

## **Expectations and Responsibilities in Service-Learning**

### **The service site expects students...**

- \* To fulfill all hours and complete projects.
- \* To complete a service-learning agreement that indicates goals and schedule of hours, with reasonable assurance that this agreement will be honored.
- \* To respect the policies and expectations of the site, especially in regards to confidentiality and participation in required training sessions.
- \* To behave professionally while carrying out assigned tasks, including observance of their established dress code.
- \* To serve in a manner which preserves the reputation and integrity of Tennessee State University.
- \* To provide a minimum 24 hour advance notice of absence.
- \* To provide a minimum 48 hours advance notice if service must be ended.
- \* To notify the professor and the Center for Service Learning and Civic Engagement, if the student or site supervisor terminates the volunteer position.

### **You can expect the site supervisor...**

- \* To provide meaningful and satisfactory work related to skills, interests and available time.
- \* To provide an orientation to the site and training for the position.
- \* To share as much information as possible about agency organization, policy, clients, programs and activities.
- \* To afford sound guidance, direction and input.
- \* To encourage respect from fellow workers toward the student as a non-paid staff member.
- \* To provide an opportunity for the student to make suggestions, receive feedback and develop a sense of being as an integral part of the program.
- \* To complete an evaluation of your efforts at the end of the term.
- \* To recognize your efforts as a volunteer.

### **The Center for Service Learning and Civic Engagement expects students...**

- \* To accurately and dependably fulfill their committed hours.
- \* To complete a service-learning agreement that indicates the goals and schedule of hours, with

reasonable assurance that this agreement will be honored.

*\*To follow TSU's policy on alcohol and drug use.*

\* To provide a minimum 48 hour notification if site placement is terminated.

\* To participate in structured reflection sessions.

\* To approach safety on site with common sense.

\* To respect client confidentiality in journals/papers and class discussions.

\* To complete course work in a timely fashion.

\* To complete a new service-learning agreement if placement site is changed.

\* To adhere to TSU's honor code.

**You can expect your professor with support from the Center for Service Learning and Civic Engagement...**

\* To facilitate a basic orientation to the service-learning concept and requirements.

\* To provide information on service learning, expectations and responsibilities, and support in locating a service-learning site.

\*To assist in developing service-learning objectives and agreement.

\* To provide support through challenges or difficulties encountered at service sites.

\* To hold reflection sessions to facilitate the integration of service experience with learning objectives.

\* To furnish opportunities to receive feedback and evaluate your experience at the end of the semester.

\* To provide access to a resource center on service and leadership, including tapes, videos and books.

\* To offer information about national community service networks, including hot web spots, listserves, and student conferences.

**Special Considerations When Working With Children**

The Center for Service Learning and Civic Engagement makes the following recommendations to service-learning students and organizations to ensure safe interactions between volunteers and children.

**Screening Volunteers:**

Service-learning students working directly with children should be screened according to the guidelines of the agency before their placement at the site. Screening may include a personal interview with the supervisor, police background check, criminal history disclosure statement, fingerprinting and/or letters of recommendation. Service-learning students working with children should ask their agencies about screening procedures. Site supervisors have their right to refuse placement of any student.

### **Training Volunteers:**

Prior to their placement, service-learning students working with children should be informed of the potential liability risks in areas of sexual harassment, child molestation, one-on-one situations and physical and mental abuse. Service-learning students working with children should ask their agency about training procedures to avoid these situations.

### **Appropriate Precautions:**

Service-learning students are advised to take the following precautions:

- Avoid one-on-one situations that place you alone with a child or isolate you and the child from the main area of activity.
- Respect the privacy of the child. Do not become intrusive or curious more than is necessary when working with the child.
- Respect your own privacy. Some children express a natural curiosity about boyfriends or girlfriends, personal relationships, and even sexual activity. Discussions about any of these topics is not appropriate.
- Use common sense when discussing sensitive subjects and do not go into details about your private life.

## Reflection

"The ability to step back ponder one's own experience..."

Human beings have a natural need to reflect on past experiences, to work through the feelings associated with those experiences. Without adequate time to do so, our thoughts tend to become distorted by frustration, emotional overload and burnout. Reflection allows us to turn inward...

- Leads to thoughtful and thus more effective service.
- Helps you to search for long-term solutions to problems or issues witnessed on-site.
- Links academic content with service experience.

### **Reflection Models**

One model for reflecting upon experience is to ask yourself, "**What,**" "**So What,**" and "**Now What**". This is a three step model.