



Start ‘Em Young

Local community engagement is for everyone.

There are a number of ways to partner with your kids or young people in your life to act and strengthen community. These steps also build confidence and leadership habits.

- **For kids.** The best way to encourage civic engagement is to involve your kids in their community. Using the public library, visiting local parks, getting to know small businesses in your area all build civic muscle. Talk with your kids about why their community matters. As children get older, help them develop service-based habits. Consider taking them to volunteer at a community garden, their school, or a local drive for the community. Even lending a hand to a neighbor can be important. Serving others builds confidence and leadership skills, in addition to being a good thing for the community. Talk with kids about the importance of fostering solidarity within their own community and with others across the nation and how they can engage as communities come under threat in this time.
- **For teens.** In addition to direct volunteer and community service efforts, encourage teens to approach problems they encounter with an “agent” mindset, as discussed in Action 1. Teens can practice organizing collective action to bring about changes in their schools or in other community settings (sports teams, clubs). Encourage teens to become interested in politics and social movements and help facilitate their participation. This can involve supporting teens in researching and creating accurate content on particular local or national issues, using their phones to serve as citizen journalists, supporting or making art, understanding worker power and unions, and more. As noted on page 50, The Civics Center has excellent resources on student-led voter registration drives, which helps increase younger voter participation and builds organizing and important civic skills.

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STEPS LIKE THIS**

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