

Making Connections with Community Service Providers: A Few Ideas

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- Find out where students already go to receive health and social services. Where do they feel safe and well cared for? Ask if there are places they would, and would not, recommend to others. Include nontraditional community healers if students are comfortable sharing this information.
- Ask students what makes it comfortable/uncomfortable to visit some of the agencies?
- Ask which areas students would like to know more about. Housing? Food assistance/food banks? Child care? Investigate agencies in your area that cover these services. Try to locate places familiar with the population you teach and have bilingual/bicultural resources, if possible. Find out policies (official/unofficial) regarding documented/undocumented clients.
- Make contact with some of the agencies. (Share this research with students or other staff if possible.) See the [community resources template](#) to help you collect information. Find out if there is an education outreach person. Invite a representative to your classroom to talk to students about their services, or perhaps make it a program wide event. (Note: Students could spend a class beforehand creating questions for the visitor. This could be a grammar/writing activity. Questions could be saved and used to interview the visitor.)
- Information from the class visit could be written up and given back to students as a reading activity, along with a listing of agencies, contact information, directions, etc. or put up on a web page and updated as necessary.
- As a follow up, plan visits to the agencies so students would know what to expect if they need to use the services.