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Recreation Director's Handbook

A guide for recreation
delivery in Aboriginal
communities



2008

Manitoba 

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Tips / Helpful Hints from Cross Lake

- ◇ Involve everyone when planning an event; ensure everyone's idea/input is used right from the start to finish of the event. This gives everyone the feeling of belonging, respect and involvement.
- ◇ Keep the community informed of all activities in their community and ask for input.
- ◇ Constantly have events for the youth to keep them occupied and involve them in the activities and planning.
- ◇ Keep the community office open to the public and make them feel at home when they drop in for a visit.

PLANNING FOR DIFFERENT AGES

These general age characteristics and tips may help in programming for specific populations. Remember, ultimately everyone is unique.

Exercise: Assist running a program with an age group you have little experience with.

Preschool (ages 1-5)

- ✦ like to imitate those around them; enjoy make believe (whatever they want to be they can be through their imaginations.)
- ✦ have a short attention span; can get restless
- ✦ want results right away
- ✦ enjoy being with other kids, but are also content by themselves
- ✦ have problems gauging their own energy limits
- ✦ see a world full of wonder
- ✦ have limited hand-eye coordination
- ✦ like sensory stimuli

Activity tips

- ◇ This group needs a lot of different and quick activities. Remember to include rest periods and low energy games. (read the group for timing). Cooperative games and quick and easy crafts are big hits.
- ◇ Include activities that:
 - let them try on adult roles- include dress-up, storytelling, drama, singing, games, puppetry;
 - involve exploring, like hikes and nature scavenger hunts;
 - involve listening, smelling, tasting and touching.
 - involve creative movement, ball throwing, blocks and simple crafts which help develop their eye-hand coordination.

Ages 6-8

- ✦ want to do well; will practice to improve
- ✦ are learning to share; enjoy being with large number of kids
- ✦ are constantly active
- ✦ are improving muscle coordination
- ✦ are inquisitive, like to experiment
- ✦ are more concerned with individual rather than team achievement

Activity tips

- ◇ Play activities that involve commitment and have appeal- sports, arts, singing, and science are good.
- ◇ Provide opportunity for group activities, such as camping, relays etc.
- ◇ Provide physical outlets, like tag games.
- ◇ Downplay competition and encourage cooperation.

Ages 9- 12

- ✦ are strongly influenced by peer approval
- ✦ can make commitments
- ✦ like teamwork
- ✦ are developing fine motor skills
- ✦ want responsibilities
- ✦ are adventurous
- ✦ have a growing awareness of gender differences
- ✦ want rewards

Activity tips

- ◇ They are more likely to attend programs that are considered cool by their peers.
- ◇ Involve them in decision making and running activities.
- ◇ Recognize achievements through praise, trophies, and certificates.
- ◇ Include programs that:
 - involve festivals, team competitions performances;
 - involve athletics, hobby groups, camps, teams, plays, bands.
 - provide activities with perceived risk eg. rock climbing
 - emphasize co-operative games.
 - provide positive gender awareness such as co-ed sports teams, dances etc.

Adolescent (ages 13-19)

- ✦ respond to strong peer pressure
- ✦ are changing; growing in sexual awareness
- ✦ seek adult roles; question authority
- ✦ strive for independence
- ✦ are sensitive to failure
- ✦ may be parents

Activity Tips

- ◇ Aim for programs that can be considered cool or appealing to their peers.
- ◇ Provide opportunities to release physical tension.
- ◇ Involve them in decisions and give them some authority in the planning process. Try peer leadership of activities.
- ◇ Teach activities that can be self- initiated.
- ◇ Emphasize cooperation instead of competition.
- ◇ Consider childcare.

Young Adults (ages 20– 35)

- ✦ lifestyles vary depending on employment, student, parental and marital status ✦ no longer have school groups ✦ are fine tuning their development in physical, intellectual and social interests

Activity Tips

- ◇ People with partners seek a balance of individual and joint activities.
- ◇ Young parents are looking for exposure to activities that can be done with children.
- ◇ Singles explore activities that promote self-improvement and socialization.

Adults (ages 36– 60)

- ✦ maintain an interest in activities and skills they can carry late into life
- ✦ lifestyles are varied; depending on marital, parental, employment, and student status
- ✦ want to stimulate their brains and maintain physical fitness

Activity Tips

- ◇ Introduce and help people determine a variety of activities they may want to keep and develop over the years.
- ◇ Couples with grown children give more attention to developing their own individual and dual pursuits, like hobbies, volunteering, traveling.
- ◇ Consider adult education programs and fitness programs.

Adults (ages 61+)

- ✦ abilities can vary greatly ✦ interest in reflecting on the past to better understand life experiences
- ✦ like to socialize with friends ✦ may be retired with a new sense of freedom and adventure

Activity Tips

- ◇ Provide oral history, journal writing, festivals, discussion groups.
- ◇ Provide opportunities that incorporate physical exercises and sensory stimulation.
- ◇ Provide opportunities for socializing, e.g. feasts, bingo, lawn bowling.
- ◇ Be flexible and relaxed.
- ◇ Provide opportunities for fun and laughter.
- ◇ Offer programs that include outings and travel.

Some see things as they are and ask why, I dream of things that never were and ask why not."
–George Bernhard Shaw