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Health Science 3240B: Nature London

Alannah Cady
Western University, acady@uwo.ca

Bridgette Cocquyt
Western University, bcocquyt@uwo.ca

Daad Kassem
Western University, dkassem2@uwo.ca

Aingeshaan Kubendran
Western University, akubend@uwo.ca

Tia Miosic
Western University, tmiosic@uwo.ca

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CLUB SURVEY

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the club survey was to gather data from organizations similar to Nature London with established youth programs. This was done to help Nature London explore the possibility of establishing their own youth program, with the overall goal of increasing Nature London's youth outreach.

METHODS

The researchers used the Nature Network feature on the Ontario Nature website to find clubs that were in the Toronto to London area. Researchers then used the club websites to find which clubs in the area had a youth program. The researchers drafted a survey invitation, letter of information (Appendix A) and research questions (Appendix B) that were then presented to their professor and the organization partners for feedback. The survey was created using esurveycreator.com. The email invitation was sent to 11 organizations. After two weeks had passed since the original invitation, the researchers began following up with organizations via email and phone calls. Participants were offered an opportunity to complete the survey over the phone. Overall, five clubs responded (Appendix D) located between Morpeth and Toronto, Ontario (Appendix C).
CLUB SURVEY
SUMMARY
HAMILTON NATURALISTS' CLUB (HNC)
Hamilton, Ontario

PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS
The age group is from 8 to 12 years and older. On average, more than 20 children take part in the program.

G.O. EXPLORE WITH HNC
The program is held in the organization's owned space (HNC's Nature Sanctuary) and classrooms. The program occurs seasonally during the spring, summer and fall and is one to four hours per session. The program includes both indoor and outdoor activities, with both structured and unstructured time. Registration is through the schools they work with. The most effective way to gain participants is by using teachers.

SUCCESSFUL ACTIVITIES
Winter - Skating, hiking, shelter building, games

CHALLENGES
Funding and gaining permission from schools for nature outings

PROGRAM LEADERS
Leaders are recruited through the organization website and social media pages. HNC members are asked to volunteer.

PAID STAFF

VOLUNTEERS

Participant liability is handled through the participating school.

The organization feels it is very likely they will continue this program in the future.

The program costs about $500 for the classroom program, program delivery, visits to nature sanctuary and bus costs. There is no cost to participants.

Parents/guardians were described as being neutral in their support of their child learning about nature.

Feedback from participants and parents/guardians on the program has overall been very positive.
CLUB SURVEY
SUMMARY
WATERLOO REGION NATURE
Waterloo, Ontario

PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS
The age group is from 6 to 12 years and older. On average, 16 to 20 children take part in the program.

WATERLOO REGION NATURE KIDS
The program is held in rented space (nature centre) and outdoors. The program occurs on the last Saturday morning of each month from September to May with occasional bonus outings on other Saturday mornings. Each session is 1-2 hours. Registration is pre-registration. The most effective way to gain participants is through the organization website, social media and word of mouth.

SUCCESSFUL ACTIVITIES
Sugar Bush, pond/stream study, water activities, shelter building, trip to bee hives
Winter - Snowshoeing, tracking, predator-prey simulation game, winter survival skills, trip to Sugar Bush and shelter building and tobogganing

PROGRAM LEADERS
Programs are led by paid staff, volunteers and students. Members are asked upon sign up/membership renewal to volunteer time. Students are offered credit for volunteer hours.

PROGRAM CHANGES
Having parents/guardians attend program

CHALLENGES
Encouraging participant interaction/friendship building

Participant liability is handled through the consent and waiver forms and parental/guardian participation.

The program costs about $865 for the program space, staff, programming and incidental expenses. The program costs $45 per child and $40 per subsequent child in the same family. Income for the 2015-16 year was $1555 - meaning the organization had a net profit of $690. Additional funding comes from Youth Fund and organization/member donations.
CLUB SURVEY
SUMMARY
HIGH PARK NATURE CENTRE
Toronto, Ontario

PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS
The age group is from 4 to 12 years and older. On average, 16 to 20 children take part in the program.

SEASONAL SUMMER PROGRAM
The program is held in the organizations owned space, both indoors and outdoors. The program runs weekdays during the summer and is one to two hours, but can be longer with guest speakers. Registration is online pre-registration. The most effective ways to gain participants have been through social media pages and organization newsletter.

SUCCESSFUL ACTIVITIES
Winter- Nature walks and activities related to school programs.

Participant liability is handled via consent and waiver forms and first aid training.

CHANGES TO THE PROGRAM
- Changing to online registration
- Increasing number of programs (up to 30 in the summer)
- Always partnering with other community groups to offer more programs

CHALLENGES
Keeping up to date with online registration.

Feedback from participants and parents/guardians on the program has overall been positive.

PAID STAFF

VOLUNTEERS

STUDENTS

The organization feels if they had more available spots in their program they would easily be able to fill them.

PROGRAM LEADERS
Staff are recruited through job listing websites. Students can complete placement as part of secondary school program. Volunteers are recruited through volunteer appreciation program.
CLUB SURVEY SUMMARY

EVERGREEN NATIONAL

Toronto, Ontario

PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

The age group is from 6 to 12 years and older. On average, more than 20 children take part in the program.

VISITING SCHOOL PROGRAM

The program is held in the organization’s owned space and classrooms. The program runs weekly during the school year and is **three to four hours** per session. The program is structured with having the majority of activities occur outdoors, with some indoor activities. Registration is through pre-registration. The most effective way to gain participants have been through the organization website and word of mouth.

SUCCESSFUL ACTIVITIES

Winter - Skating, hiking, shelter building, games

Participant liability is handled via consent and waiver forms.

Parents/guardians were described as being somewhat supportive of their child learning about nature.

Feedback from participants and parents/guardians on the program has overall been **very positive**.

The organization feels it is very likely they will continue this program in the future.

The club representative who filled out the survey did not report on cost, leadership team, challenges or community partners.

Leaders are recruited through the organization website and traditional job posting sites.

PAID STAFF
THE AGE GROUP IS FROM 4 TO 12 YEARS AND OLDER. ON AVERAGE, 11 TO 15 CHILDREN TAKE PART IN THE PROGRAM.

PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

The program is held in the organization's owned space and community space, both indoors and outdoors. The program runs all days during the summer and is one to two hours. Registration is pre-registration and drop-in. The most effective ways to gain participants have been through the organization website and social media pages.

Participant liability is handled via consent and waiver forms and government liability service.

SEASONAL SUMMER PROGRAM

The program is held in the organization's owned space and community space, both indoors and outdoors. The program runs all days during the summer and is one to two hours. Registration is pre-registration and drop-in. The most effective ways to gain participants have been through the organization website and social media pages.

Participant liability is handled via consent and waiver forms and government liability service.

SUCCESSFUL ACTIVITIES

Festival of Flight - Bird migration event
Winter - Animal tracking, animal documentaries

CHANGES TO THE PROGRAM

- Keep organization website and media platforms up to date
- Partner with organizations, such as Nature Canada, that have provided seminars to organization on how to manage programs and access resources to help expand organization services

CHALLENGES

Finding volunteers to fill all necessary slots
Feedback from participants and parents/guardians on the program has overall been very positive.

PROGRAM LEADERS

Recruited through social media and the organization's website. Leaders participate due to personal connections and desire to give back to the community.

VOLUNTEERS

PAID STAFF (Government Employed)
PAID STUDENTS (Summer Program)
General Program's Structure
- Programming was a combination of indoor and outdoor activities, usually at the organization's owned space
- Age group ranged from 4 to 12 years and older
- Average program size was between 16 and 20 participants
- Average length of the program was one to two hours
- Most programs were pre-registration online
- Most programming was on weekdays
- It was most common for programming to occur seasonally in the spring, summer and fall seasons
- The most common way organization's are covering/handling issues of liability is through consent/waiver forms
- Leaders are a mix of paid staff, volunteers and students. They are recruited through social media, job listing sites and organization website

Program Highlights & Challenges

Successful Outcomes
- Program activities found to be very engaging
- Parents and youth providing positive feedback
- All five organizations have plans to continue running their youth programs in the future

Challenges
- Funding
- Filling volunteer spots
- Online registration
- Creating a sense of community among participants

Partnerships
- Increased the number of activities offered
- Improved organization's skills on running programs
Based on the data collected from the Club Surveys, the researchers make the following recommendations:

1) It is recommended that Nature London continue to pursue the possibility of establishing a youth program, as the data collected exemplifies that programs have overall been a beneficial addition to the organization.

2) It is recommended that Nature London further explore partnering with other organizations in order to offer nature programming. This can be done by partnering with schools, partnering with existing clubs or community organizations.

3) It is recommended that if Nature London moves forward with programming it should be advertised on social media platforms as well as the organization’s website.

4) It is recommended that registration for these potential programs be available online.

5) It is recommended that Nature London continue to explore the feasibility of establishing a youth program. The data collected showed that cost varied greatly between organizations, however it is a possibility for the program to be profitable with the use of registration fees. Nature London should also explore the possibility of establishing a Youth Fund to help with the costs of the program.

6) It is recommended that Nature London use their existing member base to recruit volunteers for a potential youth program. It may also be beneficial to look into creating a partnership with secondary schools to recruit student volunteers or gain their perspective on program design.
7) It is recommended that Nature London explore the possibility of hiring paid staff to run potential programs. All clubs surveyed were using paid staff to run programming, and some also used students/volunteers. Finding volunteers to fill all the time slots for the program was cited as a challenge by one club. If paid staff need to be hired externally, it is suggested that they are recruited through the organization website, social media and traditional job posting sites.

8) In the future, it is recommended any potential programming is marketed in a way that is inclusive of children and youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities. This recommendation is due to current issues facing children with special needs in school systems, as they are sometimes excluded from excursions because of the support needed for them to participate. It is proposed that Nature London potentially partner with specialized children and youth supporter workers, social workers and behavioural therapists to devise an intensive supportive program that can educate children with special needs about nature through an interactive learning process.

9) It is recommended that Nature London include parents/guardians in the development of potential youth programs, as this was suggested by the members of Nature London and also done by one of the participating organizations.

10) It is recommended that Nature London explore the possibility of partnering with schools and teachers to offer nature programming that can enhance the curriculum and increase awareness of the organization.

11) It is recommended that Nature London take into consideration the feedback provided by survey respondents regarding successful activities in the potential planning of a youth program.
UNIVERSITY STUDENT INTERVIEWS

A SHORT VIDEO - London, Ontario, University Community Centre

INTRODUCTION
Nature London sought to understand the opinions of young adults and their perspective on nature. The purpose of the data collection was to enhance Nature London's youth outreach using the feedback provided by participants.

METHODS
Due to the short timeframe of the project, a comprehensive survey with an appropriate and diverse sample size seemed unattainable; therefore, it was decided upon that a video would be more suitable. The group felt that conducting in-person interviews would protect our research from social desirability bias, in other words, a participant’s tendency to answer a questions as they believe would be seen as most favourable by the researcher. By asking questions in-person, researchers were able to gauge more shocking and honest responses from participants. An online survey may not have been able to accomplish this, reaffirming the video to be the better choice for this project. Students were approached in the atrium of the University Community Centre of Western University in London, Ontario. Researchers explained the purpose of the project and asked if students would like to participate. Students were given a Timbit in exchange for their participation in the video. A total of eight participants were interviewed using several open-ended questions and three trivia questions at the end of the interview (Appendix G).
UNIVERSITY STUDENT INTERVIEWS
A SHORT VIDEO - London, Ontario, University Community Centre
RESULTS

How does your mood change by being outside?
Most students expressed that they felt a sense of freedom and happiness when outdoors. However, for participants to enjoy being outside the weather had to be favourable - described as warm and sunny.

What activities do you like to do outside?
Common answers included; Running, outdoor sports, social gatherings.

What do you think happens when we see ourselves outside of nature?
“That’s when you see people not taking care of the environment. It’s really sad, and that’s when other problems like capitalism get involved, and you don’t realize that everything is connected”- Third Year University Student

Are there any environmental issues that are important to you?
Some students expressed genuine concerns for issues such as single use plastics and pollution. Whereas other students struggled to think of an environmental issue or expressed concern but had limited understanding of the issue.

Would you be interested in being a part of a nature program that ran once a week for about two hours?
University students replied largely with “maybe.” When asked what it would take to get them to participate, most agreed that if the activities were challenging, they would join. Others stated that if their friends were interested, they would do it with them.

TRIVIA
Researcher: "Can you name a national or provincial park in Canada? Participant: "The Toronto Zoo."
UNIVERSITY STUDENT INTERVIEWS

A SHORT VIDEO - London, Ontario, University Community Centre

DISCUSSION

Students expressed that they did enjoy being in nature and were overall open to the idea of participating in nature programming. However there were many conditions that the students expressed would be crucial for their participation. Some students demonstrated visible concern for environmental issues, whereas others did not feel as strongly. It is unclear if this is from a lack of education on environmental issues or a lack of interest.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the data collected from the university student video, the researchers make the following recommendations:

1) Nature London should further explore the possibility of establishing a type of club or partnership with this demographic, as the participants seemed interested in the idea. The following recommendations are based on the assumption that partnership is established:

2) Activities offered should encourage a social aspect, as students said they were more likely to participate with friends.

3) Activities offered should challenge participants as students said this would make them more likely to participate.

4) It is recommended that programming be offered at a variety of times that way it can work with the busy schedules of the students.

5) It is recommended that Nature London collaborate with existing clubs at Western University that are similar to them, such as EnviroWestern and Western Outdoors Club, to share resources and increase awareness of Nature London.

6) It is recommended that Nature London use social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram to market their programs to this demographic.
INTRODUCTION
The organization leaders of Nature London wanted to know more information about how local Scout's groups were obtaining their nature badges and executing their nature programming. They asked the researchers to gather data on this process and explore the possibility of a future partnership between Nature London and Scout's groups.

METHODS
A list of approximately ten Scout groups in Southwestern Ontario were found through a web search and the emails of respective contacts were taken down. A three question open ended survey was sent with an email invitation to participate and a letter of information (Appendix E). The questions were made to encourage a free-response. Several of the emails sent were returned as undeliverable. Follow up emails were sent two to three weeks after the initial email was sent to clubs who had not responded. The researchers received two responses to the survey questions (Appendix F).

RESULTS
The Kitchener Scout group expressed they may be interested in collaborating on programming with an organization similar to Nature London. They expressed that any programming needs to be interactive for youth, low cost, and planned with lots of lead time. The representative of the Kitchener Scout group gave ideas for possible resources that may be beneficial to Nature London in program planning. They also suggested marketing Nature London to a youth demographic to increase awareness of the organization.
SCOUTS CLUB SURVEY

RESULTS CONT'D

The London Scout’s group response was much shorter. They expressed their nature programs are run by experienced volunteers. They currently have a partnership with Boyle Park. They feel it is important for youth to have continual education that is consistent.

DISCUSSION

The two participants varied greatly in their responses. The Kitchener Scout group seemed open to the idea of some type of collaboration on nature programming, however the London Scout group was unclear if this would be of interest to them.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The researchers feel that more data needs to be collected to be able to definitively say if Nature London should proceed with trying to establish a partnership with Scouts Canada groups. It is recommended that Nature London set up a face to face meeting with prospective Scouts leaders to discuss partnership on future events, as the email communication was not very effective in reaching many of the groups. If Nature London does decide to establish a partnership or collaborate with any Scouts groups, it is recommended that the programming be interactive and low cost. It may be beneficial for Nature London to collect data on what the prospective Scouts would like to have included in programming.
Subject Line: Invitation for Feedback on Nature Education

Hello,

Nature London is an organization based in London, Ontario that is committed to the preservation of nature and the promotion of environmental awareness in the community. Nature London has partnered with Western University's Environmental Health Promotion class to gather feedback on youth environmental education programs in Southwestern Ontario. The purpose of the feedback is to aid Nature London in the potential implementation of a youth education program in Southwestern Ontario.

As a representative of (insert name of organization) your opinion is extremely valuable, and we would like to invite you to participate in a survey about your current youth educational program. Responses will only be used by Nature London for the purposes of program planning and implementation. Participation in this project is entirely voluntary, and the survey can be conducted through phone interview or online survey (link provided below). The online survey can be completed at any time convenient to you. For a phone interview, please let us know a date and time that is convenient. The survey will take approximately 10 to 15 minutes to complete. The survey link closes Tuesday March 12th, 2019.

https://www.esurveycreator.com/s/1217fda

By completing the survey, you are consenting to having your answers used for the remainder of the project and disseminated to members of Nature London to improve their program. If you run more than one youth educational program, please report on only the most popular program. We thank you for your time and consideration in advance.

If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact us, by email at Western.Health.Promotion@gmail.com.

Thank you,
Alannah, Tia, Bridgette, Daad and Aingeshaan
Please answer the following questions in regards to the most popular youth program your organization runs.

1) What is the name of your organization?
2) What is the name of your youth program?
3) Where is your program held? Please select all that apply
   A) Rented space
   B) Organization owned space
   C) Community space
   D) Indoors
   E) Outdoors
4) Please describe the space
5) What are the age groups for your program? Please select all that apply.
   A) 4-5 years
   B) 6-7 years
   C) 8-9 years
   D) 10-11 years
   E) 12 years and older
6) On average, how many children take part in your program? Please select one.
   A) 1-5 children
   B) 6-10 children
   C) 11-15 children
   D) 16-20 children
   E) More than 20 children
7) What is the method of registration for participation in the program? Please select all that apply.
   A) Pre-registration
   B) Drop-in
   C) Other: ________
8) What is the length of each program session? Please select all that apply.
   A) Less than one hour
   B) 1-2 hours
   C) 3-4 hours
   D) More than 4 years
   E) Other: __________

9) What day does the program run? Please select all that apply.
   A) Monday
   B) Tuesday
   C) Wednesday
   D) Thursday
   E) Friday
   F) Saturday
   G) Sunday

10) Who is leading the program? Please select all that apply.
    A) Staff members
    B) Volunteers
    C) Students
    D) Other: __________

11) How are the leaders of the program recruited? Please select all that apply
    A) Organization website
    B) Social media
    C) Family/friends
    D) Newspaper
    E) Radio
    F) Other: __________

12) If the leaders of these programs are students or volunteers, what incentives are given to them to participate?
13) How do you handle liability issues within your program? Please select all that apply.
   A) Consent forms/waiver forms
   B) Minimize physical activities
   C) Parental/guardian participation
   D) Other: ________

14) How often do you run the program? Please select all that apply.
   A) Weekly
   B) Biweekly (every two weeks)
   C) Monthly
   D) Seasonally
   E) Other: ________

15) In what season does the program run? Please select all that apply.
   A) Spring
   B) Summer
   C) Fall
   D) Winter

16) If you run programming in the winter, what types of activities are part of your program? Please specify.

17) What method have you found to be the most effective to gain participants for your program? Please select all that apply
   A) Organization website
   B) Social media
   C) Family/friends
   D) Newspaper
   E) Radio
   F) Other: ________
18) To the best of your knowledge, how engaged were participants in the program? Please select one.
   A) Very engaged
   B) Engaged
   C) Neutral
   D) Disengaged
   E) Very disengaged

19) To the best of your knowledge, what has been the overall feedback from participants on the program? Please select one.
   A) Very positive
   B) Positive
   C) Neutral
   D) Negative
   E) Very negative

20) To the best of your knowledge, what has been the overall feedback from parents/guardians on the program? Please select one.
   A) Very positive
   B) Positive
   C) Neutral
   D) Negative
   E) Very negative

21) In your opinion, how supportive were parents/guardians in their child learning about nature? Please select one.
   A) Very supportive
   B) Somewhat supportive
   C) Neutral
   D) Somewhat opposed
   E) Very opposed
22) How willing would your organization be to continue with this program in the future? Please select one.
   A) Very likely
   B) Likely
   C) Neutral
   D) Unlikely
   E) Very unlikely

23) How willing would your organization be to continue with this program in the future? Please select one.

24) How many programs (including youth programs) does your organization run?

25) What is the cost to the organization for running the program? Please provide a breakdown of costs if applicable.

26) How is your organization governed (i.e. Board of Directors, paid staff, volunteer run, etc.)?

27) Please elaborate on your leadership team.

28) Are there any changes your club has made to keep the program running? Please specify.

29) Are there any initiatives or activities that have been particularly successful for your program? Please specify.

30) Are there any challenges or barriers you have experienced in running the program? Please specify.

31) Does your organization have a formal partnership arrangement to operate your youth programming? If so, please describe it.

32) Do you collaborate with any community partners to enhance your program? If so please describe their role.

33) Is there any additional information you would like to provide about your program? Please specify.
What is the name of your organization?
Hamilton Naturalists’ Club

What is the name of your youth program?
G.O. (Get Outside) Explore with HNC

Where is your program held?
Organization owned space, indoors, outdoors

Please describe the space.
Classrooms and HNC’s nature sanctuary

What are the age groups for your program?
8-9, 10-11, 12+

On average, how many children take part in your program?
More than 20 children

What is the method of registration for participation in the program?
We work with teachers, generally grade 3-6 and now some high school

What is the length of each program session?
1-2 hours and 3-4 hours

What day(s) does the program run?
Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday

Who is leading the program?
Staff members, volunteers

How are the leaders of the program recruited?
Organization website, social media

If the leaders of the programs are students or volunteers, what incentives are given to them to participate?
Our volunteers are generally HNC members and want to share their love of nature

How do you handle liability issues within your program?
I think this is dealt with through the school

How often do you run the program?
Seasonally
In what season does the program run?
Spring, summer, fall

What method have you found to be the most effective to gain participants for your program?
Teachers

To the best of your knowledge, how engaged were participants in the program?
Very engaged

To the best of your knowledge, what has been the overall feedback from participants on the program?
Very positive

To the best of your knowledge, what has been the overall feedback from parents/guardians on the program?
Very positive

In your opinion, how supportive were parents/guardians in their child learning about nature?
Neutral

How willing would your organization be to continue with this program in the future?
Very likely

How many active members are part of your organization?
We have over 600 members and I’m guessing about 100 are active

How many programs (including youth programs) does your organization run?
Several programs; - Junior Naturalists; - G.O. Explore; - Enhancing biodiversity and bringing nature back into the city, Build Pollinator Corridor

What is the cost to your organization for running the program? Please provide a breakdown of costs if applicable.
About $500 for classroom program - develop program, deliver in classroom, visit nature sanctuary, contribute to bus costs

How is your organization governed (i.e Board of Directors, paid staff, volunteer run, etc.)?
Board of Directors; 2 paid staff for land trust program, including the school based outdoor education program, rest of club is volunteer run
Please elaborate on your leadership team.
Land Trust Manager runs the program with a contract coordinator and HNC volunteers

Are there any changes your club has made to keep the program running? Please specify.
We're adding in bioblitzes of urban woodlands to help bring attention to city woodlands and hopefully more stewardship assistance; - sometimes we need to make slight changes to attract funders

Are there any initiatives or activities that have been particularly successful for your program? Please specify.
The combination of classroom program and nature outing makes the nature outing more controlled chaos; we have lots of unprogrammed time for the nature outing for the kids to explore, many of the kids in the program are experiencing their first nature outing so we like them to have some of their own time

Are there any challenges or barriers you have experienced in running the program? Please specify.
Funding; sometimes schools can be a challenge around permission for the nature outing, but we're generally able to overcome this, we also generally work with the same teachers each year

Do you collaborate with any community partners to enhance your program? If so please describe their role.
No, although we do talk to them to get tips and advice and all of us offer different experiences, we are the only free program to go into classrooms and then to bring them on nature outings. We often need to pay for the bus to the nature sanctuary.
Are there any changes your club has made to keep the program running? Please specify.

As it’s been going on for years, yes, there have been many formats and versions. Maybe the biggest change is having parents attend with kids. This was originally because our insurers encouraged us to make the change. It is very popular with families so we have continued although with our waivers, our current insurers don’t require it. The disadvantage is that it makes for a very big group. We have the option -- and the finances -- to have our meetings led in 2 groups by 2 staff. We haven’t done that as we always seem to be just on the edge of too many. Our agreement with the nature centre is one staff for up to 20 kids (they don’t mind how many adults). We creep up each year to just over 20 Kids but not every family comes out every time so we’re still in one group.

Are there any initiatives or activities that have been particularly successful for your program? Please specify.

Sugar bush, pond study/stream study - anything where you get to go in the water! Shelter building, visit to bee hives

Are there any challenges or barriers you have experienced in running the program? Please specify.

We’re currently working on getting to know each other more and creating more of a feeling of community. The Kids do activities with their parents so we try to get families to work together and spend some time sharing at the beginning and the end.

Does your organization have a formal partnership arrangement to operate your youth programming? If so, please describe it.

We pay the conservation authority for use of a nature centre and 1 staff to run our programs. Our happiest arrangement was when we had the same staff person each month. Recently, this hasn’t been the case but it still works.
SURVEY RESPONSES: WATERLOO REGION NATURE

What is the name of your organization?
Waterloo Region Nature

What is the name of your youth program?
Waterloo Region Nature Kids

Where is your program held?
Rented space, outdoors

Please describe the space.
We pay the conservation authority for use of a nature centre and one staff to run our programs

What are the age groups for your program?
6-7, 8-9, 10-11, 12+

On average, how many children take part in your program?
16-20 children

What is the method of registration for participation in the program?
Pre-registration - families sign up for the year

What is the length of each program session?
1-2 hours

What day(s) does the program run?
Saturday

Who is leading the program?
Staff members, volunteers, students

How are the leaders of the program recruited?
Organization website, when members sign up or renew annual membership, they are asked to offer volunteer time to the club

If the leaders of the programs are students or volunteers, what incentives are given to them to participate?
The fun of participating, lots of appreciation and an end-of-year pot luck picnic; - for high school students, credit for volunteer hours
How do you handle liability issues within your program?
Consent forms/waiver forms, parent/guardian participation

How often do you run the program?
Monthly - We meet the last Saturday morning of the month, Sept to May (but not Dec). We have occasional "bonus outings" on another Sat morning at different locations - bird banding demo, hike, etc.

In what season does the program run?
Spring, fall, winter

If you run programming in the winter, what types of activities are part of your program?
We usually book snowshoeing with an alternative activity if there isn't enough snow -- and there often isn't! We have done tracking, a predator-prey simulation game, winter survival skills (including fire-building & hotdogs & marshmallows), visit to the sugar bush down the road, shelter-building. I think the most popular is shelter-building -- very active. Also great fun anytime we can work in some sliding down the hill!

What method have you found to the most effective to gain participants for your program?
Organization website, social media, word of mouth - We have slowed down our publicity as with a few families who join through the year, we have over 20 families. We get lots of repeat registrations.

To the best of your knowledge, how engaged were participants in the program?
Very engaged

To the best of your knowledge, what has been the overall feedback from participants on the program?
Very positive

To the best of your knowledge, what has been the overall feedback from parents/guardians on the program?
Very positive

In your opinion, how supportive were parents/guardians in their child learning about nature?
Very supportive

How willing would your organization be to continue with this program in the future?
Very likely
How many programs (including youth programs) does your organization run?

Monthly meeting with speaker, frequent outings: hikes, lots of birdwatching, plants. WRN Kids for 7-12-year-olds - has been going on 20 years at least (formerly Kitchener-Waterloo Young Naturalists). Just started WRN Teens this year - environmental volunteer work projects and learning opportunities - monthly project for sure and usually another bonus activity each month - habitat restoration, helping at events, hikes, tracking, bird banding demo, visit to university ecology lab, owl prowl. Not exactly a program but in the community have installed very cool eco-posts with QR links to environmental info, etc.

What is the cost to your organization for running the program? Please provide a breakdown of costs if applicable.

I have 2015-16 handy so I'll use that. Income: $1555 in registration fees (45$ per child, 40$ per subsequent child in same family). We haven't increased the price in ages. See below. Expenses: space rental & staff 460$; program 280$; incidental expenses 125$; Notes: We use the nature centre equipment so rarely have expenses for that. Incidentals might include hot dogs, name tags, and at the end of the year, we give each child one of the field guides our club sells. The members of our (adult) club are VERY generous in making donations for anything to do with encouraging kids and youth. We have a very healthy Youth Fund to draw on so we can take on other projects that involve costs. For example, our club intends to donate trees that the Kids will plant at the nature centre where we meet. As well, we often have one activity per year that involves bringing in a guest speaker or program like an organization to do a presentation with live raptors.

How is your organization governed (i.e Board of Directors, paid staff, volunteer run, etc.)?

Board of directors and other positions of responsibility and committees - all volunteers

Please elaborate on your leadership team.

I coordinate WRN Kids and have 1 student and 6 adult volunteers. They help out in general but as the program is led by a paid nature centre staff person and the kids attend with a parent/adult, there aren’t many jobs on our meeting days. My job is answering e-mail questions and new registrations, sending reminders, negotiating details of programs. We meet with the nature centre coordinator in June to choose the programs for the following school year.
Do you collaborate with any community partners to enhance your program? If so please describe their role.

We offer occasional "bonus outings" and make use of our great partnerships with a nature reserve in Cambridge "rare", several WRN members who serve as expert volunteer leaders as needed, a local land-owner who has several ecology projects happening on the farm.

Is there any additional information you would like to provide about your program? Please specify.

We're proud of WRN Kids and its long history. This year, we started WRN Teens and though it's a smaller group (11 Teens at the moment) I'm very excited about the volunteer work and learning opportunities they're involved in. Thanks for your interest and feel free to get back in touch if you want more info. Marg Paré, WRN Kids and WRN Teens coordinator kidsewaterlooregionnature.ca teensewaterlooregionnature.ca
What is the name of your organization?
Evergreen

What is the name of your youth program?
Visiting School Program

Where is your program held?
Organization owned space, outdoors

Please describe the space.
The majority of our programming occurs outdoors, though we use multiple indoor spaces when weather necessitates and for lunch. Some of our spaces are classrooms and some are wide open, empty spaces.

What are the age groups for your program?
6-7, 8-9, 10-11, 12+

On average, how many children take part in your program?
More than 20 children

What is the method of registration for participation in the program?
Pre-registration

What is the length of each program session?
3-4 hours

What day(s) does the program run?
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday

Who is leading the program?
Staff members

How are the leaders of the program recruited?
Organization website, traditional job posting websites

How do you handle liability issues within your program?
Consent forms/waiver forms

How often do you run the program?
Weekly
In what season does the program run?
Spring, fall, winter

If you run programming in the winter, what types of activities are part of your program?
Skating, hiking, shelter builds, games

What method have you found to be the most effective to gain participants for your program?
Organization website, word of mouth

To the best of your knowledge, how engaged were participants in the program?
Very engaged

To the best of your knowledge, what has been the overall feedback from participants on the program?
Very positive

To the best of your knowledge, what has been the overall feedback from parents/guardians on the program?
Very positive

In your opinion, how supportive were parents/guardians in their child learning about nature?
Somewhat supportive

How willing would your organization be to continue with this program in the future?
Very likely

*The representative of this organization did not complete any further questions in regards to the survey*
What is the name of your organization?
High Park Nature Centre

What is the name of your youth program?
Summer clubs

Where is your program held?
Organization owned space, indoors, outdoors

What are the age groups for your program?
4-5, 6-7, 8-9, 10-11, 12+

On average, how many children take part in your program?
16-20 children

What is the method of registration for participation in the program?
Pre-registration

What is the length of each program session?
1-2 hours, with guest speakers they last an extra hour

What day(s) does the program run?
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday

Who is leading the program?
Staff members

How are the leaders of the program recruited?
Job listing

If leaders of the programs are student or volunteers, what incentives are given to them to participate?
Participation through the volunteer appreciation and we get interns through secondary school programs

How do you handle liability issues within your program?
Consent forms/waiver forms and first aid training

How often do you run the program?
Seasonally

In what season does the program run?
Summer

If you run programming in the winter, what types of activities are part of your program?
Animal track in the snow, winter birding, migration birding, and with bad weather days show documentary's on different species in the park

What method have you found to the most effective to gain participants for your program?
Social media, organization website
To the best of your knowledge, how engaged were participants in the program?
Very engaged

To the best of your knowledge, what has been the overall feedback from participants on the program?
Positive

To the best of your knowledge, what has been the overall feedback from parents/guardians on the program?
Positive

In your opinion, how supportive were parents/guardians in their child learning about nature?
Very supportive

How many active members are part of your organization?
There is hundreds of active members

How many programs (including youth programs) does your organization run?
In the summer around 30 programs

How is your organization governed (i.e Board of Directors, paid staff, volunteer run, etc.)?
Volunteer and paid staff members

Please elaborate on your leadership team.
Everyone is a nature enthusiast and have background in running programs.

Are there any changes your club has made to keep the program running?
Changing registration to online based and increased number of programs

Are there any challenges or barriers you have experienced in running the program?
Keeping up to date with online registration

Do you collaborate with any community partners to enhance your program? If so please describe their role.
Always partnering with other community groups in the area to offer more programs

Is there any additional information you would like to provide about your program? Please specify.
If more spots are available in the programs, we would easily be able to fill them
What is the name of your organization?
High Park Nature Centre

Where is your program held?
Organization owned space, community space, indoors, outdoors

What are the age groups for your program?
4-5, 6-7, 8-9, 10-11, 12+

On average, how many children take part in your program?
11-15 children

What is the method of registration for participation in the program?
Pre-registration, drop-in

What is the length of each program session?
1-2 hours

What day(s) does the program run?
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday

Who is leading the program?
Staff members, volunteers

How are the leaders of the program recruited?
Organization website, social media

If leaders of the programs are student or volunteers, what incentives are given to them to participate?
The leaders participate because they have a connection to the park, have worked from in the area, have stories from camping and overall just want to give back to the community

How do you handle liability issues within your program?
Consent forms/waiver forms - rely on the government liability service

How often do you run the program?
Seasonally

In what season does the program run?
Summer

If you run programming in the winter, what types of activities are part of your program?
Animal track in the snow, winter birding, migration birding, and with bad weather days show documentary's on different species in the park

What method have you found to the most effective to gain participants for your program?
Social media, organization website
To the best of your knowledge, how engaged were participants in the program?
Very engaged

To the best of your knowledge, what has been the overall feedback from participants on the program?
Very positive

To the best of your knowledge, what has been the overall feedback from parents/guardians on the program?
Very positive

In your opinion, how supportive were parents/guardians in their child learning about nature?
Very supportive

How willing would your organization be to continue with this program in the future?
Very likely

How many active members are part of your organization?
Less than 20 members

How many programs (including youth programs) does your organization run?
Many programs throughout the year

How is your organization governed (i.e Board of Directors, paid staff, volunteer run, etc.)?
Mix of volunteers, park staff employed by the government, paid students in the summer

Please elaborate on your leadership team.
Dedicated- that's why they have been part of the organization for a long time; The new people getting involved want to be active in the community

Are there any changes your club has made to keep the program running?
Keep website up to date, keep active on social media, partner with other organizations like Nature Canada

Are there any initiatives or activities that have been particularly successful for your program?
Festival of Flight in May- bird migration, during this month get lots of birds coming to the park

Are there any challenges or barriers you have experienced in running the program?
Having to fill the volunteer spots everyday

Do you collaborate with any community partners to enhance your program? If so please describe their role.
Nature Canada has provided seminars on how to run the programs and have shared resources on how to grow the organization; Partnered with Rondeau Bay organization for the programs; Depending on the festival/season, partner with different organizations to offer the different programs
Subject Line: Invitation for Feedback on Nature Education

Hello,

Nature London is an organization based in London, Ontario that is committed to the preservation of nature and the promotion of environmental awareness in the community. Nature London has partnered with Western University’s Environmental Health Promotion class to gather feedback on youth environmental education programs in Southwestern Ontario. The purpose of the feedback is to aid Nature London in the potential implementation of a youth education program in Southwestern Ontario.

As a representative of (insert name of organization) your opinion is extremely valuable, and we would like to invite you to participate in a questionnaire about your current Scouts programs. Responses will only be used by Nature London for the purposes of program planning and implementation. Please type out your responses and email them back to Western.Health.Promotion@gmail.com.

Do you partner with nature organizations to help Scouts earn their nature badges, or do you run your nature badge program yourselves? Please elaborate.

Would you be interested in supporting local youth nature programming via partnerships with organizations such as Nature London? If so, please explain what sort of arrangement might be of interest to you?

Are there any other comments you wish to share regarding nature education for youth/ Scouts?

If you wish to be notified of our findings, so that your organization may benefit also, please indicate here.

By completing these questions, you are consenting to having your answers used for the remainder of the project and disseminated to members of Nature London to improve their program. We thank you for your time and consideration in advance.

If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact us, by email at Western.Health.Promotion@gmail.com.

Thank you,
Alannah, Tia, Bridgette, Daad and Aingeshaan
Do you partner with nature organizations to help Scouts earn their nature badges, or do you run your nature badge program yourselves?

Scouts Canada is a national organisation and I think you may get a different answer at a national level than you would at a local level. Contact our National Commissioner, tim.welch@scouts.ca, for a response at the national level. At the local level I would say we do not partner with nature organisations; we use such organisations. For example, the Beavers (aged 5 to 7) just had a visit to the Butterfly Conservatory which put on a special Scouting appropriate program during Scout Guide Week (Feb 17 to 23). The purpose of Scouting is youth development. Getting outside, unplugging, interacting with nature and environmental consciousness are some of the tools used. An effective tool for youth development is having the youth decide what they want to do. It develops initiative, creativity, and it’s likely to be fun. This means that the direction the activities take can be very different; it is really dependant on the mix of youth involved. Yes, there is some suggestion that occurs at the younger ages but there is less as the youth mature.
Would you be interested in supporting local youth nature programming via partnerships with organizations such as Nature London? If so, please explain what sort of arrangement might be of interest to you?

I believe partnership would be too strong a relationship. We are interested in being a user of nature programming. It would be useful to look like youth focused part of London Nature as opposed to a member focus, you would have a distribution list for people interested in hearing about your youth program offering to which our Scouters and older youth could sign up. You would offer programs like:

- Wilderness canoeing on the Thames from below the dam (“Wilderness Canoeing in Southern Ontario” says there is a couple hours canoeing there);
- Hour long hike augmented with a “wild plants to eat” see and try experience;
- A wet lands visit with a list of wild life there and a challenge of how many can one find but not touch;
- A presentation (pictures and video) about how a river changes from clear water to polluted as it travels through farm land past industry (it would end with a list of examples to hike and see).

Note that the in above list each item has a “do factor” (with youth, it’s not good to just tell them something; they have to be doing things).

Lead times are important because Scouters get what the youth say they want to do, which is in general terms, then it has to be turned into program and finally delivered; an offering would have to be known at least 3 month in advanced, longer for bigger events.

It would not have to be a zero cost experience for our members, but there are single parent families with financial constraints, so prices cannot be too high.

Are there any other comments you wish to share regarding nature education for youth/Scouts?

The publications from On Nature and Friends of Algonquin have been sources of ideas for me. Your website could be the same.

Before this contact I did not know of your organization. You might want to market your organization in the youth and youth leadership demographic.
SCOUT SURVEY RESPONSES: 45TH LONDON

Do you partner with nature organizations to help Scouts earn their nature badges, or do you run your nature badge program yourselves?
Most of our nature awareness programs are ran by our volunteers. All of which have many years of experience.

Would you be interested in supporting local youth nature programming via partnerships with organizations such as Nature London? If so, please explain what sort of arrangement might be of interest to you?
We presently have adopted Boyle Park and do major park clean ups and care for the front flower beds.

Are there any other comments you wish to share regarding nature education for youth/ Scouts?
In our climate some continual year round consistent education.
APPENDIX G

UNIVERSITY STUDENT SURVEY QUESTIONS

Open Ended Questions
Do you like being outside? How does your mood change by being outside?
What kind of activities do you like doing outside?
What do you think happens when we see ourselves separate from nature?
Are there any environmental issues that are important to you?
Would you consider participating in a nature program that runs once a week and would involve being outside for two hours? What would it take get you to participate?

Trivia Questions
Can you name three national or provincial parks?
Can you name five types of trees?
Do cherries grow on trees or bushes?