



YSA – Photo Tools and Tricks!

As a YSA grantee, you are required to submit 3-5 of your best photos to YSA. In order to tell the full story of youth service, YSA suggests you take photos throughout your project that capture the following events and moments:

- Various stages of your project: before and after (show the change you created)
- Have your school or project location as a backdrop—let’s see where you do good work!
- Youth reading newspapers, conducting interviews or performing other activities that enabled them to identify community needs
- Youth meetings
- Engagement of partners
- Youth creating materials for the project
- Special attendees such as public officials
- Youth creating websites or presentations that will showcase their efforts
- Youth presenting information about their project to community members
- A group shot of the youth volunteering
- Examples of teamwork or youth leadership
- Your service event

Prior to sending your photos to us, be sure to gain permission from the photos’ subjects. Please make sure that parents of any participants under the age of 18 sign a photo release form authorizing YSA to use your project photographs.

Tips to Remember:

- Ask volunteers if they enjoying taking pictures and ask one of them to be the “official” picture taker
- Lots of people have cameras on their phones and can easily take pictures, ask volunteers to email you ones they take on their phones.
- Select a focal point to avoid unclear subject matter.
- Pay attention to the background and how it affects the focal point.
- Take candid pictures that capture energy and action.
- Capture the interaction of volunteers with each other and with the community.
- Try different distances and perspectives.
- Capture more than one person in each photo.
- Zoom in! Close-ups and smiles are great.
- Promote your organization, partners and sponsors. Event logos – in the background or on shirts – provide even more exposure to your project, organization, partners and sponsors.
- Take photos at eye level. If you are taking photos of youth and you are taller than them, squat down!
- Have fun! Taking great pictures is easier than you think, just point and shoot.

Don’t:

- Take distance shots where action and expressions are indistinguishable.
- Submit photos that are dim, overexposed, or blurred.
- Take photos of inappropriate gestures.
- Submit photos of inanimate objects (such as a bulletin board or a pile of lumber.)

Samples of good pictures:



Youth working on a community garden



Youth testing the water at a creek during a nature project.

SAMPLE PHOTO RELEASE FORM FOR ADULTS (Print On Your Letterhead)

I hereby give _____ **[Name of Organization]** permission to take photographs of me or photographs in which I may be involved with others for the purpose of promoting _____ (name of grant), Global Youth Service Day, the coordinating organization, and Youth Service America.

I am aware that photos may be used for print and online promotional purposes and may be shared on public social networking sites. Additionally, Project organizer may share my photo with Youth Service America to be used in their promotional venues.

I hereby release and discharge _____ **[Name of Photographer]**, **[Name of Organization]**, and Youth Service America from any and all claims arising out of use of the photos. This authorization is continuous and may only be withdrawn by my specific rescission of this authorization. I am 18 or older.

I have read the above statement and fully understand its contents.

Signature _____

Name _____
(Please Print)

Address _____

SAMPLE PHOTO RELEASE FORM FOR MINORS (Print On Your Letterhead)

I hereby give _____ **[Name of Organization]** permission to take photographs of the minor named below or photographs in which the minor may be involved with others for the purpose of promoting _____ (name of grant), Global Youth Service Day, the coordinating organization, and Youth Service America.

I am aware that photos may be used for print and online promotional purposes and may be shared on public social networking sites. Additionally, the organization may share my photo with Youth Service America in order to promote/publicize their activities.

I hereby release and discharge _____ **[Name of Photographer]**, **[Name of Organization]**, and Youth Service America from any and all claims arising out of use of the photos. This authorization is continuous and may only be withdrawn by my specific rescission of this authorization.

I, _____, am 18 or older, and am able to contract for the minor in the above regard. I have read the above statement and fully understand its contents.

Signature _____ Relationship to Minor _____

Name _____
(Please Print)

Address _____

Name of Minor _____
(Please Print)