

Future Problem Solving Program International

Community Problem Solving



Getting Started with CmPS
2015-16

Future Problem Solving Program International Community Problem Solving Component 2015-16



What is Community Problem Solving?

Community Problem Solving (CmPS) is a team or individual activity in which students identify real problems and implement real solutions in a community – local, state, national, or even global. Students use the skills of the problem solving process as they work on their project; however, since real life is not always as organized as an academic exercise, the process may not proceed neatly from step to step. CmPS can be pursued as an extracurricular activity or as part of the regular school curriculum and can be one or two years in length.

Why Community Problem Solving?

Future Problem Solving Program International (FPSPI) provides the tools and strategies students need to face the challenges of today and the future. What better way to prepare students for their future than by teaching them to think systematically about problematic situations, to gather information to understand the situation, and to evaluate

multiple solutions in order to best address the situation? Students involved in Community Problem Solving learn powerful lessons about creating change, about dealing with local authorities and organizations, and about making a positive impact. The implementation of real solutions gives students a strong sense of accomplishment and helps them to see the practical applications of the processes and skills that they have been learning. CmPS participation may fulfill service-learning requirements, although CmPS projects are typically more extensive.

Future Problem Solving Program International's six-step problem solving model is aligned with National Curriculum Standards, Common Core Standards, and the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) Standards. Through participation in Community Problem Solving, students refine critical and creative thinking skills, focus on a real community or school issue, produce solution ideas, generate criteria to evaluate solution ideas, determine the best plan of action, and implement the plan to resolve their problem.

Who can participate in Community Problem Solving?

Students may participate in CmPS in three divisions: Junior (grades 4-6, or the equivalent), Middle (grades 7-9), and Senior (grades 10-12). Having a background in the Global Issues or Action-based components of FPSPI is a great start for students in CmPS, but this is not required. If students have not been involved with these components, they do need to learn the problem solving process as part of their community problem solving experience.



2015 Beyond Award Project Integrate Singapore

“Project Integrate is a 2-year project targeting the recreational needs of the foreign worker population in Singapore. We aim to create a healthy culture of recreation for workers of Healthserve to reduce unhealthy activities like drinking and gambling. We achieved this through our interactive library trips, sport sessions, regular outings and events on break days. Additionally, we organised a book drive and helped out at carnivals. We increased our outreach through posters, promotional videos, social media and concerts. Foreign workers deserve our respect, and Project Integrate is proud to have made a difference.”

How do students participate in CmPS?

Individuals or teams of any size may participate in Community Problem Solving. For a team, you may want at least 3 or 4 students to handle all requirements; and for larger projects, the group may consist of more students. Complex projects often require substantial organization, with tasks divided among the participants. Please note that a maximum of 15 students on a team advancing to the International Conference may participate in the CmPS interview, but all team members may participate in the CmPS Fair. Since CmPS projects are long-term activities, lasting up to a year or more, students need to be committed to following through with the activity.

How can I get started with students?

Training in the problem solving process is important for coaches of Community Problem Solving teams and individuals. Affiliate Programs often hold workshops in the problem solving process, and you can find resources for the problem solving process within the Global Issues Problem Solving or Action-based Problem Solving publications at fspimart.org. See the CmPS Essential Publications page for information focused on Community Problem Solving and the Tips for Coaches pages for ideas on working with your students. Contact your Affiliate Director for more information.

How do I register students for Community Problem Solving?

Each Affiliate Program determines its own processes, fees, and due dates for registration and entries. Your Affiliate Director can provide you with registration and submission materials and may be able to put you in touch with experienced CmPS coaches.

2015 Junior Grand Champions Project R.U.R.A.L. Whangarei, New Zealand

“Our school’s 4.5ha of land was used ineffectively and we thought it could be used for authentic hands on learning; supporting our education, including the wider community and utilizing landspace more effectively. One challenge was finding 5 more hectares so contractors would support us on our land. We successfully signed a lease; included the whole school in learning to farm 6ha of maize; re-claim a native bush, harvest and distill essential oils from manuka and lavender we planted, keep bees, make balms, build a paddock, plant an orchard, keep Alpacas, felt, enterprise, taught all classes and provided all teaching resources.”

How are CmPS projects evaluated?



CmPS projects are scored by trained evaluators who consider all elements of the project. At the Affiliate level, these assessments usually include evaluation of a six-page written report, supporting documentation within an addendum, and a scrapbook. Additional requirements for projects that qualify for International Competition include a table-top display, an oral presentation, a media presentation, and an interview. In most Affiliate Programs, first place projects move on to the International Competition (IC).

Where can I find a sample project to view?

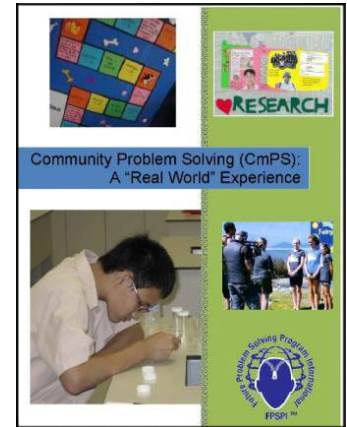
Please visit www.fpspi.org and click the components tab to view a winning CmPS project report, addendum, and media presentation.

Community Problem Solving Essential Publications

Available at www.fpspimart.org

CmPS: A “Real World” Experience

- A reference for learning more about all areas of CmPS and how to achieve successful results
- Includes tips and ideas for CmPS projects



\$35 electronic/\$40 book

CmPS 2015 International Champions

Beyonder, Grand Champion, and First Place projects at the 2015 International Conference

Includes:

- Project Reports
- Project Addendums
- Evaluations
- Presentations

\$45 Champions Book



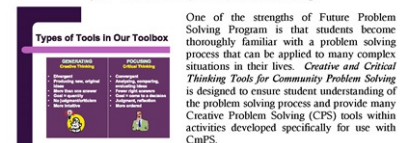
Creative and Critical Thinking Tools for Community Problem Solvers

Enhance and develop Community Problem Solving Projects

- Problem Solving Process
- Tools for Generating Ideas
- Tools for Focusing on Best Ideas

*Coming Soon - Available Fall 2015

Creative and Critical Thinking Tools for Community Problem Solving



Problem Solving Step	Thinking Tool	Type
Overall	Basic Brainstorming	Generating
Develop an Area of Concern	Futurex Wheel	Generating
	From Wild to Wild	Generating
	Desired Future, Current Reality	Generating, Focusing
	Plus Minus Interesting	Focusing
	Sources of Data	Focusing
1 Identify Challenges	5 Ws and an H	Generating
	Attribute Listing 1	Generating
	Focusing on Challenges	Focusing
2 Select an Underlying Problem	Cross Impact Matrix	Focusing, Generating
	Hits and Hot Spots	Focusing
	Improvement Goals	Generating
	Dancing with Words	Generating
3 Produce Solution Ideas	Attribute Listing 2	Generating
	Checklisting for Possibilities	Generating
	Forced Relationships	Generating
	Morphological Matrix	Generating
	Developing Criteria	Generating
4&5 Use Criteria to Evaluate Solution Ideas	Paired Comparison Analysis	Focusing
	AIAD with Criteria	Focusing
	Evaluation Matrix	Focusing
6 Develop an Action Plan	Assistors and Resistors	Focusing
	Sequencing SYMPL	Focusing

Community Problem Solving

Extending Service Learning and Community Service

Service learning enjoys a spotlight in education by taking traditional community service into a meaningful educational experience. Many schools, both public and private, mandate that service hours be completed as a condition for promotion and graduation. In addition, many youth groups and community organizations require youth service for advancement, awards, or scholarships. The Community Problem Solving (CmPS) component of Future Problem Solving International can provide a framework for service learning while going deeper. The Future Problem Solving CmPS model provides both structure and guidance to meet these service learning requirements. The CmPS component also provides an opportunity for celebration through its competition by recognizing and rewarding exemplary work.

Community Problem Solving and Community Service – NOT THE SAME THING!

Community Problem Solving expands community service as participants apply their problem solving skills to current problems. By participating in the CmPS program and completing a CmPS project, students will have gone above and beyond the parameters of traditional community service projects. Students refine critical and creative thinking skills, focus on a student-identified need, and become actively engaged in solving the area of concern. As students plan, develop, and implement the project's goals, they will find they have provided an invaluable service. The impact of the project will reap immeasurable rewards to the people within the community who will benefit from the students' actions.

CmPS Project Ideas

The ideas listed here are organized by categories and fulfill several goals:

- 1) They show the difference between community service and CmPS, and
- 2) They can serve as springboards for students as they start thinking about their Community Problem Solving project.



These ideas are only ideas, and not a complete list of all possible projects. The project the students develop **MUST** be an issue that students identify in the chosen community, one for which the students feel passion. A sample CmPS project report, addendum, and media presentation can be viewed at www.fpspi.org at the component tab.



The light bulbs represent community service ideas only.



The award ribbons indicate ideas that can be broadened into CmPS projects with planning, problem identification, and action using the problem solving process.

Civic/Cultural Issues Category

Community Service Ideas

- 💡 Train and give historical walking tours of the community.
- 💡 Contact the League of Women Voters or county voter registration officials to learn how to train and register voters, man a registration booth, explain how to register, and distribute mail-in registration forms.
- 💡 Intern at a local art or history museum.

CmPS Project Ideas

- 🏆 Beautify the public schools by organizing high school art students and community artists to create and paint wall murals based on town history or the winning ideas from students in each school.

- 🦋 Survey residents on neighborhood crime, interview police and town officials on prevention methods, create and distribute a flyer on crime prevention and safety issues to all community members, and organize a community watch committee.



- 🦋 Interview senior citizens, veterans, and older residents on town history; create a historical overview of the community to sell as a fundraiser and/or increase community pride and heritage. Write, edit, and publish a community history book.
- 🦋 Collect and document what life was like during recent historical periods by interviewing residents of nursing homes, veteran’s hospitals, and rehabilitation centers. Create a living history museum to highlight the community.

- 🦋 Conduct a study of the need for an animal shelter within the community. Design and implement a campaign to initiate the development of the shelter. Lobby local government for the implementation of a dog tag tax to cover costs of the shelter.
- 🦋 Work with victims of a natural disaster to enable them to overcome their trauma through the use of photography. Design, create, and publish the works for sale to aid other victims of similar crises.

Education Category

Community Service Ideas

- 💡 Make colorful math, science, and/or reading flash cards for younger students.
- 💡 Donate time to teach computer skills to the adults in the community.
- 💡 Invite officers of a local bank to speak to students about good financial practices.

CmPS Project Ideas

- 🦋 Start a Friendship Club to make new students feel welcome, interview and highlight them in the school paper, create and distribute a “survival kit” containing everything they would want to know about the school and town, create a website for information that would benefit new students.
- 🦋 Design, create, and man a moderated homework hotline or blog to assist students with homework.
- 🦋 Create a web site or app to teach students about responsible spending and saving habits.
- 🦋 Team with an impoverished school in a Third World Country to provide needed books and supplies.
- 🦋 Design and implement a program that uses animals to aid in the instruction of special needs students.



Environmental Concerns Category

Community Service Ideas

- 💡 Volunteer in a cleanup or painting effort to help low income or special needs residents.
- 💡 Cleanup a streambed or riverbank.
- 💡 Create a recycling plan for the school; monitor the success in each homeroom.

CmPS Project Ideas

- 🦋 Build a walking trail at a local park in order to increase the health of the local community’s residents.
- 🦋 Learn about water quality testing; test the local streams, rivers, lakes, and water storage facilities for the presence of pollutants; report findings in the school and/or community newspaper.

- ⚠ Identify local businesses that are dumping pollutants, create and collect signatures on a petition to stop the dumping, present petition to city officials, and notify the EPA.
- ⚠ Study the effects of litter, develop a plan to mandate recycling in the community, and lobby government for passage of mandatory recycling.
- ⚠ Survey the school to determine the use and disposal of environmentally unfriendly materials and investigate safer alternatives and present a plan to the principal, school board, or PTA. Implement the plan.
- ⚠ Study the impact of poor air quality on plants, animals, and humans; conduct various air quality samplings throughout the community; create a plan to improve air quality.

Health Concerns Category

Community Service Ideas

- 💡 Volunteer at the Cancer Society, Kidney Foundation, MADD, the county health center, etc.
- 💡 Collect pledges in the school for an anti-smoking campaign.
- 💡 Create first aid posters and coloring pages, and teach simple first aid skills to younger students.

CmPS Project Ideas

- ⚠ Conduct a study of the needs for organ donation in the community. Encourage people to sign organ donor cards by creating an organ donor card drive.
- ⚠ Organize an anti-smoking campaign in the school and community, arrange for experts to present a workshop, and track the impact of the campaign on the students and staff.
- ⚠ Create a puppet show or video on health issues such as the benefits of being physically fit or after-school safety tips for young children, and present it at primary schools and community centers.
- ⚠ Interview the police, rescue squad, and firefighters about how to prevent the most common home accidents; create and distribute an informational flyer on how to reduce these accidents.



Human Services Category

Community Service Ideas

- 💡 Prepare and/or serve food in a homeless shelter or rescue mission.
- 💡 Participate in a drive to collect clothing or furniture for those in need.
- 💡 Intern at a senior citizen center.
- 💡 Design flyers or web pages for local non-profit agencies so more people are aware of the services.

CmPS Project Ideas

- ⚠ Petition the city council to renovate an abandoned building or house, research possible civic uses such as a home for abused women and their children, and carry out the renovation.
- ⚠ Design and build a community park/playground for handicapped kids.
- ⚠ Research the needs of people at the local shelter or mission organize a drive to collect toiletries, school supplies, and other needed items; create "We Care Kits" to deliver to the residents.
- ⚠ Organize a local foster grandparent program, create an "interests and needs survey," and connect students and senior citizens.
- ⚠ Contact grocery stores, schools, and local restaurants to find out what they do with their unused food; organize a Gleaning Project to distribute the food to the hungry in the community.
- ⚠ Study the needs of foster kids within the community. Team with government and social services to provide essential care packages, including the distribution of suitcases containing basic hygiene items and blankets to law enforcement agencies who rescue kids from abusive situations.

