

Social Action and Civic Engagement

Adults in the local community are encouraged to share their experiences, stories, and time with the children and college-aged staff at the local program site. These community volunteers serve as role models who believe in the children and share with them the joys of learning. The children learn to apply critical thinking and problem-solving skills, as they become responsible members of their communities. Servant Leaders encourage the children not only to explore the problems facing their communities, but also to become active in working toward solutions.

The CDF Freedom Schools® program stresses civic engagement through social action projects designed to help children, parents, staff, and community partners realize that they can and must make a difference in their community. In addition to guiding children through the lessons of the Integrated Reading Curriculum, Servant Leader Interns are responsible for engaging the entire community in local and national social-action projects that include: rallies; town hall meetings; letter writing, phone calling and e-mailing campaigns to local and national legislators; voter registration drives; health and immunization projects; etc.

Alignment with the
*National Afterschool
Association's Standards
for Quality School-Age
Care*

Category: Human Interaction

Key #3: Staff encourages children and youth to make choices and to become more responsible.

Standards:

- Staff offer assistance in ways that support a child's initiative
- Staff assist children without taking control, and encourage children to take leadership roles
- Staff helps children make informed and responsible choices.

Key #4: Staff interacts with children and youth to help them learn.

Category: Activities

Key #14: Activities reflect the mission of the program and promote the development of all the children and youth in the program.

Category: Administration

Key #25: The program builds links to the community.

Standards:

- Staff provides information about community resources to meet the needs of children and their families.
- The staff plans activities to help children get to know the larger community.
- The program offers community-service options.

Key #28: Staff, children, and youth work together to plan and implement suitable activities, which are consistent with the program's philosophy standards:

- Staff asks children to share their ideas for planning so that activities will reflect children's interests.
- The program's daily activities are in line with its mission and philosophy.
- Staff plans activities that will reflect the cultures of the families in the program