

# WHAT IS I SIGNED THE CONSTITUTION?

Since 1991, the National Constitution Center has sponsored *I Signed the Constitution* events each year during the national celebration of Constitution Week, September 17-23. Over the last few years more than 500 sites in all 50 states participated. At national parks, libraries, schools and malls across America, an estimated three million people have reaffirmed their citizenship by placing their signatures next to the signatures of our Founders. Signers receive a pocket-sized Constitution and educational materials. Every site may return the signed parchment scrolls to the National Constitution Center where they will become part of the permanent archives.



The Pennsylvania Bar Association, in partnership with the National Constitution Center, is coordinating the *I Signed the Constitution* program for many schools in Pennsylvania. Schools representing dozens of Pennsylvania counties will participate in this year's signing...with thousands of student-signers statewide. Many local bar associations are partnering with schools by helping them to sponsor signing programs. Judges, lawyers and legislators across the commonwealth will be working with schools to participate in the activities.

The theme for the Pennsylvania Bar Association's celebration is "Free to Make a Difference." As Americans, we are free to speak, free to think, free to be...free. We live in a country where our government is governed by our Constitution, and the success of that process is based upon every citizen's involvement. By voting, going to school, volunteering and working, we all have the ability, opportunity and freedom to truly make a difference.

This year's celebration will begin with a formal kick-off celebration at the National Constitution Center on September 14. The Pennsylvania Bar Association's *I Signed the Constitution* program will continue from September 14 through December 10. Schools may hold signing events throughout the fall.

The Pennsylvania Bar Association thanks you for participating in the *I Signed the Constitution* program. It should be an exciting one!

**Be sure to participate in the Pennsylvania Mock Presidential Election!  
Details are covered in the lesson plan materials at the end of this guide.**

# PLANNING A MOCK CONSTITUTION SIGNING: PART I

Every school has its own unique personality and way of doing things. As such, it's important for you to think about what type of mock signing program will work best for your school. This section is designed to help you plan a mock Constitution signing program.



## THE FACTS

Here is some helpful information as you begin to formulate your program:

- **Date:** The Pennsylvania Bar Association's program kicks off on September 14 and continues through December 10.
- **Materials:** You should have received materials from the National Constitution Center for your students. You can call the center at (215) 923-0004 with any questions.
- **Kick-Off Program:** On September 14 in Philadelphia at the National Constitution Center, the Pennsylvania Bar Association will hold a formal kick-off program, which will feature the president of the Pennsylvania Bar Association and other dignitaries who will talk with students about the U.S. Constitution. This program will serve as the official launch of the Pennsylvania Bar Association's Constitution celebration in Pennsylvania.
- **Theme:** The theme for the Pennsylvania Bar Association's celebration is "Free to Make a Difference." As Americans, we are free to speak, free to think, free to be...free. We live in a country where our government is governed by our Constitution, and the success of that process is based upon every citizen's involvement. By voting, going to school, volunteering and working, we all have the ability, opportunity and freedom to truly make a difference.

## PROGRAM SUGGESTIONS

Listed below are two types of mock Constitution signing programs that schools have found to be successful.

- **Assembly:** The assembly program brings together all student-signers for a formal program and signing. Invite local judges, lawyers and/or legislators to be the featured speakers and ask them to talk about the U.S. Constitution with students as it relates to students and their daily lives. Have a school official emcee the program and ask each speaker to limit his or her comments to five minutes (or more, depending on the number of speakers). A great way to get the students involved is to select one student to speak about the U.S. Constitution and have the school choir perform patriotic songs. At the end of the formal program, have all students sign Constitution scrolls.\* The signed scrolls can be displayed in your school lobby. After the signing, invite the speakers to join students in their classrooms to take part in one of the lessons included in this guide or in the National Constitution Center's materials.
- **Classroom:** Ask a local judge, lawyer or legislator to visit your class to talk with students about the Constitution. The visitor may want to use one of the lessons provided in this guide or in the National Constitution Center's materials. Be sure to discuss this with the speaker before his or her visit and share any necessary materials. When the speaker has concluded his or her remarks and the formal program is over, have the students sign Constitution scrolls\* that can be displayed in the classroom or school lobby.

# PLANNING A MOCK CONSTITUTION SIGNING: PART II

## DESIGNING YOUR SCHOOL'S PROGRAM



These questions are designed to help you think about what type of program will work best in your school.

### General Questions:

- How many students will participate in the program?
- Will you focus on students in one grade level or students in different grade levels?
- Will judges, lawyers and/or legislators be asked to participate in the program and/or classroom activities? (arranging this through your local bar association is explained on the next page)
- Will the media be invited to attend the program/signing activities?
- Where will the mock Constitution scrolls be displayed after the students have signed them?

### Assembly Program:

- Is your school set-up conducive to an assembly? If so, what grade levels will be invited to the assembly?
- What types of program speakers would your students enjoy? Should someone from your school district's administration emcee the program? Will you invite local lawyers, judges and/or legislators to speak during the program?
- Will the entire school day focus on the U.S. Constitution? Will educators be asked to introduce the lessons from this guide or from the National Constitution Center's materials on the day of the mock signing program?

### Classroom Program:

- Will you ask a lawyer, judge or legislator to visit your class and talk with students about the U.S. Constitution? Will you have that person use one of the lessons included in this guide?
- Will the signed Constitution scrolls be displayed in the classroom or in the school lobby?
- If you choose not to have a speaker, will you use one of the lessons provided or will you prepare a new lesson on the U.S. Constitution?

*\* Making your own school scrolls on parchment paper is a great art project!*

# INVOLVING THE MEDIA & LEGAL COMMUNITY

After your school has picked a program, it's time to start getting the media and local legal community involved.



## THE LEGAL COMMUNITY

*I Signed the Constitution* offers your school a unique opportunity to involve members of the legal community in your classroom activities and/or assembly program. Bringing years of legal experience to this project, local judges and lawyers can help you create enhanced learning opportunities for your students.

Your local bar association can help you identify judges and lawyers in your community who would be willing to take part in your activities. If you are not already partnering with your local bar association, please call the PBA at 1-800-932-0311, Ext. 2216, to find the appropriate person to contact in your county. (Hint... elementary and middle school students typically respond well to judges who wear their robes into the classroom.) Make sure to invite these people well in advance of your program - their calendars fill up quickly.

## THE MEDIA

The media can help schools demonstrate their commitment to excellence in learning by reporting on *I Signed the Constitution* events and activities in local newspapers and television news programs. You may want to consider asking a local television news anchor or newspaper editor to be a speaker at your program. They are great resources to talk with students about the First Amendment and other related Constitutional issues. Below are some tips to help you to get the media to cover your program. If you are partnering with your local bar association on this project, make sure to work with it on this - local bars are great resources since they have relationships established with local media and may be willing to help you with some of the following:

- 1) Compile a current list of local newspaper editors, TV assignment editors and radio station managers. Make sure you have their fax and phone numbers.
- 2) One week prior to your program, mail or fax your media advisory to the local media (a sample media advisory is included in this packet...feel free to use it and fill in the blanks). Include a contact person on the advisory and a daytime phone number in case the media have questions prior to the program.
- 3) One day prior to the program, make follow-up calls to the media that received the advisory...ask for the newsroom when you call. During the call, confirm that they received the advisory, offer to fax it if they did not and mention how exciting the program will be for students. (it's always good to put in a last-minute pitch)
- 4) Prepare a news release to give to the media at the program (a sample news release is included in this packet...feel free to use it and fill in the blanks). After the program is over, mail or fax the news release to any invited media that did not attend.

*Inviting local lawyers, judges, legislators and members of the media to speak during your program is a great way for your school to reach out to the community. Your students also will enjoy hearing their perspectives on the U.S. Constitution.*

# SAMPLE MEDIA ADVISORY

The media advisory can be issued by your school or partnering local bar association. Make sure to include the issuing party's address at the top - using letterhead is always a good idea.

## MEDIA ADVISORY

Contact: Name  
Phone Number

### **# OF STUDENTS SCHOOL NAME STUDENTS TO SIGN** **THE U.S. CONSTITUTION**

# of students School Name students will join with list local judges, lawyers, legislators in signing the U.S. Constitution as part of the National Constitution Center's *I Signed the Constitution* program on date at time at location (include place, address and city).

The activities will feature (list any special activities, if any).

The *I Signed the Constitution* program is a national celebration commemorating the signing of the Constitution. Since 1991, an estimated three million people have participated in mock Constitution signings at national parks, libraries, schools and malls across America. The purpose of the program is to increase awareness and understanding of the Constitution, its history and its relevance.

The Pennsylvania Bar Association's *I Signed the Constitution* program runs from Sept. 14 through Dec. 10. Thousands of Pennsylvania students are expected to take part in signing programs throughout the fall.

For more information on the *I Signed the Constitution* program, visit the National Constitution Center Web site at [www.constitutioncenter.org](http://www.constitutioncenter.org) and the Pennsylvania Bar Association Web site at [www.pabar.org](http://www.pabar.org).

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# SAMPLE NEWS RELEASE

The news release can be issued by your school or partnering local bar association. Make sure to include the issuing party's address at the top -- using letterhead is always a good idea.

## NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Name  
Daytime Phone Number

### # OF STUDENTS SCHOOL NAME STUDENTS SIGN THE U.S. CONSTITUTION

CITY/TOWN (Date) -- # of students School Name students today joined with list local judges, lawyers, legislators in signing the U.S. Constitution as part of the National Constitution Center's *I Signed the Constitution* program at location.

"Quote from school official"

The *I Signed the Constitution* program is a national celebration commemorating the signing of the Constitution. Since 1991, an estimated three million people have participated in mock Constitution signings at national parks, libraries, schools and malls across America. The purpose of the program is to increase awareness and understanding of the Constitution, its history and its relevance. The Pennsylvania Bar Association's *I Signed the Constitution* program runs from Sept. 14 through Dec. 10. Thousands of Pennsylvania students are expected to take part in signing programs throughout the fall.

"Quote from county bar president" -- if applicable

**(For assembly program)** -- The students participated in an assembly program, which included presentations by the featured speakers and a mock signing of the Constitution. (List any other activities).

**(For classroom program)** -- The students participated in classroom activities focusing on the Constitution. The featured speakers assisted the students with the concepts and writing. Each class then joined in a mock signing of the Constitution.

"Quote from a participating judge, lawyer or legislator"

For more information on the *I Signed the Constitution* program, visit the National Constitution Center Web site at [www.constitutioncenter.org](http://www.constitutioncenter.org) and the Pennsylvania Bar Association Web site at [www.pabar.org](http://www.pabar.org).

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# 4th Annual I Signed the Constitution Poster Contest

The Pennsylvania Bar Association (PBA) is pleased to announce its fourth annual *I Signed the Constitution* Poster Contest for elementary students. The theme for the Pennsylvania Bar Association's celebration is "Free to Make a Difference." As Americans, we are free to speak, free to think, free to be...free. We live in a country where our government is governed by our Constitution, and the success of that process is based upon every citizen's involvement. By voting, going to school, volunteering and working, we all have the ability, opportunity and freedom to truly make a difference.

The winning poster will be used as the cover of the PBA's 2005 *K-12 Law Day Lesson Plan Guide*, which is distributed statewide. The winning student will be honored during the PBA's formal Law Day ceremony in May 2005. **The deadline for entry is December 10, 2004.**

This contest helps schools meet Pennsylvania Academic Standards for Civics and Government 5.1.K across all grade levels, as well as Pennsylvania Academic Standards for History 8.2.B across all grade levels and 8.3.3.B.



*This is last year's winning poster reproduced in black and white.*

## Contest Rules

- 1) The contest is open to all public and nonpublic elementary schools in Pennsylvania.
- 2) One entry per student will be accepted. An entry form must be completed in full and attached to the back of the poster. The entry form must be signed by the student artist, the student's teacher and a parent or guardian of the student. The entry form is included.
- 3) Students should create posters that show what "Free to Make a Difference" means to them. Each poster must be an original art composition created by a child. The entry must be the actual work of only one student. Adults may support the student's effort with suggestions and other forms of verbal assistance. The work produced, however, must be the product of the student's own effort.

- 4) The poster must be 8.5 inches x 11 inches. The design should be **VERTICAL** to facilitate reproduction on the front of the Law Day guide. The “Free to Make a Difference” message may be communicated as creatively as possible using ink, tempera, powder paint, water colors, oil or magic marker. No computer-generated posters will be considered.
- 5) Entries will be judged by a review panel from the PBA’s Law-Related Education Committee. The first-place winner will have his or her poster featured on the cover of the 2005 *K-12 Law Day Lesson Plan Guide* and will receive an award during the PBA’s formal Law Day ceremony in May 2005.
- 6) All entries must be postmarked by December 10, 2004. Entrants will be notified of the winners by March 11, 2005. The winning student will be asked to attend the May 2005 PBA Law Day ceremony.
- 7) All entries, including posters and other submitted materials, become the property of the PBA and will not be returned. Entries may be reproduced by the PBA in any form and for any purpose. The PBA reserves the right to modify any poster for reproduction purposes.
- 8) Entry into this contest constitutes permission for the artwork and artists to be photographed for publicity purposes without any compensation to the child, teacher, parents or guardians.
- 9) All federal, state and local regulations apply. Void where prohibited by law. Taxes on any prizes are the responsibility of the winners and their families.

**PLEASE SEND YOUR POSTER AND ENTRY FORM POSTMARKED BY  
DECEMBER 10, 2004, to:  
Pennsylvania Bar Association  
*I Signed the Constitution* Poster Contest  
100 South Street  
P.O. Box 186  
Harrisburg, Pa. 17108**

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***I Signed the Constitution Poster Contest Official Entry Form***  
***(please print clearly)***

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

School Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

School Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher’s Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

***This form must be attached to the back of each entry.***

# Pennsylvania's Mock Presidential Election

*Students in all grades are invited to participate in Pennsylvania's Mock Presidential Election! Let's help them practice their right to vote now!*

## Why should your school participate?

In 1972, 63% of all adults voted. In 2000, that number dropped to 51%. While the percentage of all adults who vote continues to decline, voter participation rates among younger Americans are even more alarming. Even though one-half of college-age students are registered to vote, only one in five actually do. In 2000, of the 23.3 million 18-25 year olds eligible to vote... 13.8 million (59%) actually registered to vote...and, only 9.9 million (42.4%) voted.\*\*

(\*\* Information from [www.takeyourkidstovote.org](http://www.takeyourkidstovote.org) Web site)

We want to make sure those statistics go up in future elections by helping children start understanding the importance of voting...now!



## How Can Your Students Participate?

Hold a mock presidential election at your school! Go to the PBA Web site at [www.pabar.org](http://www.pabar.org) and download a mock presidential ballot or create your own. Ask your students to vote for their favorite candidate and submit your results to the PBA no later than October 19. Send an e-mail to [Vote2004@pabar.org](mailto:Vote2004@pabar.org) and be sure to include the vote totals for each candidate and the name of your school and contact information in the e-mail. The statewide results will be tabulated and the winner announced! Your school will be listed as a participant in the publicity materials.

## Some ideas to prepare for the vote...

- ! Have your students read the newspaper every day and follow the presidential campaigns.
- ! Videotape the presidential debates and have your students watch and critique them.
- ! Visit candidates' Web sites and ask your students to critique the sites.
- ! Have younger students discuss issues important to them...libraries, parks, school safety.
- ! For an art project — turn empty refrigerator boxes into voting booths.

**E-mail your election results to the Pennsylvania Bar Association at [Vote2004@pabar.org](mailto:Vote2004@pabar.org) by October 19. Include vote totals for each candidate and the name of your school and contact information. The results will be tabulated and the winner announced statewide. A sample ballot is available on the PBA Web site at [www.pabar.org](http://www.pabar.org), or you can create your own! E-mail [Vote2004@pabar.org](mailto:Vote2004@pabar.org) with any questions.**

# HOW DOES THE CONSTITUTION PROTECT YOUR RIGHT TO VOTE?

## A Lesson Plan for Grades 3-6: A look at the history behind this important civic responsibility and valued right focusing on the 26<sup>th</sup> Amendment

- **Grade Levels:** 3 – 6
- **Academic Standards:** Pa. Academic Standards for Civics and Government 5.1C, 5.2A, 5.2E, 5.3A and 5.3F.
- **Objective:** Students will understand the evolution of the right to vote in the United States over time and apply that understanding to examine the way citizens exercise their right to vote today.
- **Materials:** *We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution (WTP)* is the title of both a free text that is available at all grade levels through the Center for Civic Education (CCE) and a civic education program that is carefully designed to educate young people about the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights. The materials below are adapted from Lesson 21 in the elementary *WTP* text. We thank the CCE for its willingness to share these materials. In Pennsylvania, the WTP is run by the National Constitution Center.

### Ask the students these initial questions:

- Why should people have the right to vote for or chose government officials in an election?
- Who should have the right to vote for government officials?
- Who should not have the right?
- Should all of the states have the same rules for allowing people to vote?

You may wish to have students explain their answers to these questions as long as time allows. You also may want to read this section from the *WTP* text to the students or have them read it prior to distributing the student handout:

### Why did the states limit the right to vote to white male property owners?

The framers of the Constitution could not agree on who had the right to vote. They left it up to state governments to decide. Early in our nation's history, state governments usually only allowed white men who owned property to vote. They believed that a white man with property could have a lot to lose if a bad government came to power. Therefore, they would be more careful with their vote. They would choose leaders who would respect their property.

During the first 50 years after the adoption of the Constitution, the states gave the right to vote to all white men, not only to those who owned property. African Americans, Native Americans and women still could not vote. It took many years and a lot of hard work before these groups gained the right to vote.

The right to vote in a democracy is very important. It is also a right that many citizens frequently ignore.

*(The WTP text goes on to describe how African Americans, women and Native Americans won the right to vote. For purposes of this lesson, the focus will be on the right of 18-year-olds to vote.)*

### **How did 18-year-olds gain the right to vote?**

In 1970, only four states let citizens younger than 21 years old vote. In that year, thousands of young Americans were fighting a war in Vietnam. Many of them were under 21 years of age. People argued that if 18-year-olds were old enough to fight, they were old enough to vote. In March 1971, the Twenty-Sixth Amendment was added to the Constitution, which gives citizens 18 years of age or older the right to vote in all elections. The people who fought for the young adults' right to vote believed they would use this right. Today, however, fewer 18- to 25-year-olds vote than any other age group.

### **Who is eligible to vote today?**

Today state governments still make decisions about voting rights. All of the states have passed laws saying that only citizens can vote. The states limit the right to vote to people who are residents of the state and to those who register to vote. Some states do not allow people who have been found guilty of serious crimes to vote. The individual states decide what kinds of voting machines are acceptable. They also decide on the rules that make a vote valid.

## **Teacher's Notes for Student Handout**

Review before distributing the student handout.

You just graduated from high school and have to sign up for military service on your 18th birthday. The year is 1952, and you are concerned that you might get called up, or drafted, to fight in the Korean War. There is a person running for election who shares your views about the Korean War, and you would like to vote for that person. However, the laws of your state say you must be 21 to vote.

1. Do you feel your constitutional rights are being violated?

**Answers will vary. Remind students that there was no 26<sup>th</sup> Amendment in 1952.**

2. Explain your feelings about your situation and what should be done about it.

**Answers will vary. If students suggest amending the Constitution, ask them how that process is done and refer them to Article V of the Constitution.**

3. How does the 26<sup>th</sup> Amendment change the situation above for 18-year-olds today?

**The amendment allows 18-year-olds to vote.**

4. If the argument that led to the passing of the 26<sup>th</sup> Amendment was “old enough to fight, old enough to vote,” and not all men and no women were drafted into combat, why do you think the 26<sup>th</sup> Amendment extended the right to vote to all 18-year-olds and not just to males in the military?

**Answers will vary. Remind students that the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment gave women the right to vote, and to discriminate against women in this way would violate the Constitution. You might discuss with the students whether an amendment that extended the right to vote just to 18- to 21-year-olds in the military would be constitutional — it is a more interesting question since that would not discriminate against women so obviously. Here you can explain to the students that the politics of the day in the early 70's would never have allowed for such a proposal to pass.**

5. Should 18-year-olds or persons of any age who fail to vote regularly lose their right to vote?

**Answers will vary.**

## Follow-up Activity

Interview eligible voters and ask them whether they voted when they turned 18. Answers will vary with each person, and the results should run the range from people who turned 18 before the 26<sup>th</sup> Amendment passed to people just now turning 18. If the person did not vote at age 18, ask at what age he or she first voted. The following is a list of Web sites that you and/or your students may go to in order to find more information about voting.

- **www.declareyourself.com** — Declare Yourself is a national nonpartisan, nonprofit campaign to energize and empower a new movement of young voters to participate in the 2004 presidential election.
- **www.vote-smart.org** — Project Vote Smart provides a comprehensive database about thousands of candidates for president, congress, governors and state legislatures. Less detailed information is available at the county and local level for each state.
- **www.pbs.org/elections/kids/educators.html** — This link will connect you with the PBS “By the People: Elections 2004” Web site. The Web site contains numerous voting-related lesson plans for all grade levels.
- **www.archives.gov/national\_archives\_experience/charters/charters.html** — This link allows you to view and download copies of the Declaration of Independence, Constitution and Bill of Rights.
- **kids-voting.org/index.html** — Kids Voting is based in Ohio. Its goal is to promote responsible citizenship and to encourage students to be informed, lifelong voters. The Web site contains free voting-related puzzles, activities and civics quizzes.
- **www.fec.gov** — This is the link to the Federal Election Commission’s Web site. It contains information about voting in federal elections.
- **www.dos.state.pa.us/bcel/site/default.asp** — This is the link to the Pennsylvania Department of State, Bureau of Commissions, Elections and Legislation Web site, which contains information about voting in Pennsylvania.

## Qualifications to Vote in Pennsylvania

Individuals applying to register to vote must be • **a citizen of the United States** for at least one month before the next primary, special, municipal or general election • **a resident of Pennsylvania** and the election district in which the individual desires to register and vote for at least 30 days before the next primary, special, municipal or general election • **at least 18 years of age** on or before the day of the next primary, special, municipal or general election.

## Qualification Information for Individuals Applying to Register to Vote

• Any intentional false statement made on an application for voter registration constitutes perjury and is punishable by law • The Commonwealth Court of Pennsylvania ruled on December 26, 2000, that the Pennsylvania law prohibiting convicted felons from registering to vote for five years after their release from prison is unconstitutional. Consequently, if completing an older version of the Voter Registration Mail Application (VRMA) form, a convicted felon who has been released from prison may make application to register to vote by striking through the felony conviction line at Section 9(2) on the VRMA and signing his or her name. [Note: convicted felons who are incarcerated on the date of a primary or election are not eligible to vote, irrespective of whether they are registered. However, pretrial detainees and misdemeanants are eligible to apply to register to vote and/or to vote by absentee ballot if they otherwise qualify to vote under law.]

# Should You Be Able to Vote When You're 18?



You just graduated from high school and have to sign up for military service on your 18th birthday. The year is 1952, and you are concerned that you might get called up, or drafted, to fight in the Korean War. There is a person running for election who shares your views about the Korean War, and you would like to vote for that person. However, the laws of your state say you must be 21 to vote.

1. Do you feel your constitutional rights are being violated?
2. Explain your feelings about your situation and what should be done about it.

3. How does the 26<sup>th</sup> Amendment change the situation above for 18-year-olds today?



4. If the argument that led to the passing of the 26<sup>th</sup> Amendment was “old enough to fight, old enough to vote” and not all men and no women were drafted into combat, why do you think the 26<sup>th</sup> Amendment extended the right to vote to all 18-year-olds and not just to males in the military?
5. Should 18-year-olds or persons of any age who fail to vote regularly lose their right to vote?

# FREE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

## A Lesson Plan for Grades 7-12: A look at community service and civic problem solving

- **Grade Levels:** 7-12
- **Academic Standards:** Pa. Academic Standards for Civics and Government 5.1C, 5.2A, 5.2B, 5.2D, and 5.2G.
- **Objective:** Students will explore the benefits of community service and develop an appreciation for its value.
- **Materials:** Student handout, “Benefits of Community Service.” The student handout and background materials were adapted from a lesson created for the American Bar Association’s “Lawyers Helping Young People Become Good Citizens” series. We thank the ABA for its willingness to share these materials.

### Ask the students these initial questions:

- Have you ever helped anyone outside your family just because that person needed help?
- What is the distinction between the duty we owe our family (personal responsibility) and the duty we owe society (civic responsibility)?
- Should people be forced to fulfill their duty to society?
- *You may wish to have students explain their answers to these questions before moving to the student handout.*

### Teacher’s Notes for Student Handout

Review before distributing the student handout.

1. What is community service? ***Students should be able to interpret community service (often called “service learning” in schools where it is integrated into the curriculum) as voluntary (unpaid) work to help solve civic problems.***
2. What makes community service effective? ***Successful community service programs have student input, tackle real community problems, allow for reflection by participants and involve participants from diverse groups.***
3. What are some different types of community service projects? ***Answers will vary greatly, but should range from tackling social issues to teaching others about issues.***
4. What person who has served the community has made an impression on you? Why? ***Answers will vary. A great follow-up exercise is to have students write thank-you notes to the people they mention.***
5. What makes you enthusiastic about community service? ***Answers will vary, but might include a desire to improve society and to feel needed.***
6. What concerns do you have about community service? ***Time, safety and need are general concerns in community service programs.***
7. How can community service be a good thing for you personally? ***Career exploration, resume enhancement and a sense of being a positive community force are some of the possible answers here.***
8. How can community service be a good thing for society? ***Community service helps address real problems and teaches good citizenship.***
9. Should community service be required in schools? ***Answers will vary. Some argue that mandatory community service takes away the power of voluntary service. Others point out that the best way to learn how to do something is actually to do it, so we can teach students to serve by giving them required lessons in service.***

After discussing the handout, ask students about the needs in their community — from school to the larger society. Is community service required for graduation? Whether it is or not, ask the students if all high school students should be required to perform community service in order to graduate. The courts have dealt with numerous cases challenging such requirements.

# Benefits of Community Service



1. What is community service?
2. What makes community service effective?
3. What are some different types of community service projects?
4. What person who has served the community has made an impression on you? Why?
5. What makes you enthusiastic about community service?
6. What concerns do you have about community service?
7. How can community service be a good thing for you personally?
8. How can community service be a good thing for society?
9. Should community service be required in schools?

**For more lesson plans and information on civics and government as they relate to the U.S. Constitution, please contact the following organizations:**

**Pennsylvania Bar Association (PBA)**

Contact: Jennifer Branstetter  
100 South Street, P.O. Box 186  
Harrisburg, Pa. 17108-0186  
Phone: 1-800-932-0311, Ext. 2216; Fax: (717) 238-2342; E-mail: [jennifer.branstetter@pabar.org](mailto:jennifer.branstetter@pabar.org);  
[www.pabar.org/educationprograms.shtml](http://www.pabar.org/educationprograms.shtml)

The Pennsylvania Bar Association's Law-Related Education (LRE) programs are designed to help Pennsylvania schools lay a foundation for teaching civics and government in the classroom. The PBA partners with the National Constitution Center, local bar associations, judges and lawyers to accomplish this goal. The cornerstone LRE projects include *I Signed the Constitution*, Project PEACE, Law Day, Mock Trial and Stepping Out. To learn more about these programs and to view past lesson plans, visit the PBA's K-12 Law-Related Education area on the PBA's Web site.

**National Constitution Center (NCC)**

Contact: P.J. Coleman  
525 Arch Street, Independence Mall  
Philadelphia, PA 19106  
Phone: (215) 409-6629; Fax: (215) 409-6650; [www.constitutioncenter.org](http://www.constitutioncenter.org)

The National Constitution Center was established by Congress through the Constitution Heritage Act as an independent nonpartisan, nonprofit organization. It is designed to increase awareness and understanding of the U.S. Constitution, its history and its relevance to our daily lives so that all of us will better understand and exercise our rights and responsibilities. The National Constitution Center Web site contains a teacher resource area with lesson plans and curriculum ideas for the classroom. The National Constitution Center also serves as the Pennsylvania Center for the We The People program.

**LEAP-Kids (Law, Education & Peace for Children)**

Contact: David Trevaskis  
P.O. Box 428, 6 Royal Avenue  
Glenside, PA 19038-0428  
Phone: (215) 885-1610; Fax: (215) 885-1036; E-mail: [david@leap-kids.com](mailto:david@leap-kids.com); [www.leap-kids.com](http://www.leap-kids.com)

LEAP-Kids is the successor organization to the statewide law-related and civic education (LRCE) program formerly housed at Temple-LEAP. LEAP-Kids develops innovative educational programs aimed at empowering young people through LRCE study. LRCE is a unique blend of substance and strategy: Students learn substantive information about laws, the legal system, and their rights and responsibilities through strategies that promote cooperative learning, critical thinking and positive interaction between young people and adults. LEAP-Kids conducts a wide variety of teacher trainings and also produces general and Pennsylvania-specific curricula related to civics and government.

**Youth for Justice Initiative** (Street Law, Center for Civic Education, Constitutional Rights Foundation, Phi Alpha Delta & American Bar Association)

Contact: [www.youthforjustice.org](http://www.youthforjustice.org)

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) of the Department of Justice sponsors the Youth for Justice program, which is a national LRE program coordinated by the partners listed above and works in cooperation with a network of affiliated state programs. Over one million students participate in Youth for Justice programs annually. With support from OJJDP, Youth for Justice's five national partners and state programs offer an array of LRE programs and activities for young people in their schools and communities.