

How Can We Involve More Youth in Quality Outdoor Experiences?

- Transportation
- Lack of expertise in outdoor & people skills
- Comfort zone
- Funding
- Instability of non-profit organizations
- Competing with indoor activities & technology

How Can We Involve More Youth in Quality Outdoor Experiences?

Background notes from discussion sessions:

1. Transportation

Solutions:

- Work with local transit agencies to request service
- Create workshop with teachers to discover funding sources for transportation options

2. Lack of expertise in outdoor skills/people skills

Solutions:

- Use retired scoutmasters
- Clearinghouse in expertise
- Continuing education
- Marry with groups like Elderhostel/NOLS/Outward Bound/Wilderness Education

3. Comfort zone

Solutions:

- Find ways to make outings more appealing to youth
- Focus on the experience/value
- Lighten up/become a child again
- Discover together
- Parent/Guardian helps to maintain control and should represent group dynamic
- Establish specific challenges appropriate to the age/skill level to develop interest and a sense of accomplishment
- Outings should group participants according to range of ages

4. Funding/Instability of non-profit organizations

Solutions:

- Find ways to earmark grant money for programs
- Set-up permanent endowments/memorial gifts
- Develop permanent partnerships
- Utilize retirees
- Interagency personnel programs.

- Sense of ownership/Get everyone to buy into the programs
- Small grants can add up to big money
- Extensive solicitation
- Partner with healthcare organizations for funding
- Self-promotion
- United Way payroll deduction
- Matching funds
- In-kind contributions
- Fundraising (e.g. dinners, golf tournaments) involving elected officials
- Healthcare education
- Chamber ambassadors

5. Competing with indoor activities/technology

Solutions:

- Publicize technology available in the outdoors (e.g. wi-fi)
- Consider technology skills when recruiting
- Interactive games on outdoor agency websites (e.g. L.A. Zoo)
- Put voices/journal entries/pictures of participants on the website
- Parks Online Resources for Teachers and Students (PORTS) – Interactive programs that bring the state parks to the classroom