

## Hampton's Model of Youth Civic Engagement



Three key pathways create a system that increases a community's social capital. This approach — investing in youth — offers countless benefits. It taps their energy and ideas, creates a youth focus in public decision-making, ensures more inclusive results, trains them for increasingly responsible and meaningful positions, creates productive citizens and cultivates pro-social attitudes in the next generation of taxpayers and policy-makers. Most important, it builds a better community.

For more information, contact:

**Hampton Coalition for Youth**  
City Hall • 22 Lincoln St • Hampton, VA 23669  
757-728-3280 • [www.hampton.gov/foryouth](http://www.hampton.gov/foryouth)

To obtain additional pamphlets in this series covering more specific topics of Youth Civic Engagement and Creating a Youth-Friendly City, email [foryouth@hampton.gov](mailto:foryouth@hampton.gov).



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# Youth in Action, Youth in Service



**YOUNG VOICES, NEW VISIONS:**  
**The Power of Youth to Improve Communities**

**A series based on Hampton, Virginia's model of Youth Civic Engagement**

# Youth in Action, Youth in Service

**F**rom voter drives to food drives, volunteering gives young people positive places to go; positive things to do; and meaningful ways to contribute. As one of three Youth Civic Engagement pathways, “Service” creates a win-win situation. One-time and long-term projects give young people valuable experience as community builders and leaders—and the community benefits from their contributions.

## SOME HAMPTON OPPORTUNITIES

- Candidates’ forums
- Environmental projects
- Fundraising
- Helping elderly neighbors
- Marketing campaigns
- Mentors for younger people
- Neighborhood cleanups
- Research, data collection
- Special events
- Technology teachers
- Training peers

Often service is a young person’s first foray into civic engagement. The more successful and meaningful their experiences, the more likelihood they will venture into other opportunities.



## TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL SERVICE PROJECTS

**Reach Out** — Recruit with non-traditional methods (blogs, party fliers, youth recruiting). Offer reminders. Adapt to teen schedules of school, activities, and jobs. Consider barriers such as transportation. Involve youth in planning events, incorporate their ideas. Cultivate community partnerships to support projects. Invite all partners.

**Relate** — Be committed to building relationships. Create a friendly, fun, interactive climate. Provide snacks. Set clearly defined roles and expectations. Make the work meaningful.

**Reflect** — Build in time for dialogue. Discuss service as a civic responsibility, caring about others as a priority. What was learned? How did the experience change views about others and themselves? What worked? What could be done differently?

**Recognize** — Celebrate everyone’s efforts. Ensure that young people understand how their contribution fits into a larger community vision.

**Repeat** — With youth assistance, evaluate and adapt plans. Build on successes. Invite continued participation. Use the experience to expose youth to additional civic opportunities.

## MORE INFORMATION:

[www.ysa.org](http://www.ysa.org), <http://learningindeed.org>

