AT YOUR SERVICE!

Build a Volunteer Project and Change the World.
ABOUT REPAIR THE WORLD

Repair the World tackles pressing issues by mobilizing the Jewish community to serve. We aim to make service a defining part of American Jewish life. [weRepair.org](http://weRepair.org)

ABOUT J-SERVE

J-Serve is the International Day of Jewish Youth Service. Since 2005, J-Serve has been a part of Youth Service America’s Global Youth Service Day weekend. Lead by BBYO, J-Serve provides teens with an entry point to community service and the opportunity to fulfill the Jewish values of *gemilut chasidim*, acts of loving kindness, *tzedakah*, just and charitable giving, and *tikkum olam*, the responsibility to repair the world. Across the globe, teens join each other to make their community and the world a better place. [jServe.org](http://jServe.org)
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weRepair.org/J-Serve
“NEVER DOUBT THAT A SMALL GROUP OF THOUGHTFUL, COMMITTED CITIZENS CAN CHANGE THE WORLD; INDEED, IT’S THE ONLY THING THAT EVER HAS.”

—MARGARET MEAD
ESSENTIAL RULES OF VOLUNTEERING

1. Investigate the issues or causes that interest you
2. Meet the organizations you want to be your partners
3. Respect your community
4. Do what you say you’ll do
5. Find creative ways to keep your team engaged and motivated
6. Give constructive feedback to your participants and team
7. Make sure the environment is safe and healthy
8. Bring your best skills and efforts to the project
9. Ask for advice along the way
10. Always say thanks!

Have Fun. Be Serious!
You care enough to do something to change the world. And we think that’s AWESOME.

Each year, thousands of teens like you make a difference in neighborhoods across their city or town and across the globe as part of J-Serve, the International Day of Jewish Youth Service. A partnership with Repair the World, Youth Service America and Rock the Vote, J-Serve takes place in April, but our hope is that you and your team will build projects with meaningful impact to LAST ALL YEAR LONG.

When creating your project, remember: The best service is done in partnership with your community and its leaders, involves some research, incorporates reflection and leaves time for celebration. And, no matter the size or duration of the project, you’ll need to understand the community with which you’re working, tap into your networks and plan, plan, plan.

This guide is designed not only to help you come up with a service project IDEA that speaks to your passions, skills and creativity, but also to help you develop a MASTER PLAN to bring your BIG IDEA to life.
Building a service project for your volunteers and community means that you’ll have to play many roles — as an investigator, a cheerleader, a captain and an all-around superhero.

So, kudos for taking this amazing first step.

To get started, you’ll need a “can-do attitude” and a commitment to make things happen (not to mention a pencil and paper, or maybe even a laptop with access to the Internet!)

By carefully thinking about your project and starting with your local community, you can make an impact in a small place.

And you CAN make a change...for the better!

You’ll learn more inside these pages and online at weRepair.org/J-Serve. Don’t forget to let us know what you find out along that way by emailing us at holla@weRepair.org or by finding us on Facebook and Twitter @repairtheworld.

Ready to go out there and change the world? We thought so!
First things first: to walk the volunteer walk, you have to talk the volunteer talk! What’s the difference between volunteering and service-learning? And why does it matter? Use the terms below (and “Service Slang” boxes throughout this guide) to find out!

- **Advocacy**: Supporting change around an issue or policy, usually through government – from the letters you write to your Members of Congress and the petitions you sign through online platforms, and even protests.

- **Awareness building**: Raising people’s consciousness around an issue and promoting understanding — all with a goal of leading people to action! May include movie screenings, lectures, posters, art shows and more.

- **Philanthropy**: Collecting and spending money to benefit individuals, communities, or humanity as a whole. Even a bake sale fundraiser qualifies you as a philanthropist, or the quarters you put in a *tzedakah* (charity) box.
• **Service**: Acts by a person or group that directly benefit individuals, communities, or humanity as a whole. The most common form of service is **volunteering**. As a volunteer, you donate your time and energy to a situation that needs help! You might choose to create care packages for troops serving overseas, plant trees in your neighborhood, or educate kids about bike safety.

• **Service-learning**: Combines community service with learning and reflection. Volunteers learn about the issues they’re working on before, during, and after the service takes place. This leads them to reflect on the social issues at hand, their experiences, and their impact when a project is over.

• **Jewish service-learning**: Combines service learning with a range of resources and reflection to help you and your peers explore your own heritage and your responsibilities to serve.
You have the power to make change by turning a small project into a really big deal! But your service project should make use of your best assets and addresses real needs. To create an **AMAZING** project, ask yourself:

### WHAT ISSUES ARE YOU PASSIONATE ABOUT?

You can be passionate about a national issue like hunger, education or the environment. Or about something closer to your home, like recycling at your school. What have you seen, heard, read or experienced that made you want to do something about it? What do you care about most? Jot down a few issues about which you’re keenly aware of and passionate on the next page.

**SERVICE SLANG**

**Community**: a group of people united by common bonds that include geography, interests, beliefs, ethnicity, religion, and culture.
MY PASSIONS:

_______________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________

Now do some more thinking about what you have to contribute, and the communities to which you belong. This will help narrow your project, and highlight where you might be best able to make a change. **Remember**: The groups you belong to are your communities, and as a member, you have a right (and a duty!) to create positive change in them. If you’re already working with friends, compile your results, talk about your findings, and have some fun!

ABOUT YOU:

Tell us about you. What are some characteristics and assets that you’re born with or that you developed an interest in.

Age: _________________________
Religion: ______________________
Political belief: ______________________
Sexual orientation: ____________
Gender: _________________________
Ethnicity: _______________________
Skills: _________________________
Interests: _______________________

ABOUT YOUR SURROUNDINGS:

Picture your day, nights, weekends — and the people around you. How and with whom do you spend your time? What activities and events ignite you? Which family members and friends inspire you?

My neighborhood: ________________
Places I frequent: __________________
People I hang out with: _______________
Experiences I partake in: _______________
Traditions I keep: ___________________
Activities I enjoy: ___________________
Now, let’s find a way to connect your passion with community needs.

How can you connect your identity AND your community to build a project that will create change? Jot down your ideas, then circle those in which you’re most interested. You’ll have to do more digging to see if they’re going to work for your community.

When thinking about a project idea, consider **community members**:

- What do they need to live a healthy and happy life?
- What’s most urgent? Is it new library books? Cleaner parks? Or basic food and shelter?
Take a look around your community and make a note of the needs you observed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MY PASSION</th>
<th>COMMUNITY</th>
<th>MY CONTRIBUTION</th>
<th>WHAT NEEDS I SEE AROUND HERE</th>
<th>POTENTIAL PROJECT IDEA</th>
<th>POTENTIAL PROJECT TYPE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>My block</td>
<td>I make crafts</td>
<td>Lots of cans in the trash</td>
<td>Collecting recycled goods and making crafts to raise money for recycle bins</td>
<td>Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dogs</td>
<td>NYC</td>
<td>I write</td>
<td>Stray dogs</td>
<td>Print posters</td>
<td>Advocacy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Ask yourself:** Are you the best person to create positive change there? How will you know that you’re really meeting the needs of the community if you don’t know it well?

Once you’ve researched the people, the needs, and the leaders of a community, you can begin to see if your idea makes sense. Which gets us to our next step: **INVESTIGATION**.
Okay, you’ve thought about your passions, skills and community, and you probably have tons of ideas about what you’d like to change in the world. Now you’ll need to answer one very important question: What does your community really need?

**SERVICE SLANG**

**Material needs**: Those that can be fixed with things (including money).

For example, if your community garden needs to be replanted, time and materials like seeds, mulch, and water can be used to fix it.

**Social needs**: Those that can be fixed with changes to attitudes or policies.

For example, if a group of teens at your school is being bullied, their needs are social – like safety, acceptance, and a shift in school culture.
To figure out the best action to tackle this need, bring in the experts. Do some more research online and by asking around to find local leaders to see who else is tackling these issues in your community.

**CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING:**

- What do you already know about the needs that you’ve identified?
- What do you need and want to learn about to take action?
- Where can you find more information?

**Remember:** If you see someone who’s already doing great work, try focusing on an issue that doesn’t get as much attention, or find a way that you can truly add something to his or her existing project.
By applying your thinking from the previous section, consider the communit(ies) to which you feel most strongly tied. Then, fill in the chart on pages 14 and 15 with your research findings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NEED: What do you see as this community’s material and social needs?</th>
<th>BENEFICIARY: Who or what will the project help?</th>
<th>COMMUNITY: Who are you working with?</th>
<th>EVIDENCE: What does the research say about this need? Where did you learn this?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Safer crosswalks Driver education</td>
<td>Children, dogs, grandmas and other pedestrians</td>
<td>My neighbors on my block</td>
<td>Lots of nearby accidents There were 10 just last month according to the Daily Bugle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAUSE:</td>
<td>ISSUE:</td>
<td>CURRENT STATUS:</td>
<td>POSSIBLE ACTION:</td>
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<tr>
<td>What local issues contributed to the current situation?</td>
<td>What BIGGER social issue is this need a part of? Think on a national or worldwide level.</td>
<td>What is the community currently doing to deal with this?</td>
<td>What could you do to help?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget cuts led to fewer hours for crossing guards</td>
<td>Public Safety</td>
<td>They have one guard on Thursdays from 7 A.M-8 A.M.</td>
<td>A petition to employ more crossing guards</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Need more evidence?
If you’re having trouble finding the facts, here are a few great resources:

- Census data + [your town]
- News articles or blogs
- City government website
- School or local university website
- Observations and experiences
- Surveys with people you know
- DoSomething.org

Census: The U.S. Constitution states that every ten years, we need to count the number of people living in America.

Today, the census includes information on ethnicity, income, gender, and all kinds of data! All census data is public and available on national, state and citywide levels. It’s a goldmine for data nerds and service superstars!

SERVICE SLANG

- Are you connecting the dots?
- Do your passions, assets and interests meet your community’s needs?
- How has your BIG IDEA changed, if at all?
Based on your research, we’re confident that you have a new understanding of just how valuable you are! Have your ideas changed or evolved in the process? If so, how?

**Apply your latest and greatest thinking to the chart below.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MY PASSION</th>
<th>COMMUNITY</th>
<th>MY CONTRIBUTION</th>
<th>POTENTIAL PROJECT TYPE</th>
<th>NEW PROJECT IDEA</th>
<th>WHY THE CHANGE?</th>
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</table>

**Now think about whether this makes sense:**
- Do you have the time and skills to make this project happen?
- Will the outcomes be positive for the community?
- Can you track the results?
- Will your friends join the cause?
- What are you missing?
Now that you’ve done some research on your own, find some people and organizations working on your project issue area to drill down and blow out your idea. Partnerships can create greater impact, recruit more volunteers, gain more publicity, and make your project last more than a day!

Seek out some community leaders, both individuals and organizations. They can be anyone from elected officials and policy experts, to associations, to those congregants of a house of worship who know a lot. Even the PTA president who also runs a local nonprofit. Chances are these folks will either have information, or be the right people with whom to connect!

“The best service work is done collaboratively with a community.”
Make of list of potential partners and leaders here and update as soon as you go through the process described next.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ORGANIZATION/LEADER</th>
<th>CONTACT NAME/INFO</th>
<th>DATE (S) CONTACTED</th>
<th>NOTES</th>
<th>GOOD FIT?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Town Synagogue</td>
<td>Bob Markowitz: <a href="mailto:Bob@yahoo.com">Bob@yahoo.com</a></td>
<td>12/12</td>
<td>Looking for a project for bar mitzvah students</td>
<td>Yes!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation Alternatives</td>
<td>Sam Smith 888.555.5555</td>
<td>12/13</td>
<td>Has annual bike-a-thon</td>
<td>Not sure yet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Quick Tip: Review the information above and decide who’s a good fit for a potential partnership.
- Are they accessible?
- Are they interested in working with teens?
- Do they have capacity to handle a project?
Community leaders make great partners! We can presume that they’re experts in the issue you’re addressing—they have wisdom to share and know what needs to be done.

When approaching a community and its leaders or members, it’s SUPER important to keep a few other things in mind:

- **Be respectful**: Approach communities with humility, knowing that they often have expertise that you don’t. Remember to lead with statements like: “We would like to work WITH your community to solve “X” instead of, “We want to help your community.”

- **Keep an open mind**: Sometimes we have preconceived notions about what a community or its members are like, but we’re not always right. When approaching a community member for the first time, don’t assume that you know what they’re going to say or do.

- **Get creative together**: Your project idea may be awesome, but it may not be the best way to solve the issue. Listen to the ideas of others first, and then shape a project that you, your volunteers and the community will love.

- **Partner**: After this inquiry process, see if they’re a good fit for partnership. Has this person or group held service events in the past? Are they open to teen volunteers? Do they have space for you? Once you decide on a project, first ask for help, then keep them updated on your project, and finally, see if you can build a partnership.

To take the next step towards solidifying the partnership with the organization you’ve chosen, first email them to make sure they’re on board with your project. If so, you’ll soon need to finalize your BIG IDEA.

**SERVICE SLANG**

**Organization**: An association or group of people working together for a cause. It can be part of a national group like the Red Cross, a religious community like a church or temple, or an association like the PTA.
Dear, __________, and I’m participating in J-Serve, the International Jewish Youth Service day that’s taking place on _______ [day of the week, date, year].

As a project leader, I’ve been researching and compiling information to develop a service project that will engage teen volunteers in meeting local needs. Through my research, I’ve learned [insert a research finding here: e.g., “The public safety report shows that there have been many accidents happening on Main Street.”]

I’ve noticed that your organization is doing amazing work in _______ [insert issue area]. I’d like to meet to learn about your work, and discuss the possibility of partnering with you or someone on your team to create a project that will be most meaningful for the community and our volunteers.

Please let me know if you are able to speak or meet in the next _______ [number] weeks about this project. I’ll follow up with you next week to check your availability. Thank you in advance for your time, and I look forward to speaking!

Sincerely yours,

[First and last name]

[Phone number and email]

Download this template at bit.ly/15j7kbk.
Building partnerships takes a lot of hard work. Organizations are busy, and they may not be able to focus on your project, but keep at it by reaching out to several key leaders and local experts to help shape your program.

You may end up partnering with your community leaders, or just gathering more information to support the creation of your own project. The most important thing is that your idea is **ACTIONABLE**, **MEANINGFUL** and **VALUABLE**. We’ll talk more about how you’re going to get your volunteers to show up later on!
"ONE PERSON CAN ONLY DO SO MUCH."
Take a deep breath, and get ready to dig in.

Use this worksheet in the next few pages to fill in details about what you’ll do to bring your service project to life. There’s a reason why we call it your master plan, so print it, post it up on your wall, or carry it with you, and be sure to update it as you go along.
INTRODUCING THE BIG IDEA

Now that you’ve got an awesome project idea (refer back to page 17), let’s make it happen! My **BIG IDEA** is to (drum roll please):

**SETTING GOALS**

What are your goals? They will drive everything you do, including how much to order and who to reach out to.

For example:

- I want to have **25** volunteers at my **EVENT**.
- I want to have my events covered by **OUR LOCAL PAPER**.
- My event will be a success if we create **150 LITERACY KITS**.
- I would like our volunteers to walk away with understanding the **IMPACT OF THEIR SERVICE**.
- I will track this progress with **2** pre- and post-surveys.
THE DETAILS

And now, the nitty gritty! Think about all the stuff you have — and will need — to make your idea a reality.

**Resources and Supplies**
In other words, everything from tools and computers to meeting spaces, printing and photography. Jot down how many you need and how you’ll get them. Will someone donate, or will you need to purchase these things? What are your estimated costs, and who will take care of it?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPACE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FOOD</td>
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<tr>
<td>FLYERS</td>
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<tr>
<td>SUPPLIES</td>
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<td>...</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Time Management:** Set realistic goals by breaking project tasks into small pieces — include **deadlines**, keep your list **updated**, and stay in touch with your team!

**Example:** My team will meet **2 times per month**.
**Task List**

Keep a running list of tasks that need to be completed. Get specific. You’ll fill in your task owner as you gather your team. Use a google doc to share with your team.

**Note to self:** Be sure to keep this list updated!

(For your own working task list, please visit bit.ly/144sN7p.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TASK</th>
<th>START DATE</th>
<th>DUE DATE</th>
<th>COST (IF ANY)</th>
<th>POSSIBLE FUNDING</th>
<th>OWNER</th>
<th>NOTES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Choose Date</td>
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<td>Build Team</td>
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<td>Secure Space</td>
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<td>Secure Transportation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Food Donations</td>
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<td>Budget Creation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fundraising</td>
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<td>Press Release</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recruitment Flyers</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Let’s build a team to move this project forward. Who will you recruit to help, and how? Start with people you know, from family and friends to neighbors and other students. Then ask them to invite their friends. Be clear about what you need, the time commitment, and how they can help.

### YOUR PROJECT TEAM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>ROLE</th>
<th>RESPONSIBILITIES</th>
<th>CONTACT INFO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>Operations Manager</td>
<td>Orders supplies and food. Handles transportation logistics. Helps team members with budget.</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Jordan@gmail.com">Jordan@gmail.com</a> 212-222-2222</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**YOUR EXPERT HOTLINE**
If you’re stuck, who can you ask for help?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROFESSIONALS</th>
<th>SPECIFIC ROLE</th>
<th>ORGANIZATION</th>
<th>CONTACT INFO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mentor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expert</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advisor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J-Serve Contact</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PARTNERS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ORGANIZATION OR INDIVIDUAL</th>
<th>CONTACT &amp; INFO</th>
<th>THEIR PLEDGE</th>
<th>WHAT I PLEDGED TO DO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Repair the World</td>
<td>Sophia, <a href="mailto:sophia@weRepair.org">sophia@weRepair.org</a></td>
<td>Create a toolkit</td>
<td>Develop a project</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Your project is as strong as your team. They’ll also help you identify new tasks, so keep that list running. Your team must be dedicated to the cause, so choose wisely.

**GAME DAY PLAN**

To avoid any surprises, fill out a game plan in advance of the project day. Include your team contact numbers and a play by play of how the day will proceed. Then, discuss the game day plan together in a meeting or on a call. To see a sample game day plan, visit [bit.ly/11b6mOh](bit.ly/11b6mOh).
When planning a service event, both the members of your community and the community organizations that you work with are critical to your success, especially when it comes to publicity. They can be your champions and your cheerleaders before and after the event.

Questions to consider:

- What would make you read about or attend a service day? Can you think of a cool name?
- What’s the issue? The date?
- Will you use social media? (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Pinterest, a blog)
- How will you promote your event to volunteers? To the community?
- Will you engage local media (papers, bloggers)?
- Will you create flyers? Who will design them?
- Will you offer prizes or incentives to those volunteering?
- Can you send group text messages to promote your event?
- What local officials or celebrities will you reach out to?
- How much money can you spend?
TAPPING YOUR NETWORKS

When it comes to recruiting your volunteers, your network is your greatest strength. But you’ve got to know how to tap it!

• **Know your audience**: Are all teens alike? (You know the answer here. Far from it!) So get to know them! The more you know about who you’re trying to reach, and the more you can meet them where they are, the more success you’ll have.

• **Find where they hang out.** Once you’ve figured out who you want to join, you’ll need to think about where they’re spending time. Is it on Facebook, Twitter? At the mall? In a coffee shop? At the JCC? On the basketball court? Then, think about what tools you have to communicate with them, and how you’re going to engage with them.

• **Introduce your audience** (to each other!): Engage a core group of people early on. They will begin to set the groundwork to build a group of ambassadors to serve as your recruiters, and help to build some buzz. Get the conversation going by hosting small gatherings and Facebook groups. These in-person strategies are the best way to get the word out. Leading up to the big day, be sure to remind people in creative ways so that they will really show up.

• **Make your event contagious**: Your service is truly important, but you’ll want to make your event something people **WANT** to spread the word about, **WANT** to grab postcards for, and **WANT** to join. So this tip’s a no-brainer: be inviting, spirited, and fun. Use every opportunity to encourage your potential volunteers to publicize the event in emails and online. When it comes to event day, make sure your community catches on, and is ready to roll by snapping and sharing photos, and letting the world know about their event!
MOBILIZING YOUR PARTNERS!

Your partners have access to networks that you might not know. They can lend validation to your project and help reach new audiences. Some tips:

Get listed: It’s never too soon to study the communications from your community partner. Do they have an e-newsletter? Use social media? Is there a place to include a J-Serve photo or logo on their site? Ask if you can include blurbs about your event, making sure you have their Twitter handles, and see if they’re willing to use the J-Serve hashtag to promote the event and follow it that day.

Present: Find out if the organization will let you present to their staff! This is a great way to get people interested in your work. Encourage them to promote the event to their networks, and if that’s not possible, see if your contact — or maybe even the CEO — can bring up the event at staff meetings and more.

Pix: If your community partner has a photographer, see if he or she is willing to share photographs with you. If you’re using your own, be sure to share them with the partner to include on their networks as well. It’s a great way to engage people after the event to show your success, and maybe even inspire people to volunteer again!

Publicize: Does your partner have a public relations contact? A blog? If so, see if they’re willing to contribute to press outreach leading up to the event. Ask if they’re game to promote the event through their blog — before and after the event. Maybe you can even offer to write something about the experience.

And of course, we’re part of your networks, too, so make sure to share all the goodies you gather with J-Serve and Repair the World so we can toot your horn!

@repairtheworld and @J_Serve
THINK LIKE A REPORTER: PRESS RELEASE TIPS

Most often, press releases are sent by email to reporters, organizations, partners, community members, and other influential people who may be interested in promoting your event on websites, in newspapers or to their personal networks. In thinking about who you want to target, make a list of them. Six weeks in advance of your big day, send them the release.

Four Simple Steps to Crafting Your Release:

1. Your **TITLE** should be in all caps and address the big facts: the what, where and why. What are you doing? How is it helping your community? Who’s involved? What makes it interesting and timely? It should be brief, clear and yes, to the point — a super succinct description of the key point of the press release!

2. The lead paragraph includes the “who, what, when, where and how” of the story. If the reporter were only to read the lead of a good press release, she or he would have everything they need to get started.

3. The rest has the meat of your story. It’s common to use a quote from someone at the organization or involved with the project to explain what you’re doing and why. You can even quote an influential community member who’s affiliated with your project and wants to talk about why it’s so important for people to care and get involved.

4. Include a description of your organization, including any hyperlinks to your website and sign-up form.

**Remember**: Always include your contact info!

When building a service project, it’s important that the service is authentic and meaningful to those being served and to the volunteers themselves.

A great service project enables people to learn, talk, and share about the underlying local and social issues that surround it. It also allows space for participants to talk about what they’re feeling and what they’re thinking about before, during and after their service. Interpreting reflection is an important way to truly understand the value and meaning of what you’ve been experiencing.

These kinds of conversations help participants become more effective advocates for your cause, giving them tools to reflect on their experiences and what it means to be a leader and change-maker. They help solidify a bond amongst your group!

Now set a plan of action for how you’re going to get people to think about the stuff that matters!

- **Remember**: Keep it safe, and work with your team to create ground rules so people feel comfortable talking about tough stuff that your project might revolve around – like race, class and privilege. These suggestions will guide your learning and reflection.
- **Issues**: What are some of the social, economic and political factors that surround the problem you’re addressing in your project? What considerations can you explore with your participants to make your service become more meaningful?
• **Information**: What information can you share with your participants, or learn about with them so that they really understand the issue on which your project focuses?

• **Discussion methods**: How will you convey this to them? Think about the methods you’ll use, such as giving a speech, sharing a text with them, showing a movie clip, or giving them something to read beforehand.

• **Jewish culture**: What questions or prompts can help your participants think more deeply about their service experiences through your project? Is your project connected to a Jewish ritual, good deed (*mitzvah*), or cultural practice? Is it connected to Jewish history? How? Think about the spiritual, ritual, historical or cultural connections between your project and being Jewish. Look to resources such as biblical texts, photographs, films, music, poetry, art, literature and others that reflect these connections. (See Page 38 for more helpful suggestions.)

• **Timing**: When should these discussions take place?

• **Location**: Where should this part of the project occur?

Here’s a sample reflection plan for a tutoring event. Use this as your guide to fill in the areas in the chart during your tutoring session.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PRE-FLECTION</th>
<th>DURING</th>
<th>AFTER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Issue(s)</strong></td>
<td>Education gap</td>
<td>Poverty &amp; education outcomes</td>
<td>Budget cuts to local schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Information</strong></td>
<td>Fact sheets</td>
<td>Talking points</td>
<td>Petitions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Discussion Methods</strong></td>
<td>Quick lecture by Becky Stein, local teacher and service project partner.</td>
<td>Discussion questions handed out to volunteer team leads.</td>
<td>Quick introduction to local issues by me. Team will hand out the petition during debrief.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Jewish Culture</strong></td>
<td>Jewish quotes on education posted around the room.</td>
<td>Present information on the Jewish people’s deep roots in the American public education system.</td>
<td>Participants are asked how their Jewish education has impacted their beliefs about education policy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Timing</strong></td>
<td>I will assemble the group together for 10 minutes before we start the project.</td>
<td>Team members will circulate throughout the project to ask discussion questions.</td>
<td>After service is complete and cleaned up.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Location</strong></td>
<td>Study hall at the JCC</td>
<td>On site</td>
<td>Rec room at church</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
YOUR A-HA MOMENT

Below are examples of educational, reflection and Jewish service-learning activities. Read through the following sections to see how you can bring Jewish service-learning into your project.

- Search for short YouTube videos and articles to discuss. Before your project begins, develop some questions that you’d like others to discuss after reviewing the content.

- Bring in a speaker who’s an expert in the area your project focuses! Discuss what exactly you’d like them to talk about before the conversation gets underway. Also, make sure those involved have time for a Q&A — about what your group is doing!

- Break up into small groups to discuss and reflect on some of the following questions for 15-20 minutes. Come back together to debrief and share thoughts to the following questions:
  - How are we connected to this issue, aside from the service we’re doing together?
  - What emotions, thoughts or new ideas come to mind as we do this service work?
  - Do I disagree with, or am I confused by anything?
  - What universal values are we each manifesting as we do this?
  - How are we impacting the community we’re working with today? Are we making important and long-lasting change through our service?
  - Now that we’ve learned about these things, what do we do with this new knowledge?
  - What Jewish values are we bringing to life through our service?
  - Why is it important to bring Judaism into this experience?

- Gather old magazines, glue sticks or tape, markers and pieces of cardboard for each participant. Have them make collages that depict past experiences, personal values, and motivations for participating in service.
BUILDING JUDAISM INTO YOUR PROJECT

Integrating Jewish ideas, language and resources into your reflection will definitely take it to the next level. Think about how great to create a Jewish service-learning experience for your participants by bringing in resources that span 3,000+ years of Jewish life! From passages in various texts, photographs and films, to music, poetry, art, literature and more, it’ll help position your service work in a fascinating and meaningful context. It also helps everyone to reflect on their own relationship with the tradition and the world, and build community with your group!

Framing your service experience in Jewish terms takes some thoughtful planning, and insight from experienced educators. Keep in mind that learning, reflection and thinking about what Judaism has to say about your efforts should happen at all stages of your service project — and not just as an add-on at the end.

*Please note that “texts” can refer to a variety of things, including traditional Jewish and contemporary texts from the Torah or Talmud, biblical commentary, the writing of modern-day thinkers, literature, poetry, art, photography, objects, song lyrics and the like.

EXAMPLES

- **It’s a Sign: The Heart and Soul of Jewish Service**: Place signs around the room that describe different Jewish (and human!) motivations for doing service. Read them aloud and instruct participants to stand near the one they like best. This is a great way to form a mini-group for reflection! Then discuss the statement they’re standing by, or give them other topics to explore.

- **Conversation Starters**: Make copies of the following sheets and hand them out. Discuss with the group or split up into small groups. Ask the participants to each read every passage, or to look at each piece closely.
Read through and review each of the following texts. Each represents the Jewish tradition in some way. Then choose two that speak to your experience, or things you may have thought about today. Spend some time discussing why these texts resonate with you. What values do they highlight? What do they tell us about Judaism and service?

**Bonus discussion:** Do you disagree with any of the texts?

1. “One who gives a penny to a poor person merits an encounter with the presence of God (shechina).”
   – Bava Batra

2. “There are eight degrees of charity, each one higher than the next. The highest degree, exceeded by none, is that of a person who assists a poor Jew by providing him with a gift or a loan, or by entering into a partnership with him, or helping him find work. In a word, by putting him where he can dispense with other peoples’ aid.”
   – Maimonides’ Mishneh Torah, laws concerning gifts to the poor, 10:7

3. If you want to raise a person from mud and filth, do not think it is enough to keep standing on top and reaching a helping hand down to him. You must go all the way down yourself, down into mud and filth. Then take hold of him with strong hands and pull him and yourself out into the light.
   – Rebbi Shelom of Karlin (8th Century)

4. We may not be silent in the face of wrongdoing or injustice. We must use whatever influence we have. If we succeed, we have made a difference. If we fail, we have honoured our obligation by doing what we could.”
   – Yehudah Baur: Thou Shalt Not Be a Bystander

5. Rebbe Nachman of Breslov said, “The whole world is a very narrow bridge. And the most important thing is not to be afraid. But I’ve been thinking, and I’ve come to realize that at the end of the day, it’s all right to be afraid. The most important thing, I believe, is that we help one another across that narrow passageway.”
   – Talya Gillman

6. “Our Rabbis taught: Formerly, [food] was brought to the house of mourning for a wealthy person in silver and gold baskets, and food for the poor was brought in baskets of peeled willow
branches. This caused the poor to be humiliated. In deference to their feelings, it was decreed that food for the poor and wealthy alike should be brought in baskets of peeled willow branches.
– Babylonian Talmud, Moed Katan 27a-b

7. In 1965, Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel went to Selma, Alabama, to march with Martin Luther King in the struggle for civil rights. Someone who marches with him questioned why this eminent scholar came to Selma instead of remaining in his ivory tower in New York. Heschel’s reply: “When I march in Selma, my feet are praying.”

8. Consider the chasid who boasted to his rebbe that he had made a beggar pray. The beggar had come for a piece of bread; the chasid sought to save his soul. “First we must pray”, the chasid insisted. And so they both prayed minchah, the afternoon prayer, and before the chasid gave the beggar his bread, he had him wash his hands and recite the al nitilat yadaim, the prayer for the washing of the hands. Hearing the chasid’s story, his rebbe grew sad. “You meant well, but you have not acted well. There are times when you must act as if there is no God in this world.” “No God in this world?” The chasid was astonished by the apparent blasphemy. “Yes, no God. When a person comes to you in need, you must act as if there is no one in the world, neither God nor man to help him except, you yourself.” “And what of his neshama [soul]?” asked the chasid. “You take care of your soul — and of his body”, the rebbe answered.

9. On the last day we were asked to construct a little brick garden along a wall of the building project. I found it totally absurd imagining a time when dainty begonias or delicate pink tulips might blossom among marauding goats, rummaging chickens and playing children. But maybe there is something to it. Perhaps the act of building a space for a garden is a way of creating a picture of a future not yet realized. A compass pointing to what may be and not what is. A seed planted to challenge the meaning of our work begun, but not complete.
– Rabbi Will Berkovitz

Find more ideas at:
weRepair.org
standup.bbyo.org
mazon.org
avodah.net
rac.org
justaction.org/actionguide/intro.htm
sulamcenter.org/about.asp
on1foot.org
Now that you’ve completed your project, it’s important to thank your participants and partners and to learn about how you did.

Choose from some cool websites that can help you create free surveys online! Surveymonkey.com is the most popular.

In the survey, ask participants meaningful questions about their experience, or allow them to rate different aspects of it on a scale of 1-10. Then, compile your data to see what you could improve upon next time. Remember to include this survey in your thank you emails.

**SAMPLE SURVEY QUESTIONS**

- How many meals were served? _________
- How many trees were planted? _________
- How was the coordination with you? _______
- What would you do differently? _________
- Did you have fun? ______________________
- Was the reflection meaningful? __________
- What was the best part? _________________
- Would you do it again? _________________
GRACIAS, TODAH RABAH, THANK YOU!

The hard work might be over, but you still have one last step: to show thanks. It might seem small, but it’s just as important as the hard work you did to make this day happen! (For a sample thank you note, please visit bit.ly/170lQsj.)

Here are some ways to show your gratitude:

- **During the event**: Tag volunteers in Facebook and Twitter posts during the event to acknowledge their work.

- **One day after**: Send a handwritten thank you letter to your partner[s], donors, and teammates. They deserve a BIG thank you. Depending on their contribution and support, a meaningful gift might also be appropriate.

- **One to two days after**: Send a thank you to volunteers with a survey and a list of future volunteer opportunities, if available.
  - Give shout outs to your team and partners who helped to make the day a success!
  - Make sure there’s a way for volunteers to stay involved, such as getting an email address from somebody at the organization who coordinates volunteers, or informing them about your next project date.
  - Include photos of the event.

- **One week after**: Have a meeting with your service partner organization to review how the day went. (Make sure this is on a calendar in advance, as your partner may be busy.) Bring photographs, respectful feedback from you and your participants, and a thank you gift.
SAMPLE PARTICIPANT THANK YOU NOTE

Dear [Name],

Thank you so much for attending our service day! With your generosity, we are [sending/providing number of products/services to schools/libraries/youth centers] throughout our community. It never would have happened without your work and dedication.

If you’re interested in working again with J-Serve and our [name of partner org], please contact [name] for more information about upcoming opportunities. If you’re a high school student, email [name at email address] if you want to be part of our [initiative/club, etc].

Lastly, your insight will help us create an even better event next time. Can you please take three minutes to fill out our survey at surveymonkey.com/mitzvahday?

Thanks again, and see you soon!

All best,

[first and last name]

Download this template at bit.ly/170lOqj.
SHOW OFF!!

Let people know how awesome your project was by showing the impact of your project. You’ve done a ton of work to build something great, so why not make it last? Everything you and your team have done can help engage people over time, and make a really big impact in your community year-round.

Some ways to celebrate and motivate others:

- Design a report for the community
- Present your results at an event in your school or at a public event
- Write for your local blogs or papers
- Send a newsletter to parents and participants
- Recognize your volunteers at an awards ceremony, and ask them to stay involved year-round
- Showcase your pix on Facebook, Twitter, and tag participants and partners
- Talk to the local news!
- Host gatherings to talk about local issues, referencing your project and inspiring others to take action

GOOD TIMES

How will you reward you and your teammates for your awesome work? Plan something fun and do it. You deserve it!
ooray! You’ve completed a successful service project. From all of us at Repair the World and J-Serve, we are so grateful for your contribution to repairing the world. It’s our greatest hope that we’ve inspired you, and helped to set you on a long and rewarding path of service.

But guess what. The fun has just begun. We look forward to keeping in touch with you, and those with whom you collaborated during your project. And, now that you’ve been involved in service-learning, we’re sure you’ll keep your radar on local issues and participate in ongoing events, and even motivate others to keep connected, too! Let us know how it’s going!

**HOW TO SERVE YEAR-ROUND**

- Follow the news
- Like your fave organization on Facebook
- Organize a volunteer reunion
- Donate stuff or money to an awesome charity
- Write letters, blogs, and articles about issues you care about
- Stay in touch with local organizations
- Start planning for your next big event!
- **Stay positive! You can change the world!**
- Follow @repairtheworld & @J_Serve on Twitter