

Direct service examples

In support of people with memory loss

Your turn

Design your own

Direct service example: In support of people with memory loss

Note: With **direct service**, you see the people who will benefit from your actions or interact with the environment or animals. In all cases, the action is intended to have reciprocal benefits for all involved.

Investigation: After reading articles about challenges facing people who have had strokes, head injury, or dementia, I contacted a local day care center for people experiencing memory loss. I interviewed the education director about what helped people the most; she said exercise and conversations. She agreed I could visit on Saturday mornings on a regular basis to lead sitting and standing exercises and visit.

Preparation: I developed a series of simple exercises, beginning with those someone can do sitting down. I showed them to a relative who is a physical therapist and she helped me make adjustments. Later, after leading the sitting exercises several times, I developed some for standing and again reviewed these with my cousin. I also began adding music since I found everyone liked moving to music. This led me to find songs from their era.

Action: Leading 30 minute exercise routines on Saturday mornings, twice per month was the initial plan, though I went more often. Because these became popular, I would lead two or three sessions a visit, offering one sitting session, one sitting and standing session, and one walking session (added later). Also I would stay and have conversations for 30-45 minutes each visit.

Reflection: I found writing after each session was so important for me to describe what happened, because sometimes I was upset. My grandmother had passed away and she had Alzheimer's and sometimes the residents reminded me of her. Other times I was so excited that I just had to write about a new accomplishment I noticed for one of the participants. In IB Art I found myself drawing some of the faces so I began sketching on occasion to accompany my writing. I found reflection to be an unexpected helpful way to put all the pieces together.

Demonstration: I created a virtual space that had a video of me with some friends doing my exercise routines, written reflections, a thank you letter from the agency, my sketches, and an email my cousin sent me about how I inspired her to donate her time—she came with me on occasion to help me develop more exercises. What was most enjoyable was leading some of the routines on the day we showcased our CAS experiences and also showing photographs which the agency gave me permission to take and use.

Direct Service: Your Turn

Investigation often involves:

- Media—articles, videos, books
- Interviews—questioning experts
- Surveys—finding out from many
- Observation—onsite viewing

Tutoring Refugee Children

Investigation:

After reading an article describing struggles of refugee families, I set up a meeting to interview a refugee worker from a local organization. He invited me to visit and spend an hour at the after school program. I found that children needed books and art experiences and the teachers confirmed this was a real need.

Preparation:

Action:

Reflection:

Demonstration:

Teaching Gardens

Investigation:

A school parent led a workshop for students about community gardens and I joined a group going see several locations where gardens are used to teach local residents how to grow food and plant their own gardens. They explained there is a need for teachers on to promote gardening skills. I enrolled in a course to become a City Garden Leader and teach classes to the public about planting and maintaining their own gardens.

Preparation:

I completed the course that included gardening techniques, composting, and plant selection. We learned about tools and formed teaching teams and practiced leading lessons for other students and family members.

Action:

Reflection:

Demonstration:

Direct service: Design your own

How should you decide what to do? Consider:

- What are my interests?
- What are my talents and skills?
- What are areas in which I want to grow, strengthen or improve?

Name of plan:

Investigation:

Preparation:

Action:

Reflection:

Demonstration:

Ideas for direct service

With people

- Coaching children in sports
- Delivering meals to people living with a medical condition
- Leading resume-writing workshops for people who are unemployed
- Organizing or assisting at a blood drive
- Playing music with elders to have an exchange of skills and learn about each other's music preferences and talents, and then performing as an ensemble for others
- Distributing plants at a farmer's market to promote home-grown container gardens
- Serving food at a soup kitchen

With the environment

- Restoring a stream
- Preparing the soil and beds for an elementary school garden and planting with the children
- Growing seedlings for distribution
- Installing raised-bed gardens for a senior center
- Establishing a recycling program at city hall

- Making a storm-water garden

With animals

- Helping at an animal shelter with data entry and dog-walking
- Assisting with a pet adoption outreach program at community events
- Leading a workshop on pet care
- Setting up a turtle sanctuary in partnership with a community organization