

Opening Pathways to the Community

Abriendo Caminos a la Comunidad



"Together We Can Make a World of Difference"

A program for vulnerable youth to explore their community through meaningful service activities, character development and reflection.

Funded through the California Department of Education -
Community Service Grant Program
- No Child Left Behind Act
- Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities

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is a regional partnership of

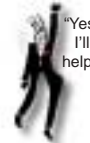
Volunteer Centers



of Santa Cruz County



Volunteer Center of Silicon Valley



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Monterey County Office of Education

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Santa Cruz County Office of Education



For more information in your area, contact:



Printed by the COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION
Diane K. Siri, Ed.D., Superintendent



"I knew that I could help people in the community and this [program] was my first chance to show what I could do."

— Junior Volunteer Participant

Philosophy

The Caminos or Pathways project provides community service opportunities for youth who have been suspended or expelled from school. The approach takes on the philosophy that these vulnerable youth can be transformed through service activities and positive interactions with caring adults in the community.

Caminos/Pathways is built upon the latest research for fostering resiliency and developing the assets that youth need to thrive. Through the varied intern/service opportunities offered by the County Volunteer Centers, youth will enhance the following developmental assets as defined by the Search Institute. Participants will:

Acquire **Support** from working with caring adults in the community.

Gain **Empowerment** when valued as a resource to the community.

Receive **Boundaries and High Expectations** from positive adult, peer and community role models.

Experience **Constructive Use of Time** when engaged in positive after school activities.

Renew **Commitment to Learning** through personal rewards, achievement and success in internship service activities.

Cultivate **Positive Values** such as respect, responsibility, integrity, justice, civic virtue and trustworthiness through participation in program elements.

Learn **Social Competencies** in decision-making, conflict resolution, cultural sensitivity and interpersonal relationships.

Achieve **Positive Identity** through the confidence that service activities can provide.

Optimally, youth will experience a sense of purpose, perceive the esteem of their community, and develop a positive view of their personal future.

Program Elements

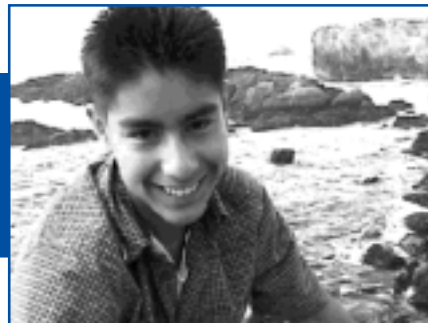
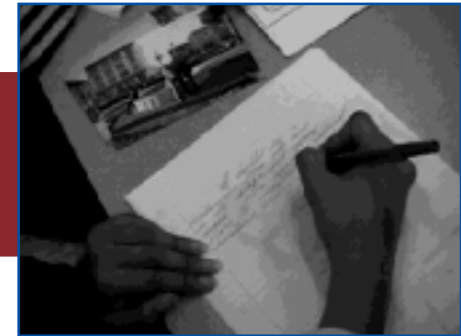


Service Cycles:

Youth will participate in 6-week internships with one or more community organizations. Youth may participate in more than one cycle. Each cycle is structured with graduated levels of skill and responsibility so successful participants can look forward to more rewarding service placements. The cycles will focus on activities from four broad areas of community service: Human Services, Health Services, Neighborhood/Civic Improvement, and Education/Recreation.

Character Development:

Through the community service and reflection activities youth will gain an insight into themselves and their connection to the community. Participants will develop problem-solving skills, practice decision-making and increase positive behavioral traits.



Reflection:

Once a week, youth will meet as a group for a variety of reflective activities developed to meet the various learning styles of each participant. These activities may include journal writing, photo essays, group discussion, role-playing, skits, art and field trips.

By working closely with our participant school sites, we will ensure that our activities are in line with community service goals and expected outcomes for each youth.

If a participant enrolls in a different school, Caminos staff will assist with the transition. Follow-up services will be provided to ensure that newly acquired skills are encouraged.