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MAKE SPARKS FLY

Engage In Your Community

Improve Your Community: You may be familiar with the saying, “It takes a village to raise a child.” Now, imagine that the statement was tweaked to read, “It takes a village to improve a village.” In other words, a community needs EVERYONE to contribute to the prosperity and success of the people in it. You are a community member, and you can make a difference. There is no need to wait until you are “old enough.” The time is now for you to have an impact in your community. You know your spark and have resources to develop it, so it’s time to USE IT!

Think about the needs in your local community. Ask other students about the needs they see. Create a list of possible opportunities you and your fellow students have to make a difference in your community. For example, if your spark is music, consider putting together a group of singers and musicians among your friends to entertain at a local nursing home. Or, if your spark is a sport, see if there’s a local park where you could volunteer to teach younger children that sport.

Take the time to brainstorm as many ideas as possible and write them in the space provided. After you have listed your options, choose one idea on which you can take action. Decide if you want to work independently or with several other students to develop and implement a plan. You can create something new or connect with a local organization that welcomes volunteers. It’s time to use your spark to help your community!

Explore Your Community: USA TODAY is a great resource for finding out about the challenges and issues the nation faces every day. Look for and read a story about a national issue that relates to an issue in your local community. Find out what people are doing at the national level to address the issue. Then, identify actions that you could take at the local level. How could you put your spark to work on the issue?

1. Title of article: _____

2. National issue: _____

3. National ideas: _____

4. How can I use my spark to address this issue in my community? _____

Expand Your Community: While we are all members of the local community in which we live, today’s technology allows us to connect with people throughout the country and the world. One opportunity for teens in the United States is to connect with passionate, talented teens who really care about their communities and want to make a difference on at15.com. Become a member and find out how you can use your talents, pursue your passions and have a voice in your local and national communities.

