

LIVE TIMEWISE MIDDLE SCHOOL



Session 10: Community Resources, Connections, and Belonging

In every community there are resources – places, organizations and people – which could be helpful in various ways to community members. As you grow older and take on more responsibility for making decisions, it is helpful to know what resources are in your community and then to know how to use them. Examples of community resources are the library, the clinic, schools, sports clubs, teachers etc.

Student Goals

1. Understand the concept of community and communities.
2. Develop a sense of belonging to one's communities and why it is important.
3. Develop ideas about participating in one's community (through leisure, recreation as well as other ways) and giving back to one's community (e.g., volunteering).
4. Learn about various recreation and leisure resources in one's communities.
5. Consider the need to "make things happen" if desired resources are not available.
6. Reflect on community resources they know about and those they would like to find out more about.
7. Develop a spatial awareness of my community...e.g., where things are in relation to each other.

Students will Think About

- What is a community?
- How many communities do I belong to?
- What does belonging mean?
- What resources are available in my community?
- What can I do to enhance opportunities for myself and others in my community?
- Which communities do I feel a sense of attachment to? How can I increase my sense of belonging to the different communities I am part of?

Subtopics

1. What is a community? What communities do I belong to?
2. What resources are in our communities?
3. What do “sense of belonging,” “sense of place” or “place attachment” mean?

Activities

1. An Ideal Community
2. Map and Local Community Resources
3. Please also check out the High School and Elementary School sessions on this topic

Materials

- TW teacher manual pp. 46-49
- Student book p. 22 (Where to Find it), and p. 23 (My Leisure Action Plan)
- Master 6 (My Leisure Action Plan)
- Live Your Why Passport Edition
- https://depts.washington.edu/hhwb/Thm_Place.html (for some ideas about the importance of place attachment.)

Subtopic 1: What is a community? What communities do I belong to?

Practicing the skills you have learned will help you use your leisure time wisely. We have spent time talking about how you will be continuing to make more and more decisions about how you use your time, especially leisure time. This also means getting to know more about your community so you can make better decisions because you'll know more about using the resources you have available to you. Therefore, in this lesson we will be talking about places to go and people you know in your community that can help you develop your interests and make better plans and decision for you leisure time. There may be many resources available in the community which you might not even know about.

Ask and discuss:

- What does “community” mean?
- Are there different types of communities? Brainstorm different types communities and record on the board or screen. [schools, churches, neighborhoods, on-line, recreation centers, etc.]

Community members likely share a common location (even on-line), experiences, resources, beliefs, supports, issues, challenges, and so on.

Today we are focusing on the community we live in (name) and the resources that the community offers.

A **community** is a social unit (a group of people) with a shared socially-significant characteristic, such as place, set of norms, culture, religion, values, customs, or identity. Communities may share a sense of place situated in a given geographical area (e.g. a country, village, town, or neighborhood) or in virtual space through communication platforms. (Wikipedia)

Maps

Maps give us a spatial understanding of a location or community. They help us find things and understand what is available to us. That means we get a sense of where

things are in relation to other things. For example, how close is our school to your home, or how close is your home to a grocery store or a recreation center?

Maps also help us understand how we exist in relation to other people in other areas. Show a map of Vermont on the board or screen.

How does the state we live in affect what we do in our leisure or free time? [weather, close to Canada, natural resources, etc.]



Subtopic 2: What resources are in our communities?

In every community there are resources – places, organizations and people – that could be helpful to you in some way. The important thing is to know what resources are in your community and then to know how to use them. Examples of community resources are the library, the clinic, schools, sports clubs, teachers etc.

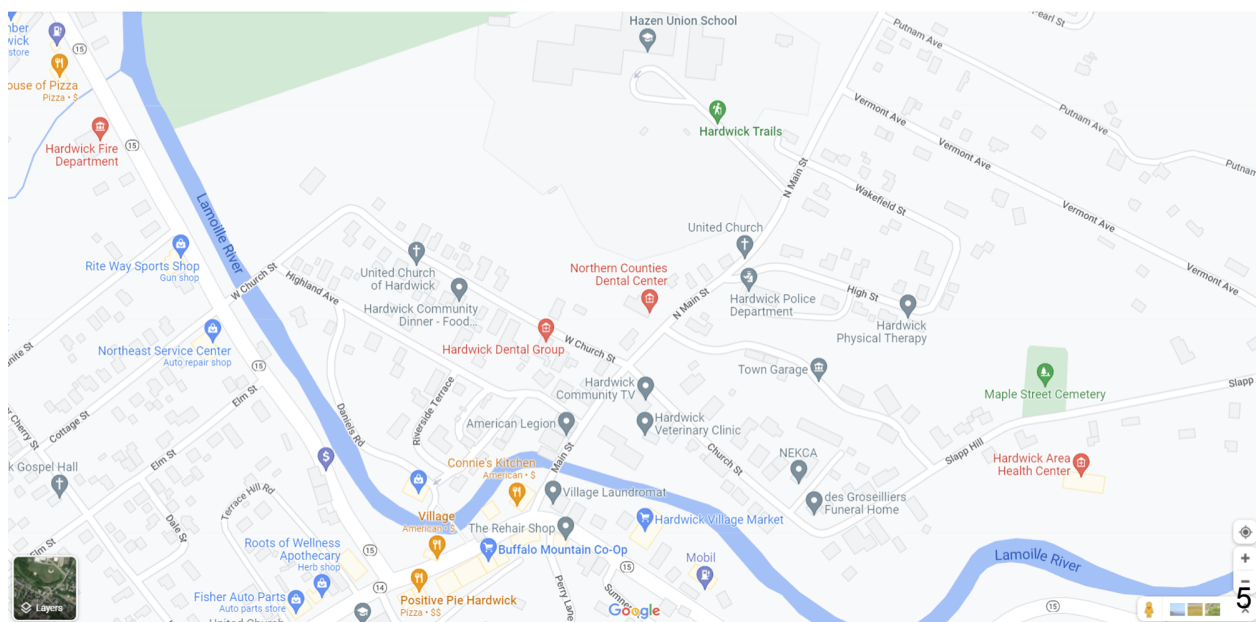
Activity 1: An Ideal Community

In small groups, brainstorm what things and resources they would like to include in an ideal community. For example, what would your ideal community have as resources to support your interests and needs in leisure and other aspects of life? Someone should record the ideas and report out. What kinds of things were easy to decide on.

Ask whether it was easy or hard to agree on what should be included in the community. Perhaps use this as a point of discussion that this is what happens in most communities, there are disagreements on how to run things, etc.

Activity 2: Map Local Community Resources

Find a Google map or similar of your location to display. Discuss what resources are in the community and in surrounding areas. Have students identify where they live on the map, if possible.



Sometimes if there are things you would like to have in your community that don't exist, you might have to take responsibility to organize or advocate for it to become a reality.

Ask and Discuss

In small groups or pairs, discuss the following (choose those questions that make most sense for your situation):

- What community resources have you used? Which are most important to you?
- What community resources would you like to see in your community that don't currently exist?
- What would you like to know more about in your community?
- Do you know where to find places and organizations that offer advice and help to young people?
- Identify places where you typically spend your free time
- When you are at those places, how do you feel? Happy, tired, anxious, bored, etc. Why do you feel that way?
- Who are you typically with?
- Is this a place where healthy activities take place?
- Are there places where risky behavior often takes place?
- If you had a choice, where would you like to spend your time? Why?
- Would you like to make any changes about where you spend your time? What would it be and how can you make it happen?
- How does the physical or natural environment influence you or influence your experience?
- Where are places where you can find adults who can help you or listen to you or provide activities that you would like to do?

Use Live Your Why Passport Edition to discuss various community opportunities.



Share Your Why: Passport Edition



Community Connections

Plan, Do, and Reflect on an activity
that includes one or more of the following:

- Attending a community event
- Meeting new people
- Finding something new to do in your community

Ideas & Activities at
healthylamoillevalley.org/passport



Plan Your Why.

A Community Connections activity that I can do with friends or family is:

When can I do the activity? Day: _____ Time: _____

What needs to happen before I am able to do this activity?



Do Your Why.

The activity I chose: _____



Reflect

What I liked about the activity I chose:

Something I might do differently next time:

One or more important resource in my community I would like to check out or learn more about: _____

Can we share this activity on our website using your first name, last initial and grade? **YES NO**

Name: _____ **Grade:** _____

Passport # _____

**PASSPORT MUST BE REGISTERED TO
BE ELIGIBLE FOR A RAFFLE**

Return this completed sheet to wherever you
picked it up or a location listed at
healthylamoillevalley.org/passport



Use TimeWise Student Book (pages 22 and 23) and TimeWise Teacher Manual (pages 46-49) to discuss finding community opportunities.

Subtopic 3: What does a sense of belonging to one or more communities mean?

Having a sense of belonging to a community provides numerous benefits, including improved mental and physical health, increased life satisfaction, and a stronger sense of purpose. It can also foster resilience, reduce stress and isolation, and offer opportunities for personal and professional growth.

The concept of sense of place or place attachment has to do with the bond people feel with their environments. It is shaped by personal experiences, social interactions, and how much you feel like you belong there. It also has to do with the resources and opportunities available at the “place.” The “place” can be a river, community, neighborhood, park, ski slope, and so on.

Identify the places you feel an attachment to.

Discuss

- What might you want to change or improve in your community so that you have a stronger place of attachment or bond, feeling of being valued?
- What does it mean to you to belong to a community?
- What feelings do you get by belonging?
- Are there other communities that you might like to belong to?

Use TimeWise Student Book (pages 22 and 23) and TimeWise Teacher Manual (pages 46-49) to discuss finding community opportunities.

Summarize

It is important for us all to feel a sense of belonging to one or more communities. Today we focused on the community we live in and the resources that are available. You also discussed what resources you would like to have. No community is perfect but every member of a community should be responsible for doing their part to make it the best possible. Think about all the communities you belong to and how you could contribute to making them better and stronger.

You may also want to review *Leisure is for Everyone, Global Citizenship* and the high school and elementary school sessions on this topic for more ideas.