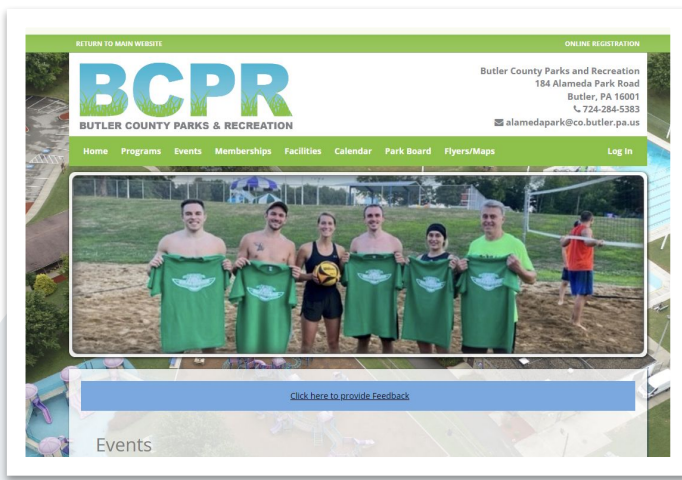
- 1 -- Does not do
- 2 -- Requires physical prompting to complete
- 3 -- Requires extensive prompting, verbal, model, pictorial or written
- 4 -- Requires limited prompting, gestural, verbal, pictorial or written
- 5 -- Requires no support (shadowing or independent with no supports)

Environments Where Performed:

- 1 -- None
- 2 -- One to two known natural environments
- 3 -- Generalized to three or more environments

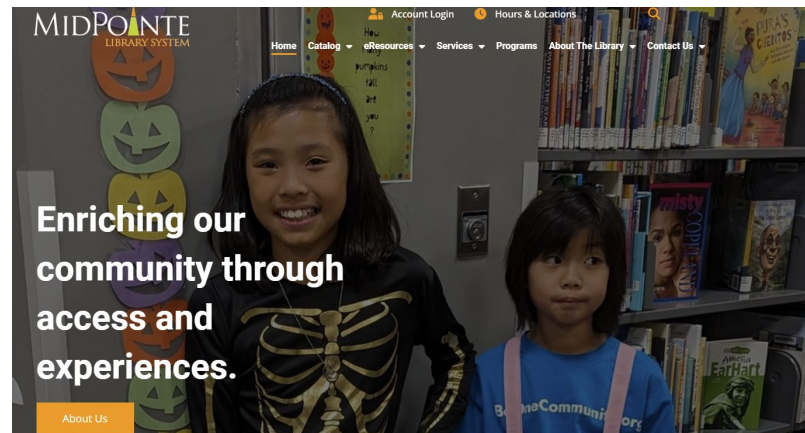
1

LEISURE / RECREATION	Level of Independence	Environments Performed
LIFE EXPLORER		
4. Demonstrates the ability to self-manage behavior during leisure activities	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3
5. Demonstrates the ability to use technology	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3
6. Demonstrates the ability to use a phone independently (text and/or call)	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3
7. Participates in self-identified leisure activities	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3
	Total ___ out of 20 = ___%	Total ___ out of 12 = ___%
LIFE SEEKER		
8. Demonstrates the ability to use technology	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3
9. Demonstrates the ability to use a phone independently (text and/or call)	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3



Think outside the Special Ed box

- Explore free and local events in your community
- Involve students in planning process for outings and activities
- Class can make their own calendar of local community events to share with others





Part Two

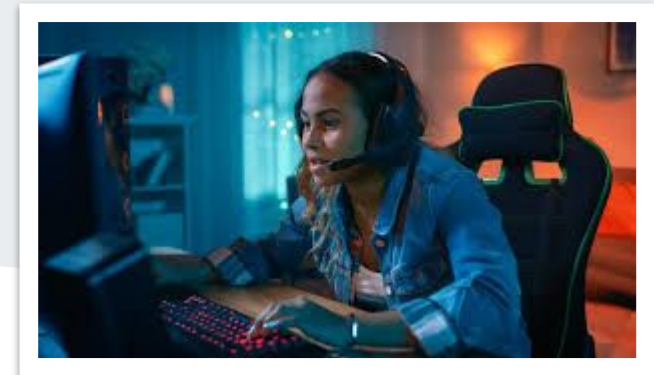
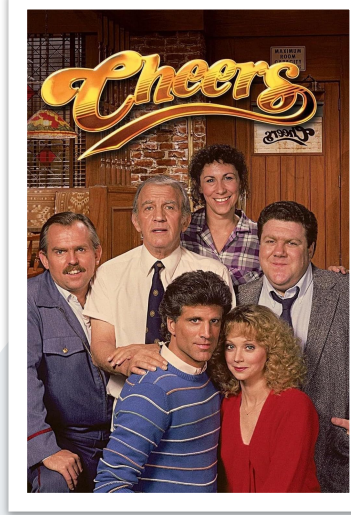
Finding a “Third Place”



What is a “Third Place”

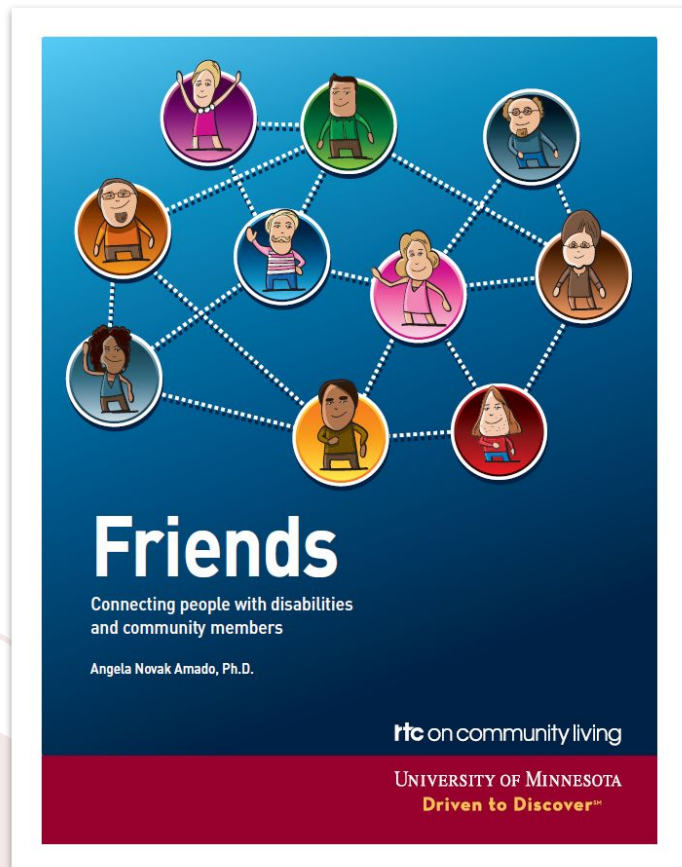
- A familiar public spot where you regularly connect with others know and unknown, over a shared interest or activity.
- The Great Good Place, 1991
- Can be in-person or digital
- Provides a sense of ease and a feeling of *belonging*

"Life without community has produced, for many, a life style consisting mainly of a home-to-work-and-back-again shuttle. Social well-being and psychological health depend upon community." - Ray Oldenburg



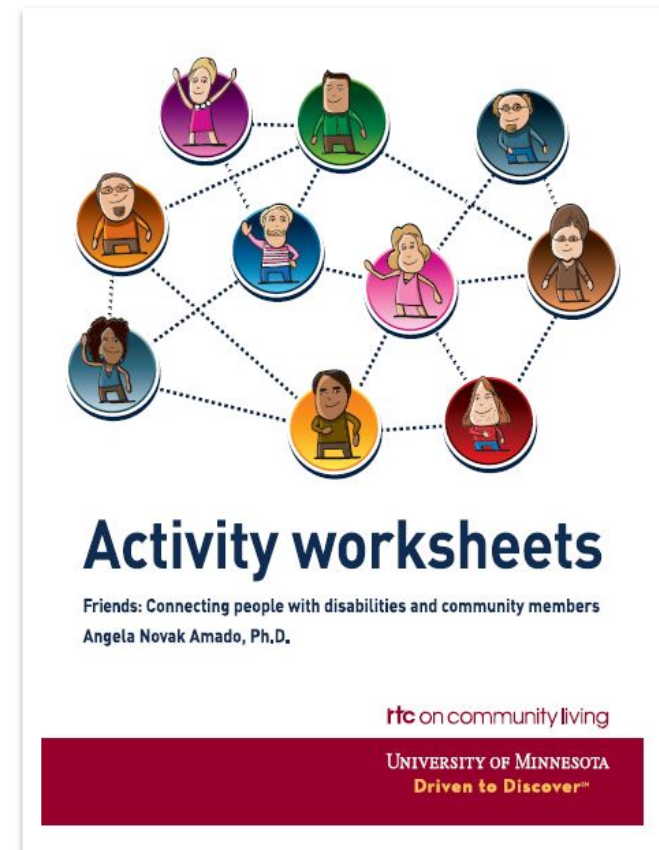
Detailed Resource in Handout

Friends: Connecting people with disabilities and community members-
Angela Novak Amado, Ph.D

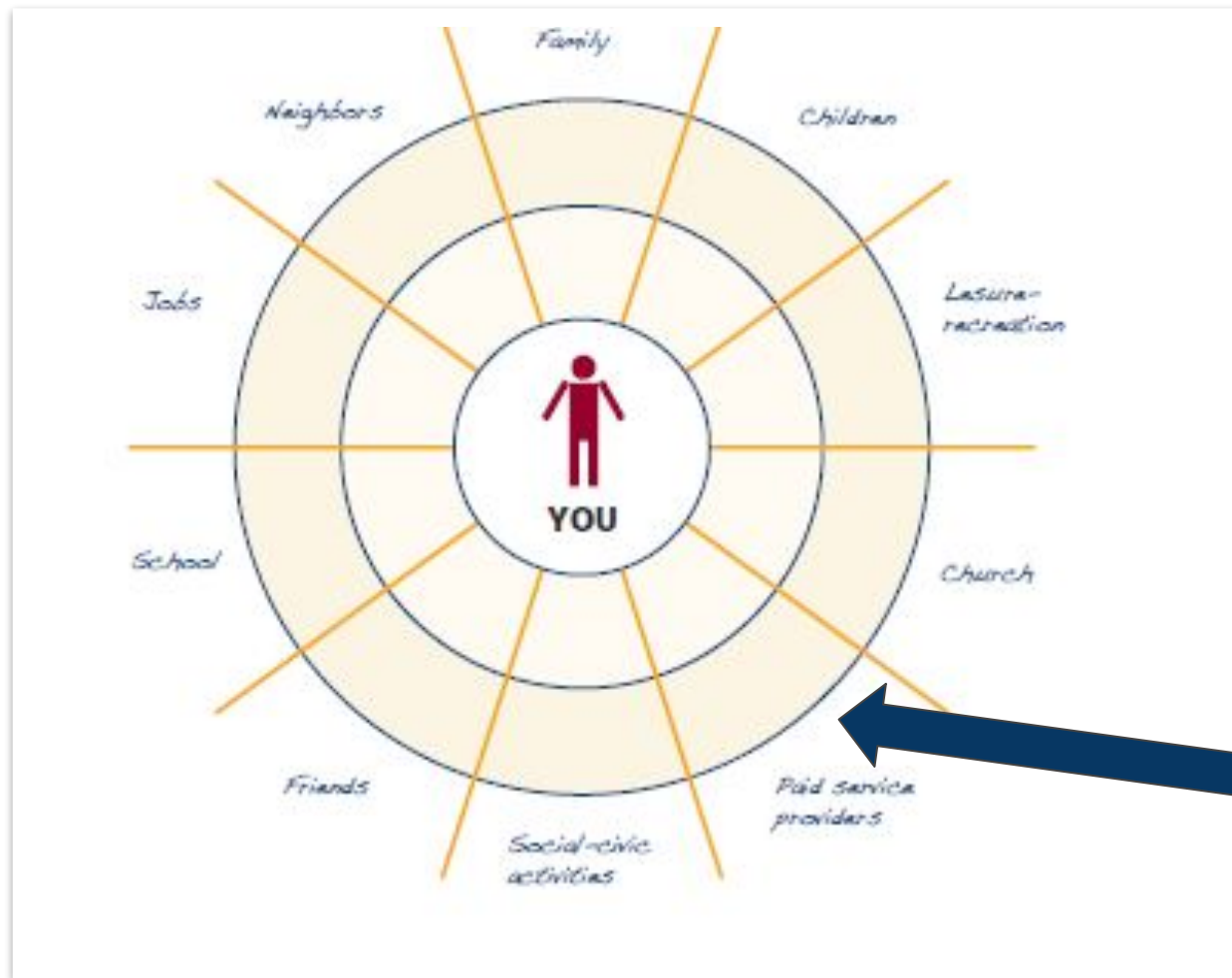


Activity Worksheets

Friends: Connecting people with disabilities and community members
Angela Novak Amado, Ph.D.



Activity- Relationship map



- Share you map with a neighbor



Part Three- Community Service





*Where do you volunteer in your
community?*



How does this make you feel?

Data regarding benefits of service learning for our population

Exploring Predictors of Community Participation Among Young Adults with Severe Disabilities

Hyunjoo Lee and Mary E. Morningstar (2019)

Unfortunately, our study found substantial discontinuity between school and community life as has been previously noted for young adults with severe disabilities during the early stages of adulthood (McCarron et al., 2011). Specifically, young adults rarely participated in community settings and exhibited **low levels of engagement in community activities.**

... educators must ensure young adults with severe disabilities receive sufficient opportunities to be engaged in **volunteer and community service projects** and build social relationships with friends while in school.

Research has suggested that service learning can improve students' academic outcomes, increase content knowledge, and improve school attendance (Muscott & O'Brien, 1999; Terry, 2003).

Our “Why”

- Typically, our students are on the receiving end of services. They are perceived as needing assistance by staff and others in the public. So that is how they perceive themselves.
- Allowing them to develop and run a community service project of their own choosing, empowers our interns. They feel the impact their actions have on their community.
- This sense of empowerment can then transfer into an increase in self-esteem, and self-direction.
- While communicating with the public, they are increasing their social and communication skills, and building their social network that could lead to employment.



What Does High Quality Service Based Learning Look Like?

- Sufficient duration and intensity to address community needs
- Intentionally uses as an instructional strategy to meet learning goals
- Collaborative partnerships which address community needs
- Actively engages participants in meaningful and **personally relevant** service activities
- Provides youth with a **strong voice** in planning, implementing, and evaluation service learning experiences.
- Promotes understanding of diversity and mutual respect among all participants.
- Incorporates reflection activities that promote deep thinking and analysis of oneself.
- Ongoing assessment of the quality of implementation

Heart Maps

Finding Common Ground

- What makes you happy? Where are you happiest? Why?
- What are you proud of?
- Who do you love? Who do you admire? Why?
- What's the most fun you've ever had? What's your favorite memory?
- What possession or activity is most important to you or brings you joy? Why?
- What makes your heart swell?
- What do you love about the designated topic?

Things you are Passionate About

Food/cooking with family

Reading/books

Lake Cumberland

Pets (dogs and cats)

What about these things would break your heart

Food insecurity

Lack of library access in digital age

Lake has a lot of trash built up

Shelters full/ so many homeless pets

- What creative or new activity could make a difference?
- Who are the specific people or places that need support?
- What are the everyday things they do, or we can do together?
- What resources already exist that I can support?

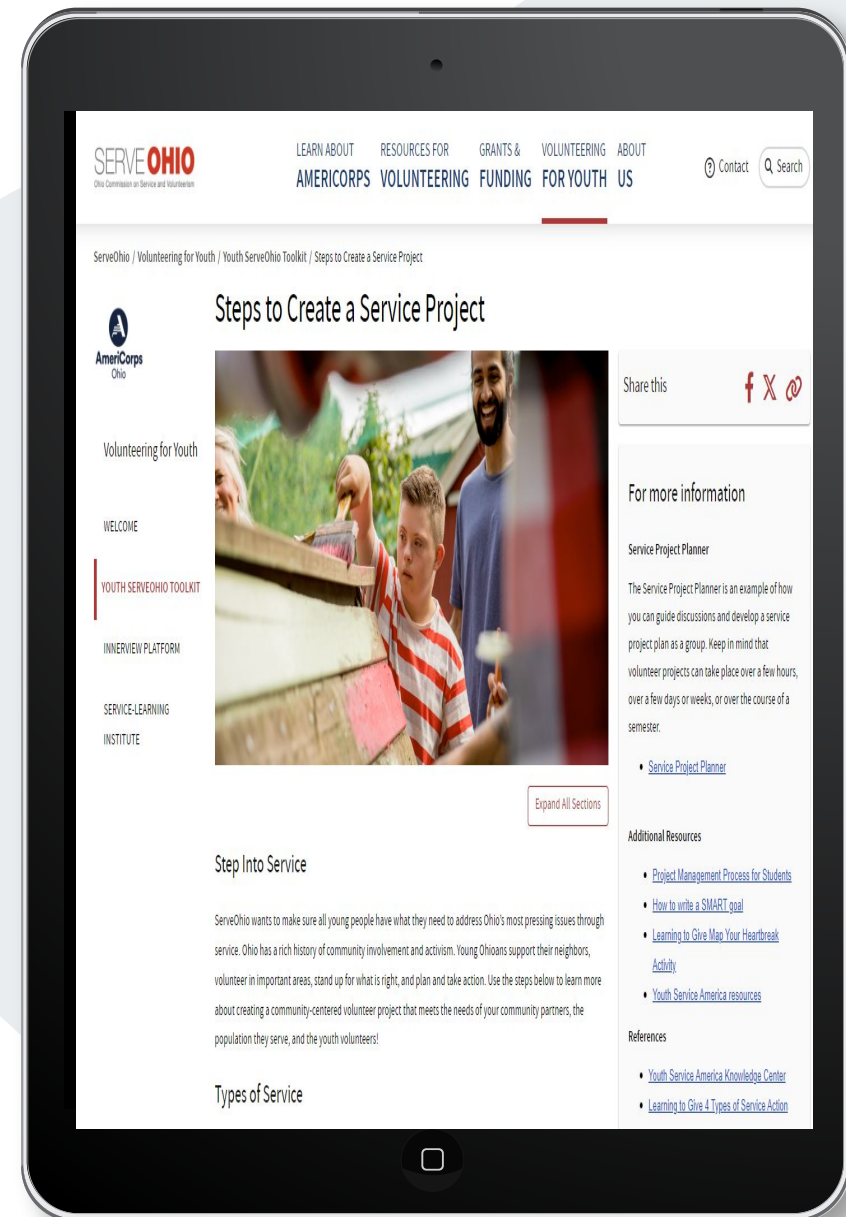
- Weekend bag food program for school kids
- Create a little free library in your neighborhood
- Lake cleanup day
- Awareness campaign for pet adoption/ supply drive

SERVE OHIO

<https://serve.ohio.gov/volunteering-for-youth>

Youth ServeOhio Toolkit

Service projects by age group and Focus Area



*What are
you
going to do to
improve your
students'
engagement in
their community?*



Three Learning Domains



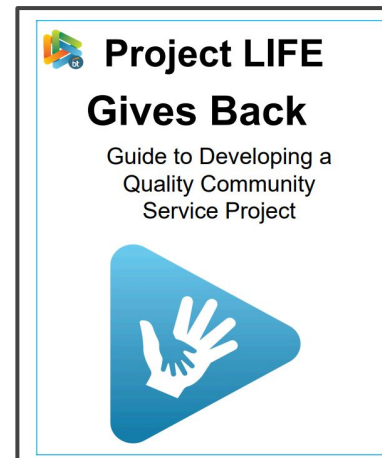
LIFE at Work



LIFE at Home



LIFE in the Community



Community Service Projects



Student driven activities,
making a difference in
their communities.



Wyandotte County DD

Created a “color run” event to support a local food pantry. They had 431 participants and raised over \$2,000





Project LIFE

www.btprojectlife.com



Thank you!

Do you have any questions?

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