

Welcome to Your Sierra Service Project Experience!

2011 Adult Counselor Training



We are so excited that you have joined the Sierra Service Project (SSP) team from your church for this summer's adventure. You are a vital part of this transforming experience for your youth; hopefully you will find yourself transformed as well.

The goals of this training session are:

- To ensure that each counselor understands the mission and purpose of SSP.
- To make sure that all counselors have a good idea of what they can expect at SSP.
- To make sure that each counselor knows what SSP expects of him or her.
- To go over some specific information from the prep packet that will help you understand your responsibilities.
- And especially to try to answer any other questions you might have.

Today's Topics

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Contact Information

916-488-6441

Meghan.osborn@sierraserviceproject.org

PO Box 992
Carmichael, CA 95609

www.sierraserviceproject.org

1) SSP Mission and Theology

Sierra Service Project Mission Statement

Through acts of service repairing homes in Native American and urban communities and serving in Central America, SSP invites youth and young adults into a closer relationship with God and to experience the transformative power of serving people who have a culture and life experience different from their own.

Question: Reflecting on the Mission Statement, what do we try to accomplish during a week at SSP?

Sierra Service Project Theology Statement

We know God to be a giver of wonderful gifts. Sierra Service Project is an extension of the Divine Invitation into a relationship with God. Like God, Sierra Service Project can only invite but cannot control the response of those invited. Like grace, Sierra Service Project offers service freely without judging if the receiver merits our love. We as participants of Sierra Service Project are the receivers of God's grace. We extend that same grace to our hosts by putting our faith into action repairing homes.

We respond to God's invitation to open ourselves up to the possibility of a transformational experience. In community, we begin to recognize our dependence on God and interdependence on each other. As a community, we strive to grow being led by the Spirit. We choose to serve, believing that through our humble acts of love, we can learn about God's character and love for us. We seek to accept people as they are from the moment they stand before us, as the first step toward relationship. We seek to remain open--an openness of hand and of heart that we might give, receive and understand.

Through our acts of service, we allow the grace of God to flow into and through our lives. We understand that all people are valuable, carefully fashioned in God's image and we are freed to accept the essential humanity of each person we meet. In reaching out to others, we follow the example of service set forth by Jesus Christ.

As with Christ, we serve people whose lives will benefit by our service. We believe that God lives with us and the work we do with our hands and heart. We realize that, despite the differences in culture, values, history and geography, we are all brothers and sisters of worth. Let us accept the Sierra Service Project invitation. "Let us rise up and build."

Question: What does this statement say about our relationship with God?

Question: What does it say about the youth who come to SSP?

Question: What does it say about the people we serve?

2) Sierra Service Project 101

Who Participates

- There are about 65 youth and adult participants at each SSP week.
- That number may be made up of just a couple larger groups, or several smaller groups or any combination of these.
- Over 130 churches are participating this summer at one of our seven sites.
- Most churches are from California where SSP's roots are, but there are groups from Arizona, Oregon, Washington, Colorado, Montana, Illinois and Pennsylvania.
- The majority of the groups are from United Methodist churches, but there are also Episcopal, Presbyterian, United Church of Christ, Catholic and Lutheran churches.
- Many churches participate every summer and some churches have been participating in SSP for over two decades.

Where We Work

- Six of our seven sites are on reservations or rancherias. The seventh site is in South Los Angeles.
- Our community is usually housed in a school or church for the week. We eat, sleep, worship and play there.
- Sometimes we may use other facilities or schools for meals and showers.
- Some sites have Porta-Potties.
- Facilities are different at each site.
- Some of us will be eating inside and others will be eating outside.
- All volunteers, youth and adults sleep on the floor, with a line between the young men and the young ladies.
- Some worksites are close by our home base and others can be quite a distance. (30-45 min)

How we decide which homes to work on

At the beginning of the summer our construction staff members work with the tribal or community leaders to determine which homes we should work on. They go through each home and determine which jobs we will do based on skills needed, safety and cost.

Each job is chosen carefully. We look for a ...

- Job that can involve all members of a work team.
- Job that can be done safely at the worksite.
- Job that can be completed during the summer. (Note: the average SSP project takes multiple weeks to complete; help guide your work team and set reasonable expectations so youth are not disappointed by their hard work!)

Please do not discuss other projects that come up at your worksite with the homeowners before talking to the construction team member about the problem or job. There may be several reasons that the job isn't on our "to do" list.

What kind of jobs does SSP do?

Drywall

Floors

Exterior and interior painting

Roofing

Stairs

Decks

Awnings

Wheelchair ramps.

NO Plumbing or Electrical work

Remember no experience is needed! We will teach you what you need to know.

3) The SSP Staff

Sierra Service Project Headquarters

SSP has a permanent year-round staff in Carmichael California.

- *Rick Eaton* has been the executive director for ten years.
- *Meghan Osborn* is our Business Manager and works with the local church leaders.
- *Megan Taylor* is our Construction Associate. Megan helps prep for the summer, helps plan projects, and trains and oversees the construction team members during the summer.
- *Caitlin Hamilton* is our Program Intern and works on Outreach and Summer Operations.
- *Bob Elam* is our Project Manager. His focus is on the construction aspects of SSP and the donation of materials and tools.

Summer Staff

Each year SSP hires about 50 young adults who dedicate nine weeks of their summer to working with the youth and counselors who attend SSP (over 1,900 this summer). Most of them attended SSP themselves when they were youth and almost half have served as staff before.

- ✓ **The Site Director**
Oversees the operation of the entire site and leads the staff. He or she is the primary liaison with SSP Headquarters in Sacramento.
- ✓ **The Spiritual Life Coordinator**
Organizes all of the programs and activities. This includes team building, evening programming, cultural exchanges and all other spiritual components of the week. The SLC is also the spiritual leader for the staff.
- ✓ **Cook Team**
Shop for and create a week's worth of fabulous food for 65 people. They recruit and oversee volunteers that want to help out in the kitchen.
- ✓ **Construction Team**
Each site has three staff members that are dedicated to the construction part of the SSP experience. They pick projects, purchase and organize supplies, teach construction skills, offer ongoing support to the teams and oversee the projects from start to finish.

Staff Training

Although each staff member has a specific job they all work very closely together to make each week great! Prior to heading out to the summer sites, all staff members gather for a week in Sacramento for training in:

- Job Specific Skills
- Youth Ministry
- Conflict Resolution
- SSP Tradition
- All are First Aid and CPR certified

Board of Directors

SSP is also supported by a volunteer Board of Directors. These folks are made up of a cross section of backgrounds, faiths, and professional expertise. They devote their time and money to SSP year-round. The Board also includes two youth members.

4) What Will Happen at SSP

Sunday is a Very Busy Day at SSP!

1. Arrival between 2:00 - 4:00 pm

Upon your arrival to the SSP site your group will be met by our enthusiastic staff. The staff will show you around and help you unpack and settle into your home for the week. The Site Director will collect medical forms at this time.

After you are settled, the drivers will be given a short opportunity to relax after the drive. The staff will begin getting to know the youth quickly and the youth will also get to know each other.

What time should we arrive?

The staff team organizes each Sunday afternoon for the groups to arrive between 2:00 - 4:00 pm. Arriving before 2:00 doesn't allow the staff their full 28 hours of preparation time between volunteer weeks. Arriving after 4:00 means the Sunday evening schedule doesn't get started on time and pushes us later into the evening than we would like, after a long day's drive. The official business doesn't start until all groups arrive. Please make your travel plans to arrive on time.

Remember, the Arizona and Idaho sites are on Mountain time

Call the office if you foresee a problem making this window.

2. **Welcome and Orientation** The staff will go over the schedule, expectations and other important information that needs to be shared with the entire group.

3. **First "Staff/Counselor" Meeting**

While the youth and staff are getting to know each other, the site director, adult counselors and the construction team members will have their first meeting.

- Introductions and Check-in
- Counselors will be asked to provide the construction team with information they need to create the work teams
- Counselors will receive information and instructions for emergencies
- Site Director will talk briefly about hygiene, food issues and safety guidelines for behavior when working with youth (Short overview of Mandated Reporting)

4. **A fabulous dinner will follow the Staff/Counselor meeting!**

5. **Evening Program** First SSP Singing! Work teams will be announced, get to know each other and find out what their project for the week is and who the homeowners are.

6. **Bed Prep and Reflection** After everyone has had a chance to meet their work team, everyone gets ready for bed. A Spiritual Reflection is led by staff to end the first day!

7. **Bedtime** It's off to bed at 10:00. Lights out!

What are Work Teams?

- Each team is typically made up of 2 adults and 5 youth.
- Each team will have its own project at their own worksite.
- Churches need to bring vehicles that can transport a work team of seven to and from the work site. Sedans and trucks don't work well.
- Youth and adults from different churches are all blended together in work teams.

Our construction staff needs the following information from all the adults to help form the work teams.

- 1) Any prior construction experience that might be helpful for that week's work projects.
[Remember no experience is needed, but if you have any we'd like to know!]
 - 2) Who is driving which vehicle and how many seat belts there are.
 - 3) This is the time for adult counselors to let the construction staff know about people who shouldn't be on the same work team, best friends, siblings, parents, and romantically involved youth. If a certain youth needs to be with a certain adult, please let us know at this time.
- Sunday evening the work teams meet for the first time and get to know each other.
 - Work teams are together a lot during the week and do just about everything together.
 - Besides working at their work site, they lead worship or grace and give site reports to let everyone else know what they are doing at their site and how it is going.
 - Work teams do chores together as well.

Just traveling to and from the work site can be lots of fun! Work teams usually get very close by the end of the week!

SENIOR HIGH

Typical Daily Schedule Monday - Friday

7:00 Rise and Shine

7:15 Spiritual Awakening - Optional short morning program

7:45 Morning Devotion - Led by a staff member

8:00 Breakfast - Teams make lunches and pack up supplies

9:00 - 4:00 Work teams at Work sites

Includes driving to and from sites (there can be long drives at some sites 30-45 minutes)

Lunch (PB&J) and Spiritual Sandwich (A thoughtful discussion for mid-day.)

4:00 Showers and Free time

6:00 Dinner

6:45 Community Chores

7:30 Evening Program

- First off is singing for mail! We encourage liaisons to ask parents and church members to write youth at SSP. Participants sing a silly song for their mail.
- The Spiritual Life Coordinator has a creative program planned for every evening following singing. The program consists of activities and discussions that relate to the summer's theme.

9:00 Youth "Jamify" - Youth get their sleeping bags and mattresses out, get into their PJs and do all other pre-bedtime personal hygiene efforts!

9:00 Staff/Counselor Meeting - Site Director and counselors talk about what is coming up the next day that counselors should be aware of. It is also a great time for adult counselors to share about the highs and lows of their day.

9:30 "Spiritual Reflections" - The Spiritual Life Coordinator works with one work team to prepare a short worshipful experience. These usually include singing, personal sharing and prayer.

10:00 -10:30 Lights Out

Typical Weekly Schedule

Monday night work teams will report to the rest of the community about their project and homeowners.

Tuesday night is typically cultural night. A member or members of the hosting tribe or community come to talk to the group about their community.

Wednesday is Water Day. (At sites where there is no body of water, the staff will plan a fun afternoon like a hike, games or team building). Teams work until about 1:00 and then caravan to the water hole. There is time for swimming, playing games, talking, and singing. And of course there is a BBQ! There is time for kicking back and cooling off!

Thursday night is traditionally a very powerful part of the week. Participants are given a wonderful spiritual opportunity to focus on where they are on their faith journey.

Friday night is "Candle". Each person has the opportunity to share their thoughts and feelings about the week with the entire group.

Saturday morning starts out with packing up, cleaning up, eating up! Then it is time for the historic photos, and photos and photos! and then a few more photos! Then it's time to say goodbye! Groups are usually ready to leave around 10:00!

JUNIOR HIGH

Typical Daily Schedule Monday - Friday

7:00 Rise and Shine

7:30 Breakfast

8:15 Lunch crews make sandwiches

8:45 Energizers and Morning Program

9:30 - 3:00 Work teams at Work sites

Includes driving to and from sites (there can be long drives at some sites 30-45 minutes)
Lunch (PB&J) and Spiritual Sandwich (A thoughtful discussion for mid-day.)

3:00 Showers and Free time

5:15 Dinner

6:00 Community Chores

6:30 Evening Program

- First off is singing for mail! We encourage liaisons to ask parents and church members to write youth at SSP. Participants sing a silly song for their mail.
- The Spiritual Life Coordinator has a creative program planned for every evening following singing. The program consists of activities and discussions that relate to the summer's theme.

8:00 Youth "Jamify" - Youth get their sleeping bags and mattresses out, get into their PJs and do all other pre-bedtime personal hygiene efforts!

8:00 Staff/Counselor Meeting - Site Director and counselors talk about what is coming up the next day that counselors should be aware of. It is also a great time for adult counselors to share about the highs and lows of their day.

9:00 "Spiritual Reflections" - The Spiritual Life Coordinator works with one work team to prepare a short worshipful experience. These usually include singing, personal sharing and prayer.

9:15 Story Time

9:30 Lights Out

Typical Weekly Schedule

Monday night work teams will report to the rest of the community about their project and homeowners.

Tuesday night is typically cultural night. A member or members of the hosting tribe or community come to talk to the group about their community.

Wednesday is Splatter Fest! Teams work until about 1:00 and then return to home base for the new Junior High tradition of Splatter Fest in the afternoon followed by a BBQ and evening program.

Thursday is the final day of work followed by reflection on the week in the evening.

Friday morning starts out with packing up, cleaning up, eating up! Then it is time for the historic photos, and photos and photos! and then a few more photos! Then it's time to say goodbye! Groups are usually ready to leave around 10:00!

5) Safety at SSP

Safety for the Worksite and Construction Training

The “Do It To It”. Monday morning everyone will take part in safety training - the “Do It To It!”

- ☑ Staff members will go over many safety guidelines including power tool safety, proper ladder use, eye protection and appropriate worksite dress.
- ☑ Hydration is an essential part of safety at SSP. Regular water breaks should be taken throughout the day, especially when it is extremely hot.
- ☑ In some situations work teams will also be given a short job specific construction tutorial.

Off to the Work Sites After the safety and construction presentations the staff will take the teams out to the sites and introduce the team to our host homeowner and explain more about the specific work project.

Each vehicle should have one **First Aid Kit** supplied by your church.

Hydration! Hydration! Hydration!

Churches are asked to bring at least one, preferably two, 5-gallon water jugs for each vehicle.

Each work team will take a 5-gallon water jug with them to the work site.

Churches can bring powdered sports drinks to add to their water jugs if they wish, but churches should bring extra 5-gallon water jugs so each site can have water and sports drink.

Sports drinks replace electrolytes but do not hydrate well.

Please do not bring individual water or sports drink bottles. The water at all the sites is drinkable.

Unfortunately dehydration can involve a trip to the ER that we want to avoid. It is not unusual for adult counselors to be among the dehydrated so take care of yourself so you can take care of the youth!

Creating a Safe Environment

Sierra Service Project is committed to creating and maintaining safe environments for young people and the adults and staff who work with them. This responsibility includes maintaining an environment in which youth are protected from emotional, physical and sexual exploitation and harassment of any kind.

Over the years, Sierra Service Project has developed a set of policies and practices aimed at creating this environment and reducing the risk to participants and staff. The following are selections from our policies. For complete copies of the policies, please contact Sierra Service Project at 916-488-6441.

Counselor Screening and Orientation

It is the responsibility of participating churches to select mature, committed and responsible adults to accompany their youth and participate in SSP. Sierra Service Project will enforce the following policies with regard to church counselors:

1. All counselors must be at least 23 years old unless they have been specifically approved by SSP's Executive Director or Business Manager. In approving exceptions to this policy, SSP will make sure that the counselor is actively involved in the local church's youth ministry program and is a mature adult.
2. All counselors must submit to a criminal background check, to be done by SSP, the local church or the counselor's employer. To be valid, background checks must be done at least every two years. Individuals convicted of violent crimes, sexual crimes, serious drug offenses and crimes involving children will not be allowed to participate as counselors.
3. All counselors will be strongly encouraged to attend an SSP Counselor Orientation Session where counselor expectations are carefully reviewed. (This is your training!)
4. At the beginning of each week at SSP, counselors will be given a presentation on child abuse reporting responsibilities, SSP's Non-Harassment Policy and our safe behavior policy.

Safety Measures at Our Project Sites

The Open Space Rule

At Sierra Service Project we want to eliminate situations where abuse is possible and situations which make an allegation of abuse possible. The Open Space Rule involves the following:

1. All gatherings of small groups of individuals will take place in open areas which are clearly visible to people not involved in the activity.
2. Private conversations involving one adult and one youth **will always** take place in an open area clearly visible to other people.
3. A single adult (staff or counselor) will not transport a single youth unless there is another youth or adult present.

Sleeping Arrangements

Youth and adult counselors are required to sleep in separate sleeping areas, one for males and one for females.

Showers

Arrangements are made at each site so that youth and adults do not share group showers.

Guidelines for Appropriate Physical Contact

Appropriate and loving physical contact is very important to the healthy development of young people and is a powerful way to affirm youth. Teens are very often starved of this kind of contact. Therefore, this is encouraged at SSP. Examples of appropriate physical contact between adults and young people are:

1. Shaking hands.
2. High-fives.
3. Sideways shoulder hugs.
4. Touching the back, arms, hands and elbows.
5. Hugging that is loose - touching shoulders, not chests and hips.

The following kinds of contact between adults and children are inappropriate, can be offensive and can easily lead to misunderstandings. These kinds of behaviors are not acceptable:

1. Touching on the chest, legs or behind.
2. "Butt slapping."
3. Lap sitting.
4. Kissing.
5. Any physical contact that an individual has expressed any level of discomfort with.
6. Patting on the head.

These rules regarding touch apply regardless of the genders involved.

6) SSP's Goals for Healthy Eating

Meals

Cooking meals for 65 people twice a day is very challenging!

- The kitchens at our sites vary from small kitchens not larger than a household kitchen to large kitchens outfitted for serving meals to large groups.
- Menus change from site to site based on what equipment the cooks have to work with.
- Our goal is healthy eating for the week and so we strongly discourage junk food.
- Since SSP is an experience of living in a community where people often have less than we do, our food is respectively simple.
- Our cooks strive to offer plenty nutritious tasty food, prepared and given out of love.
- We try to accommodate people with special food needs. (Please contact the site prior to your arrival so that the cooks can do any necessary shopping.)
- We have vegetarian options at every meal.
- Helping out in the kitchen is encouraged. SSP kitchens are a place for creating great food with lots of love and laughs!

Taking Care of our Bodies

There is a growing trend in schools and camps nationwide to promote healthy diets and to restrict access to low-nutrition foods. We have taken measures to significantly curb the purchasing and consumption of junk food at our sites.

As we all know, the consumption of junk food has exploded in the past 10 years. For teenagers, this creates a whole host of problems, including obesity, diabetes, eating disorders and reduced attention spans.

Taking care of our bodies at SSP goes hand-in-hand with using our bodies to serve others.

Traditions

It is not our goal to deny participants sugar during the week and SSP has some traditional yummy goodies during the week. Homemade cookies or other pops on a hot afternoon, and root beer floats.

Steps toward more healthy eating at SSP

1. Each afternoon during free time, the SSP staff provides a healthy array of snack foods for all counselors and campers. This consists of things like fresh fruit, cheese sticks, crackers, trail mix, carrots with ranch dressing, and others.
2. Work groups will be asked by the site directors not to make stops to purchase snacks at local markets during their trips to and from worksites and showers. Rewarding youth with sweets and junk food for hard work or for reaching a goal sets up a habit that is hard to break and creates bad feelings when one work team does it and others don't.
3. Church groups will be asked not to arrive at SSP with large quantities of junk food in their vans. Food is not allowed in the sleeping areas, for hygiene purposes and to prevent rodent problems. Churches that arrive with junk food will be encouraged to box it up for the trip home. Junk food will not be left in the vans during the week.
4. We request that SSP liaisons encourage parents not to send "care packages" containing low-nutrition foods to their campers. Care packages are very welcome, but should contain healthy snacks like granola bars, mixed nuts and fruit snacks for instance. Groups will be able to eat these during afternoon snack time or take them out to the worksite for lunch and snacks.
5. SSP chefs will provide good food in ample quantities for both breakfast and dinner and will be happy to make more if people are still hungry.
6. Traditional SSP lunches consist of peanut butter and jelly sandwiches and are augmented with fresh fruit and salty snacks to help replace sodium that is lost through sweating. This is a simple meal and lunch time is a good time to reflect on how blessed we are to have the food and to be eating a meal with friends.

What Are We Asking Each of Our SSP Liaisons To Do?

We are counting on all church liaisons to help their counselors and youth understand and support these plans. This means that we need you to:

- Explain the expectations to your youth and their parents.
- Explain the reasoning behind our strong commitment to healthy eating.
- Work to see that your church team can support what we are trying to do. Ask them to support it with good humor and grace - it's only for one week!
- **Sports Drinks** Churches have asked if they can bring sports drinks for the hot days on the worksite. Absolutely!

Churches are asked to bring Gatorade powder for work teams to use in their water jugs. Most jugs are 5 gallons and the standard 1-lb canister of powder works great.

Please do not bring individual plastic bottles.

7) Living In Community

Sierra Service Project is all about creating community between all the participants each week and building community with the people we come to serve. We are guests of the local tribe, community, and facility where we stay. We want SSP's great reputation to be ongoing and we want to be invited back to the community in the future to serve again.

Living in a community of 50 - 70 people means individuals simply can't do whatever they'd like to do. It means that everyone is expected to participate in all activities and be on time. These guidelines help us support one another so that all SSP participants can focus more on God and service and less on our individual desires.

The Dress Code

The intention of the SSP dress code is to:

- Prevent clothing or lack of clothing to become a distraction to any of our daily community activities.
- Be respectful and reflective of a more conservative dress standard in reservation communities.
- Make sure that everyone brings and wears the proper clothing so that staff and counselors don't have to confront individuals about how they are dressed.

We expect that everyone will honor the dress code when participating in all scheduled community activities each day.

Guidelines for Dress

- Sleeveless tops, tank tops, halter tops, half or crop tops are not allowed during the day. Tank tops and shorts are acceptable for sleeping but participants must be more fully clothed for evening worship.
- T-shirts must not display slogans or artwork which includes alcohol, tobacco, or obscenities.
- No short shorts. Shorts must be mid-thigh length. Thrift store jeans cut off at mid thigh work great. Groups can decorate them with permanent markers for pre-trip fun.
- Shorts and pants must not "sag" either.
- Skirts must fall below the knee. Skirts are not allowed at the worksite and are discouraged in the evening because participants spend much of the time either running around or sitting on the floor.

Work Site Clothing

- **Closed toe shoes** like work boots or tennis shoes must be worn at the worksites. No sandals or open toed shoes.
- **Long pants** are not required at the work site but are generally more comfortable when sitting on roofs, the ground and lumber.
- **Hats and bandanas are good for protection from the sun!**

Things that are off limits at SSP

Tobacco, Alcohol, Firearms, Illegal Drugs, Pyrotechnics are forbidden.

Electronic gadgets (other than cameras) are not allowed at SSP. This includes cell phones, MP3 players, iPods, Mini DVD players, CD Players, Laptop Computers, iPads, and handheld games.

Please do not use DVD players in vans during your week at SSP.

Community Service Opportunities

- Before and after each meal there is Kitchen Patrol duty.
- Bathrooms and showers must be cleaned and floors must be swept and mopped.
- Everyone helps with these chores which are assigned on a rotating basis to work teams.
- Hygiene is very important at SSP so there are very specific instructions on how to do all these jobs.
- Frequent hand washing is also a tradition at SSP!

Camper Covenants

Each youth, parent and adult counselor should have received information about the previous expectations and rules for dress code, electronics, healthy bodies policy and hygiene already and are expected to bring a completed covenant with them to site.

8) What SSP Expects of Adult Counselors

Counselors are an essential part of the SSP experience - they transport campers, assist with all site activities, and serve as role models to both campers and staff.

Above all, the adult counselors are expected to work closely with the SSP staff members to create an environment of trust and mutual respect. The SSP staff members have been trained and are experienced in SSP policies and procedures. Counselors are expected to:

- Model good communication skills and help to work out conflicts quickly and without drama.
- Discuss problems with the Site Director rather than participate in divisive discussions with youth or other adults.
- Keep the youth positive when things aren't going as planned.
- Set an example by adhering to and enforcing the dress code, healthy bodies policy and the other rules presented by the staff.
- Be present for the entire week. Youth and counselors are not allowed to arrive late or leave early.
- Participate in ALL activities (this includes singing, housekeeping duties, and all other program activities) and help your youth to be involved as well.
- Take responsibility for the youth from your church, being sure that they uphold the rules and policies as well. Be sure that youth are not skipping meals and are getting to sleep at night.
- Participate on the work site in a way that is "leader" appropriate - ensuring that all youth assigned to your work team are part of the action.
- Build self-esteem through affirmation and praise, and refrain from put-downs.
- Ensure the safety of the youth under your care at all times. Do not carry more passengers in a vehicle than it is designed to carry and make certain that you do not drive away in a vehicle until everyone is secured by a seatbelt. Obey the speed limits.
- Refrain from sexual harassment, abusive language or behavior, and discrimination. This includes profanity, suggestive or crude hand gestures and off-color jokes or comments. Police youth on this as well.
- Be appropriate in all physical contact with youth. Examples of inappropriate behavior are hitting, spanking, pinching, lap sitting, laying on or being laid upon, resting head in youth's lap or vice versa. Remember that youth in your own church group may be used to more physical contact than youth from other groups. Respect personal space boundaries. This is as much for your protection as for theirs.

9) Cultural Exchanges with the Tribes

Culture Night

Tuesday night is traditionally our culture night. Members of the host tribe or community come to share about the history and culture of their tribe/community. They also share stories about the current happenings on the reservations. It is a wonderful opportunity for our guests to share with us and it is a true gift for us to learn from them.

Each tribe has different ways of bringing their story to us.

- Some nights the guests are singers and dancers
- Some bring hand-made crafts and foods.
- Some teach the group words or songs in their native language.

There is always time for questions and answers.

Homeowners

The interaction between work teams and the homeowner can vary from site to site. Some homeowners work during the day and others are mostly at home.

You are encouraged to take time to visit with the homeowners and please feel free to share any food that is offered. This is a way for our hosts to show their appreciation.

Homeowners are welcome to join us for dinner. Talk with the site director for more information.

Groups will receive a short historical introduction to the tribe and we strongly encourage groups to seek out more information about the tribe before arriving at site. Some of the tribes have their own websites (we have links to these on our website).

10) 2011 Site Information

Below you will find brief descriptions of SSP's site plans for the summer. Please visit <http://www.sierraserviceproject.org/locations.html> for up-to-date information on each site, site specific study guides and links to various tribal and Indian history websites.

[The Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, Fort Hall, Idaho](#)

Fort Hall is located just north of Pocatello in Eastern Idaho. We worked here for four weeks in 2010 and had an incredible experience.

[Navajo Nation, Teec Nos Pos, Arizona](#)

In 2010, we had a great experience working in the community of Teec Nos Pos, Arizona, on the northeast portion of the Navajo Nation 220 miles from Flagstaff. We will return to Teec in 2011.

[Susanville Rancheria, Susanville, California](#)

Located about 80 miles north of Reno, the small city of Susanville is the location of the Susanville Indian Rancheria, a tribe of about 900 members.

[Chukchansi Tribe, Coarsegold, California](#)

Coarsegold is located about one hour northeast of Fresno in the central California Sierra foothills. We have been invited to work with the Housing Authority.

[Yurok Reservation, Weitchpec, California](#)

This year, we will be working and serving on the inland part of the Yurok Reservation. Our site will be housed in the Weitchpec School, located along the Klamath River in the tiny town of Weitchpec.

[Bear River Rancheria, Loleta, California](#)

The Bear River Rancheria is located just inland from the town of Loleta on California's north coast. The Rancheria has invited SSP to assist in the construction of new homes.

[Urban Los Angeles](#)

As always, our urban immersion project will take place in the neighborhoods of South Los Angeles. Our LA program is always extremely well received by our participants.

[Central America](#)

SSP has sent teams of young people to serve and learn in Central America since 2003. These are challenging, life-changing and extremely rewarding experiences for mature young people eager to grow in faith and understanding. These projects focus on social justice; participants immerse themselves in the local culture, working alongside community members in both rural and urban settings. We offer two different types of projects, Study-and-Serve in Guatemala and homebuilding in Honduras.

