

### ***Pretty Pressure: How Media and Other Factors Effects Girls***

In the rise of the social media era, young girls are exposed to carefully curated feeds and highly photo-shopped imagery. Research shows that movies, magazines, and media at large affect beauty perceptions. Host a space for alternative narratives to be discussed. Create workshops for girls grades 5-8, educate them about these pressures, and effects of media on girls, while opening dialogue through a series of questions. By deconstructing these perceptions, the goal is to support girls to have a renewed sense of self-confidence.

### ***Who made THIS? Ethical Labor Education***

Fast fashion and increased product production leave consumers unaware of how, where, or who made the items they purchase. Create “Who Made THIS? Ethical Labor Education,” workshops. Help her peers understand how products they use daily are connected to exploited labor. Seek to increase interest in the moral undoing of unethical labor practices, and how students can be empowered to choose to consume more ethically, as well as increasing awareness of individual choice.

### ***Fair Housing Act***

The Fair Housing Act is meant to protect people from discrimination when they are renting or buying a place to live. Research and identify someone who has experienced difficulty or who successfully secured housing. Become an advocate for fair housing practices and help spread awareness about the resources available to those in need.

### ***Shirts for Foster Girls***

Research and find an organization that provides foster kids with essential support—and develop a plan to provide and distribute trendy shirts, jeans and bracelets for foster girls entering high school. Knowing how difficult it can be to fit in, you could help your peers feel confident, fashionable and fierce!

### ***Environment-Friendly Greenhouse***

Collect two-liter plastic water bottles from local schools. Build a greenhouse – maybe as part of a community garden project. The greenhouse—which is entirely constructed from the bottles can be used to grow food in a temperate environment. Gives great meaning to the phrase “reduce, reuse, recycle”!

## ***Data to Create Change***

### **Dress Code Revision**

With the help of a professional, create a survey to find out more about students' experience with the schools dress code policy. Compare the genders on who gets dress coded. With these results in hand, analyze the school's dress code. Determine which gender the dress code pertains to. Using this information, work with their school administration to re-write the dress code using only gender-neutral language.

## ***Adulting 101 – Reality Check***

Create a financial literacy program for middle school and high school students regarding how to save money, how to budget, how to stay out of debt, how to save for college, how to save for retirement, etc. Have them simulate a month in the life of an adult, working, with bills and obligations. Volunteers from financial institutions, particularly credit unions, may be willing to lead an existing [financial literacy curriculum](#).

## ***Tech for Seniors***

Set up a **cyber cafe in a retirement home** and recruit and train volunteers to help new users connect with information and their loved ones. Interview residents before and after the project to see how Internet access and computer use affects their lives. Volunteers will have to be screened by either the retirement home or a nonprofit organization, to ensure the safety of participants in the program.

Help a senior residential center set up a pet therapy program where, once a week or twice a month trained volunteers bring pre-screened dogs and cats to the center to interact with patients.

## ***Animals***

### ***Volunteer Corp***

Create a volunteer corps through your local Humane Society, ASPCA, animal shelter, senior center or another existing organization that would **help elderly people to be able to keep their pets**. It would offer elderly people volunteers to walk their dogs, pet sit for these people when they are hospitalized, provide extra help if the person is bed-ridden, etc. Your sponsoring organization would have to help with your screening process (how will elderly people apply for assistance for this program?) and you will have to identify all possible costs for such a program. You would need to work with Meals on Wheels, your local hospice, and senior services to help identify people who might need this service, and a way to get a volunteer immediately to a person in need. You would also need to create a way to screen volunteers (you should do this through the volunteering program of an existing nonprofit organization, such as your local Humane Society).

### *Pet Food Pantry*

Create a **pet food pantry**, similar to a regular food pantry (for people). Your local food pantry may be interested in hosting such. It would provide pet food for dogs, cats, rabbits and birds for people who cannot afford such. You would need to secure a space for storage of the food, create a policy for distribution, educate your community about how to make donations (just as with human food, pet food would have to be in never-opened packaging, and not be expired), and work with your local Humane Society or ASPCA to create ways to educate pantry users about the importance of spaying and neutering pets, where to find low-cost spaying and neutering clinics, where to find help with pet behavior problems, and other activities that discourage people from taking their pets to animal shelters or neglecting their pets' needs.

### *Dog Park*

Recruit volunteers and lead an effort to **create a dog park** - even better, two parks, one large main one, and one smaller one for small and timid dogs. The dog park will need a place to park right next to it, and in the park, there will need to be a water source, a couple of picnic tables, and plenty of grass cover (and even bark chips).

### *Awareness of Service Dogs*

Determine if there is a need to increase volunteer numbers for service dogs. You might find out that local clubs dedicated to the cause needed a lot of people to their support guide dogs: puppy sitters, volunteers, and people who could raise the dogs. Created a reusable information board they use at events to get people informed and excited about pitching in to help!

### *Educating the Community on Service Dogs*

Research and discover those businesses who do not have a training program for their staff on what constitutes a service dog, what questions they can ask and how do they handle admission or refusal of an animal in their business. Make a community wide campaign and educate the general public of those business who are service animal friendly with promotional window clings.

### ***Volunteer Resources***

#### *Service ideas youth under 16*

Interview local nonprofit organizations to find information to create a web site that lists at least **25 community service ideas for youth under 16** in your specific city/county/region, allows youth to blog about their experience as volunteers, etc. Do interviews with young people to talk about why and how they would like to volunteer, what challenges they face in trying to volunteer, etc., and post the results of your interviews on this web site. Contact all nonprofits in your area (you can find these at [Guidestar.org](http://Guidestar.org), in the USA) and let them know about this web site you are building and encourage them to share information on how youth can volunteer with them.

Create a half day or all day **group volunteering opportunity for 15 or more Girl Scouts under 13 years old**, that could be easily organized every year after you are no longer involved in the activity. Most Girl Scout leaders struggle greatly to find community service activities for their troop members under 12. Work with your local United Way, your local arts organizations, your nearest state park or any nonprofit organization to create such an activity, or look through the list above and think about how some of the activities could be accessible for girls under 13.

### *Community Meetings*

Make a list of free and low cost meeting places and event sites around your community for nonprofits and community groups. Nonprofits are DESPERATE for such a list! Note if each site is accessible for people with disabilities. Put this list on a free wordpress site or ask your local public library if they would like to publish it. Each listing should note the address of the site, how many people the site could host, if the site allows food, the name of the owner or host of the site, a phone number or online form to reserve, and how much it costs to reserve. Start with your local public library, area senior centers and community centers, communities of faith (churches, temples and mosques), grange halls, buildings and picnic shelters at local parks, and VFW and American Legion Halls. When your list is published online, ask the public library to post it on their social media accounts and let all of the venues you are listing know that this list is online. Let your mayor or city counselor know you have done this list - they may want to promote it as well.

### *Service ideas for families with all ages*

Interview local nonprofit organizations to find information to create a web site that lists at least 20 [\*\*community service ideas for families with young children\*\*](#) to do in your specific city/county/region. Do interviews with parents to talk about why and how they would like to volunteer as a family, what challenges they face in trying to volunteer as a family, etc., and post the results of your interviews on this web site. Contact all nonprofits in your area (you can find these at [Guidestar.org](http://Guidestar.org), in the USA) and let them know about this web site you are building and encourage them to share information on how families, particularly those with children under 16, can volunteer with them.

### *Recycling*

If your local [\*\*Goodwill\*\*](#) doesn't have such already, help create a program, or even more than one, that can recycle, resell and **properly dispose of electronic waste** in your community. You would need to identify potential partner organizations who will volunteer their expertise and resources, knowledgeable people willing to donate their service as volunteers, and volunteers willing to help with non-technology issues.

Work with your local Goodwill store to create a **bicycle-refurbishing** program, where people bring in used bicycles and they are refurbished by volunteers and those being trained by Goodwill to re-enter the workforce; or seek another nonprofit organization willing to partner with you for this project. You would need to (1) recruit highly-skilled people willing to donate many hours to refurbishing bicycles and willing to train others in how to do this; (2) publicize a particular day and time when bicycles could be dropped off, and where; (3) track how many

bicycles come in, how many people donate, how many items are refurbished, how many items are sold and how much money that raises for the organization.

Partnering with Goodwill or another agency that serves the homeless or people experiencing severe poverty, host regular sewing events. Lead a sewing group of volunteers and offer repairs for ripped or torn clothes or things that need sewing: clothes, backpacks, blankets, etc.

### ***Art***

A **photography project** with young people from a low-income housing project, youth from a high-poverty community, seniors/elders living alone or in a retirement home, people learning to re-enter the workplace, or some other special-needs group, where you teach them to take and present photos about their lives and how they experience the world. Could film the students talking about their experience, host a gallery night, play the video and display the photographs to raise awareness – invite the public, city officials.

Create a historical walking tour or community display for a public space regarding something in your community's history that most people don't know about. It could be about a group of people or the lives of a part of the population during the depression, the civil rights movement, etc.

Recruit volunteers and lead an effort to **create a sculpture or other public art project** in your city that commemorates some historical event in your city, or that celebrates science. For instance, your city probably has lots of memorials for soldiers, but what about civil rights workers? Or slaves that built key buildings in your city? Or suffragettes? Or you could lead an effort to create a sun dial and/or a solar calendar, and encourage classes, community groups and others to help design it, submit tiles to decorate it, etc., and create a web site associated with the site that promotes science. Both of these projects would bring different groups in the community together and help educate the community about history or science.

### ***Healthy Eating***

Create a **community gleaning program**, where volunteers go to the homes of people with fruit trees in the spring and pick all of their apples, pears, plums, and other fruit (with prior permission, of course!), and bring it to a central location to be donated to a local food bank.

### ***Safety***

Organize a one day conference to discuss **dating safety and self defense**, or **online safety**, with middle and high school girls. You would be in charge of recruiting and preparing the volunteers who would provide the training (and ensuring they had properly registered with Girl Scouts), finding a location for the event, publicity, getting permission from your Girl Scout service unit for the event, etc.

Create a **mock disaster drill**, for response to a gas explosion at a high school, a massive earth quake, etc., with local Red Cross, police/fire/EMS and your local hospital. Have some student participants who are "injured" in gory makeup, students who pretend to speak only

Spanish or ASL, etc. Then facilitate a full debrief/problem-solving meeting with the school administration and the emergency personnel.

Plan a campaign for safe pre/post prom parties and safe graduation campaign in your community with representatives from the different high schools. Involve local service organizations that can demonstrate the aftermath of unsafe parties.

### ***School Emergencies: Are We Prepared?***

By being prepared for an emergency, everyone's safety is front and center. Knowing this, create "School Emergencies: Are We Prepared?"; a series of checklists for various school districts. By assisting schools in their annual and biannual processes with these checklists you can help everyone to be prepared in case of an emergency. Additionally, work with the administration of each school, advertised to PTA groups and the Girl Scout community at large. As a result, school districts will be better prepared and empowered for a more positive outcome in the event of an emergency.

### ***Pedestrian/Bicycle/Public Transit Safety Awareness***

Create a **pedestrian safety** or **bicycle awareness** campaign targeted at car and truck drivers, and present it at community events, communities of faith, civic clubs, etc. Research issues relating to pedestrians and bicycle use in your area.

Host a [\*\*bicycle rodeo / fair\*\*](#) (your local police department will probably be happy to help!) and/or a weekly [\*\*bike train\*\*](#), where students and their parents gather in an agreed-to starting point and bike to school (and are joined by other student riders along the way).

Explore challenges to people using more **mass / public transit and/or bicycles for transportation** in your community, and explore ways to address one or more of those challenges. Your city probably has a citizens committee or commission on mass transit or on bicycle use, for instance; attend the meetings of the appropriate committee, look through the reports it has published. Do they have youth representation on the committee, or a subcommittee of youth? Could you start such a committee? Could you recruit other Girl Scouts/other youth/other people to survey riders, bicyclists, neighbors, friends, etc., regarding challenges to using mass transit and/or bicycles for transportation in your community? Could you lead this group to creating a project that addresses a specific challenge, or a series of challenges, to more people using mass transit and/or bicycles for transportation in your community?

### ***Public Services Fair***

**Organize a public services fair**, if your town or neighborhood doesn't already have such. It would feature displays and activities by the fire department, the police department, your water and sanitation department, companies that provide public utilities and more regarding fire safety, personal safety, water conservation, recycling, call-before-you-dig awareness, etc. Make sure information will be provided in multiple languages, if your community has a significant

population that speaks another language. You would also be in charge of marketing the event to the public. Recruit volunteers to help.

## ***Literacy***

Start a **literacy program for expectant parents and those raising a child up to three years old**, to help them with their reading skills and to encourage them to read to their children *every day*, which will prepare their children for kindergarten. You would organize partnerships, and volunteers to make this happen.

Create a **summer reading program / book club** designed to help young people maintain and expand their reading abilities and their interest in books outside of school.

Create [\*\*a web accessibility fix-a-thon for local nonprofits\*\*](#), where a group of volunteers spend one day onsite doing some simple things to nonprofits' web sites to make them more accessible for people with disabilities: for people using screen readers (people who are blind and have a tool that reads a web site's content to them), people who have low vision and use a tool that makes a web page bigger on their device, people who have mobility issues and don't use a mouse, someone with hearing impairments, etc. As a result, these web sites become more accessible for EVERYONE. By the end of the day, you not only have some web sites that are more welcoming for people with disabilities, you have also increased awareness about digital inclusion.

Create a multi-**Badge Day** for younger Girl Scouts in your Council, where younger Girl Scouts could engage in activities in two-three hours in one location and earn at least two badges at the end of the day, where several people from the community -- even other clubs and organizations -- are involved in delivering the activities for the girls, and that somehow educates or addresses a community, human or environmental issue you care about and think others should know about as well. Remember that you must tie the badges/activities to somehow educating or addressing a community, human or environmental issue you care about and think others should know about as well. You would be in charge of picking the activities, recruiting and preparing the volunteers (and ensuring they had properly registered with Girl Scouts), finding a location for the event, publicity, and getting permission from your Girl Scout Council for the event.