

Taking Care of the Kakapo

Name: _____

Date: _____

Authentic service learning is a valuable life-long lesson that is easily introduced to children of all ages. There are many programs available to begin service learning in your school (search the internet for ideas), but you can begin with small steps focusing on the following concepts.

Some characteristics of service learning are:

- It is positive in nature and real to those who participate.
- Students determine ways to raise money and determine where and how it is spent.
- It is a cooperative experience that builds greater global understanding.
- It becomes imbedded into your schools daily life and lessons.
- It offers opportunities for children to problem solve and gain knowledge about challenges that face their community.
- It fosters critical thinking skills such as identifying critical concerns in the community or globally and determining strategies to make changes.
- Money comes from the children – a penny here and a penny there. Obviously larger donations are great, but typically they come from parents.

Service learning is not:

- Episodic volunteering or fundraising (many schools have fundraisers to support a family at the holidays – while this is a worthwhile activity, it is not service learning)
- A requirement for students
- One sided. Service learning benefits the recipients and the givers.

Since service learning is student directed, you cannot simply state that the school is going to raise money to help the kakapo of New Zealand. However, with instruction and guidance, students will often identify critical needs locally, nationally and globally. Children are acutely aware of endangered animals. Service learning along these lines should begin by reading [Kakapo Rescue: Saving the World's Strangest Parrot](#) and completing the lessons that accompany the book. Through classroom discussions children may very well ask "What can we do?" That question is the spark to ignite service learning.

With that in mind, your children can become involved service learning!

If your school already includes service learning in its daily life, build upon that by making students aware of the needs of endangered animals such as the kakapo. Visit www.kakaporecovery.org.nz for details on this unusual parrot.

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A Service Learning Project

To begin...

- Brainstorm areas of need locally, nationally and globally.
- Post these ideas for all to see daily. They will guide the focus of your funding.

The next step...

- Determine how to collect funds (pennies plus), when to collect, and your accountability methods (accountability methods may be dictated by your school or district). Set a goal for how much you would like to raise.
- Begin collecting money. Students may contribute small amounts of change by choosing to donate money rather than by an extra cookie at lunch. They may earn money by doing small jobs around their house or neighborhood.
- Some students may choose to write letters to local businesses asking for support. Since students are asking, it is student directed! You can use the opportunity to teach students how to write a business letter!
- Begin the selection process for your funds. This, too, is student directed. A small group of student leaders should take on this role. They may be selected by teachers or voted for by peers. Qualities to consider: responsible, compassionate, honest, etc.
- The student leaders should research each potential recipient or recipient program and present this information to the main group. This, too, could involve writing letters or making phone calls. Personal visits by the student leaders and adult supervisor would be appropriate if local organizations are selected.
- Collectively students choose the recipients based upon the knowledge gained from the student leaders. Prominently display the organizations that will receive funds. You may wish to have student leaders create posters with details about each organization.
- Display a large thermometer to share with your school the progress being made raising money.

Once funds are raised...

- Student leaders count money and make sure it is deposited in the bank properly (with teacher guidance).
- Determine how to allocate the funds. Not every penny needs to be donated to one organization, several may be chosen.
- Select a date to present checks to each organization. Perhaps have an assembly to celebrate your progress in service learning and the presentation of checks.

Donate the funds...typically toward the end of the school year

- Students should be involved in all aspects of service learning, including donating the funds.
- Follow the progress and growth of each organization. Stay involved! You will be surprised how this process fuels further involvement of students even at home!

After that...

- Reflect upon the success of the first year's service learning and raising funds. What did the students do well? What can be improved? How can more money be raised?
- Use the information from each organization to start the next school year. Students may choose to continue supporting the original organizations or may choose to expand to others. It's their choice!
- Students may work over the summer to earn money that will be donated during the next school year. They may also volunteer with the selected organizations or with others that may become future recipients.
- Continue building on the first year's program.