

LIONS SERVICES FOR CHILDREN



COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Current statistics reveal that staggering numbers of children all over the world live in adverse circumstances, with millions suffering from poverty, illnesses, disabilities, and illiteracy, among many other hardships. A glimpse at these numbers may create an impression that so many children cannot be helped. However, the sight of a child suffering in our midst always creates a deeper impression – this child must be helped! More and more, Lions are meeting the distressed, yet hopeful, gaze of the children nearest them.

Rooted in communities across the world, Lions are helping through food and clothing drives for children in poverty, recreational activities for children with illnesses, camps for children with disabilities, reading programs for children with illiteracy, and countless other projects. By responding to the specific needs of children in their respective communities, Lions are making a difference, one child at a time.

The mission of the Lions Services for Children Program is to improve the lives of children and young adolescents in adverse circumstances through health and education services, locally and internationally.

What adverse circumstances do children in your community face?

This assessment will help your club answer this question and determine the services that would most benefit these children. It will also help your club identify the individuals and organizations concerned with meeting the health and education needs of children, a process that may lead to future collaboration. Furthermore, by successfully completing this assessment and initiating a project for children, your club will demonstrate the leadership skills that promote club pride, build team spirit, and attract new members.

Take the following steps to assess the health and education needs of children in your area:

STEP 1 DISCUSS ASSESSMENT WITH THE BOARD

Discuss with your club's board of directors the idea of developing a project for children, emphasizing the important role Lions can play in providing services to children in adverse circumstances. Propose to them the goal of conducting a community assessment of children's needs. Explain how the assessment will help the club find and focus on a project that provides health and/or education services to children in serious need of assistance, and how such a project would excite and challenge the club's members.

STEP 2 APPOINT A COMMITTEE

After receiving the board's approval, discuss the importance of the assessment with club members at a meeting, asking them for their ideas and suggestions. A committee can be appointed to conduct the assessment.

STEP 3 IDENTIFY KEY INDIVIDUALS IN THE COMMUNITY TO CONTACT

Before beginning the assessment, you and your committee should identify the individuals who can best evaluate the needs of children in your community. Make a list of individuals to contact that includes specialists in the fields of health and education.

Here are examples of individuals you will want to contact:

- Health Services.....Hospital administrators, doctors,
and nurses.
- Education Services.....Administrators and teachers at local
schools; directors of local libraries.
- Youth Services.....School counselors, social workers,
and student leaders; managers of youth
programs and activities.

Once you have obtained the addresses and telephone numbers of the individuals listed, the assessment can begin.

STEP 4 CONDUCT A SURVEY

Call the individuals on your list to see if they will participate in the assessment. A questionnaire is included for your convenience. Explain that the questionnaire can be completed by mail or by telephone. If the individual prefers to be surveyed by mail, then mail the questionnaire with a cover letter (see the attached sample). Indicate a return address on the back of the questionnaire or include a stamped, self-addressed envelope to increase the likelihood of a reply. If the individual prefers a telephone survey, begin asking the questions on the questionnaire.

STEP 5 ANALYZE SURVEY RESPONSES

The committee should review and analyze the completed questionnaires. In your community, what health and education services do children need the most? How can your club help to ensure that children receive these services? Are other clubs and organizations providing these services? Would these groups be interested in collaborating with your club?

STEP 6 SHARE RESULTS WITH YOUR CLUB AND OTHER LIONS

The committee should share the assessment results at a club meeting and discuss how your club might address the specific needs of children in your community. Invite fellow members to give their opinions.

The District Lions Services for Children Chairperson would be interested in your findings. Also, if you have learned about children's needs outside of your club's service area, notify your district governor. Finally, inform other clubs in your area about the project your club plans to begin, as these clubs might be encouraged to conduct their own community assessments of children's needs.

STEP 7 SHARE RESULTS WITH SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

In writing or by telephone, thank the individuals you surveyed for participating in the assessment. Let them know how the information they provided helped your club to develop a project for children in need in your community. Ask them if they are interested in working with the Lions and if they would like to learn more about your Lions club by attending the next club meeting.

Lions Services for Children Community Needs Assessment Sample Cover Letter

To be attached to the questionnaire and mailed to community leaders.

Date

Name of Community Leader

Title

Address

Dear (Name):

To provide better service to (name of community), the (name) Lions club is conducting a survey of leaders in the community. Our goal is to identify health and education services which we, as a service club, might provide to children and young adolescents in need. We hope that you will help us to recognize areas of need within our community where we might offer assistance.

By completing the attached questionnaire, you will help us to determine children's needs in the specific areas of health and education. Please feel free, however, to comment on any services that you feel would benefit our community.

We also encourage you to forward a copy of this questionnaire to any other person whose insights you believe would be helpful to our club.

Please return the completed questionnaire by (date). After we have analyzed all of the results, a representative of our club will contact you to discuss what we learned from this survey and how we might work together.

In the meantime, if you have any questions, feel free to call me at (phone number). It would be a pleasure to hear from you. Thank you very much for taking the time to complete the questionnaire.

Sincerely,

(name of Lion)

(name of Lions club)



LIONS SERVICES FOR CHILDREN COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Name:

Title:

Address:

Business Telephone:

Fax Number:

E-mail:

Area of Expertise:

Health Services

Education Services

Youth Services

Other _____

1. Can you identify successful service projects in your field that provide health and/or education services to children in your community? Yes No Please list below.

2. If you answered yes to question one, why do you think the community service projects you listed are successful?

3a. Can you identify a specific children's need in your field that, if met, would especially benefit the community? Yes No Please describe below.

3b. How do you think this need can best be met?

4a. Do you know of any volunteer groups that currently address this need?

Yes

Please name the groups and describe their activities below.

No

4b. How can volunteer groups work to complement each other and avoid unnecessary duplication of efforts in addressing this need?

5. Do you feel that residents in this community are adequately aware of the health and education services available to children? Yes No Please comment below.

6. In your opinion, is there room for more volunteer projects for children in your service area?

Yes

Please comment below.

No

Additional Comments:

Signature

Date

Please return completed questionnaire to:

Thank you very much for helping Lions determine how we might assist children in need in our community.