

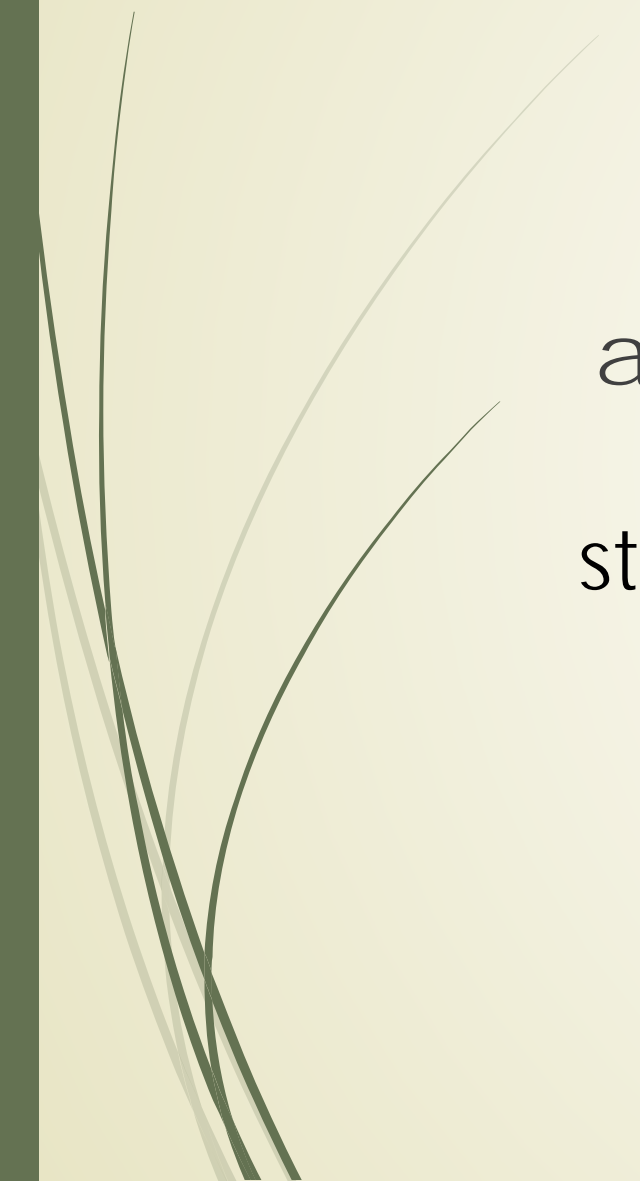


Volunteering:

*Community, Wellness and Leaders of
Tomorrow*



Land Acknowledgment



I would like to take a moment to acknowledge that we are gathered today on *Syilx Okanagan Nation*. We thank the stewards of this land for having us so as that we may learn and grow as we share our knowledge and passion for our communities.



Overview




- ▶ Welcome
- ▶ Who is this Lady?
- ▶ Benefits to Volunteering
- ▶ Stats and Highlights
- ▶ Volunteer Demographics
- ▶ Engaging the Volunteers
- ▶ Benefits of a strong volunteer program
- ▶ Making Connection: The Intake Process
- ▶ Leaders of Tomorrow!
- ▶ Conclusion



Who is this lady?

And why should we listen to her?

- ▶ Courtnea Stolting (she/her)
 - ▶ Arts and Leisure Programmer (Children's Programs)
 - ▶ Volunteer Coordination
 - ▶ BA Major in Psychology (Vancouver Island University)
 - ▶ Bonus Credentials: Mother of two, Photographer, High Five Certified Trainer
- 



Who is this lady?

And why should we listen to her?

- ▶ Volunteered most of my Youth Days with Comox Military Family Resource Centre
 - ▶ Experience in Children's Programming since 2010
 - ▶ Summer Camp Leader, Summer Camp Supervisor, Summer Camp & Volunteer Coordinator
 - ▶ Youth Services Coordinator with CMFRC
 - ▶ Programmer with the City of Courtenay
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Volunteering: Benefits Beyond Numbers

- ▶ Positive Impacts on Mental Health
 - Volunteering makes you feel good-- creates a similar physical experience to vigorous exercise or meditation
 - Reduce Cortisol Levels = Lowered Stress
 - Lowered rates of Depression (especially in 65+)
 - Boost Happiness and Satisfaction with life
 - Build Friendships and Social Connections
- ▶ Other Personal Benefits:
 - Lowered Blood Pressure
 - Live Longer
 - Better Sleep
 - Resume Building
 - Gain Paid Employment
 - Skills Development



Volunteering: Benefits Beyond Numbers

- ▶ Community Benefits:

- Building a stronger community
- Positively transforming and uplifting a community
- Fostering a warm and caring environment for all
- Develop a sense of responsibility and connection to the community
 - Decrease sense of isolation and disconnection



National Volunteering Statistics

According to Statistics Canada, in 2018 the following organizations saw the most Volunteer engagement:

- ▶ Hospitals (avg 111hours/year)
- ▶ Religious Sectors (avg 110 hours/year)
- ▶ Sports and Rec (avg 105 hours/year)
- ▶ Arts and Culture (avg 104 hours per year)
- ▶ Self Deteremined Volunteering (assisting others) (avg 137 hours/year outside of the home)

We see from this data that nationally Parks and Recreation sectors are already actively engaging volunteers in our communities.

<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/210423/dq210423a-eng.htm>



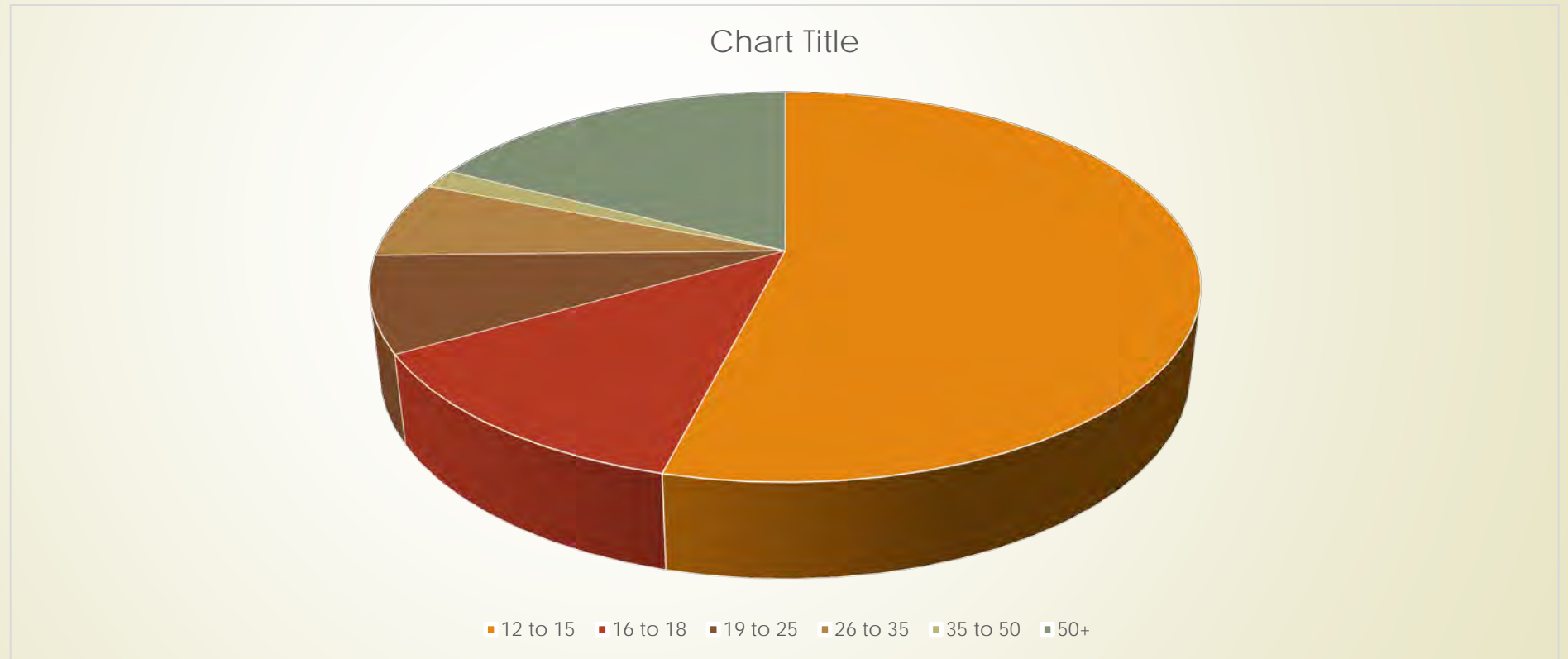


2023 Volunteer Highlights

From City of Courtenay Recreation

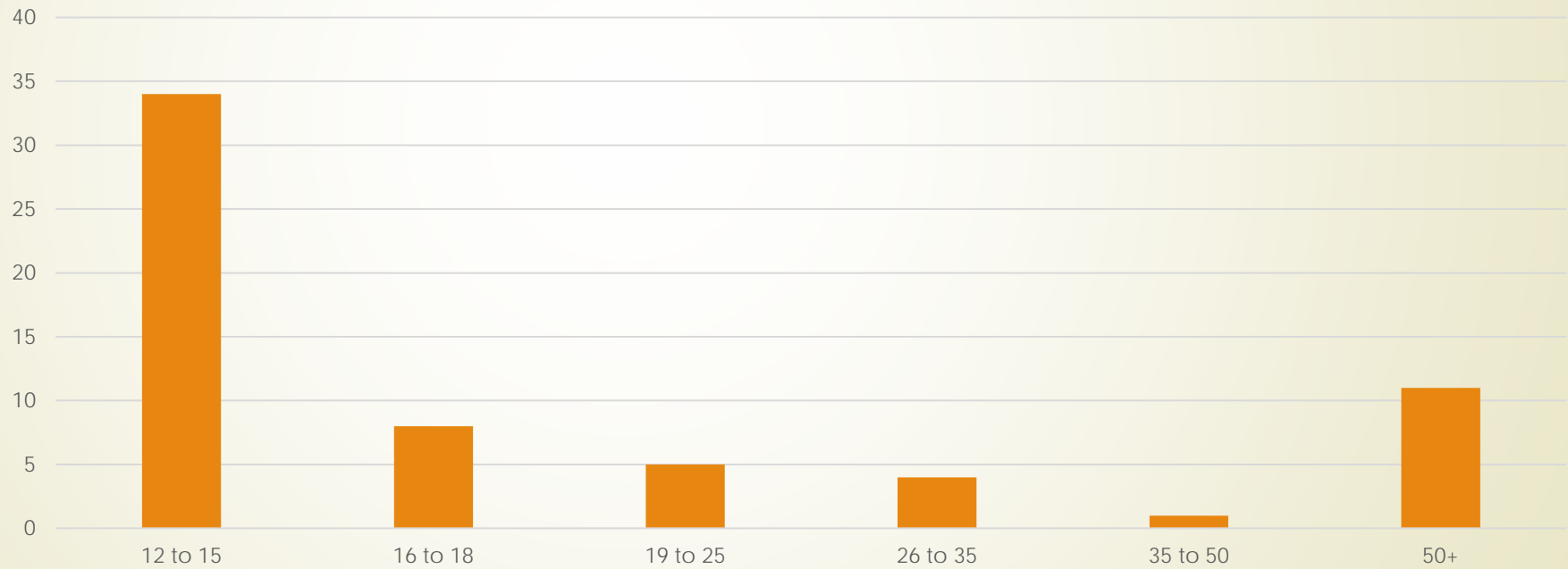
The following stats reflect the volunteerism with Courtenay Recreation's Lewis Centre programs. Other volunteer programs, including those with our Evergreen Club, are tracked and coordinated separately.

Courtenay Recreation Volunteer Demographics 2023



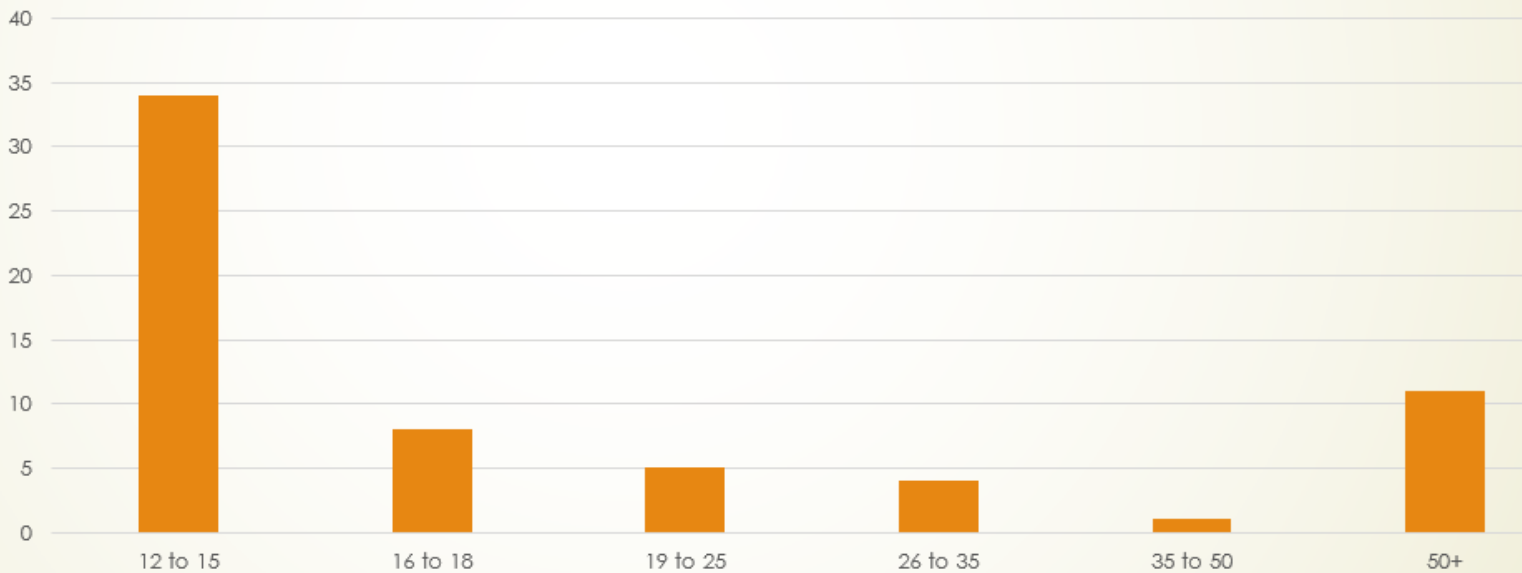
2023 Volunteers City of Courtenay Recreation

Chart Title



Discussion: Observations of Volunteer Demographics


- Who volunteered the most? Why?
- Who volunteered the least? Why?
- How does this data line up with your organizations volunteerism?
- Other Observations?





How the Data Lines Up?

2018 Stats Canada survey found:

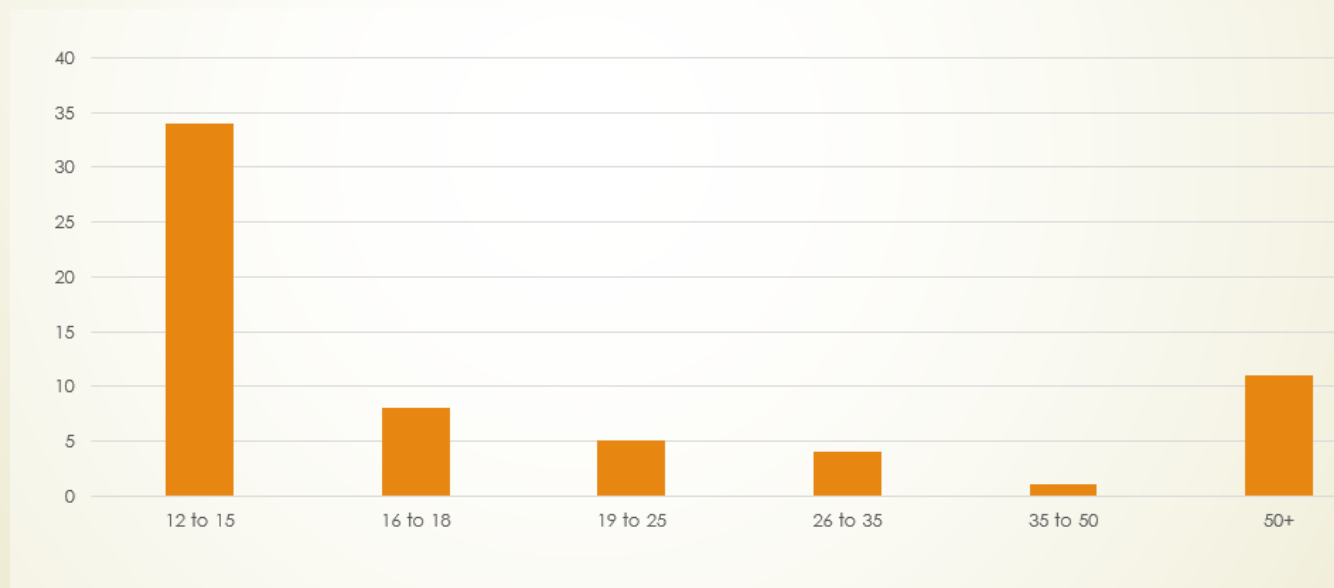
- ▶ Younger generations of Canadian's are more likely to volunteer with increased frequency and numbers,
 - ▶ Baby Boomers (born between 1918 and 1945) and those born prior to 1996, contributed more hours on average, despite less individuals engaging.
 - ▶ We also see that, in general, more Boomer and Millennial woman (44%) engage in volunteerism than men (38%), with other generations not having a statistically significant difference in engagement between the binary genders.
- 

What's the deal with that Gap?

High engagement from ages 12 to 15, lowering drastically by age 16.

Stays low until 50+

- ▶ What do you think is the cause of this trend?





What's the deal with that Gap?

It's observed that the 12-15 age is the most engaged in volunteerism.

Reasons this has been found to be true for Courtenay Recreation includes:

- ▶ Children aging out of full day programs
- ▶ Increased desire for independence and Responsibility
- ▶ Begin resume building prior to joining work force

Building connections with other volunteers and the community

Statistics Canada 2018 survey reflected this as well as they found younger volunteers tend to view volunteering as a means of boosting employable skills and CV's or to meet graduation requirement.



What's the deal with that Gap?

We still see engagement from 16 to 18 years. This demographic tends to volunteer to:

- ▶ Complete Graduation Requirement (30 hours Work Experience required to graduate Highschool)
- ▶ Resume and CV building for College/University applications
- ▶ Trying out prospective lines of work

We see a steep decrease in volunteerism at this age in part to:

- ▶ Being of age to join the work force
- ▶ Social and Personal schedules are paramount
- ▶ Trusted to be left home alone

Statistics Canada noted that Gen-Z (those born 1996 or later) is reported to have the highest volunteer engagement (52% of respondents in this category noting that they have volunteered within their communities)



What's the deal with that Gap?

- ▶ Between the ages of 19 and 35, we see a similar number of volunteers, where-as 35-50 we saw nearly 0 engagement in volunteerism.

Why do we see low engagement in this age category?


- ▶ University studies may account for a large amount of energy and time expenditure on the younger end of this demographic.
- ▶ Jobs are needed to sustain their existence. Many adults are working 2-3 jobs to make ends meet, leaving little time or energy for volunteering.
- ▶ Young families have less time to devote to volunteering as they raise their children.



What's the deal with that Gap?

- ▶ We see a steep uptick of volunteerism in the 50+ community.
- ▶ Many of our volunteers in this demographic are retired and looking for ways to stay active and connect with their community.
- ▶ These volunteers tend to donate their time to programs and events that suit their interests or fields of work, as compared to the youngest volunteers who tend to try everything as they develop a sense of the world and themselves.

Stats Canada noted that those reaching or transitioning into retirement tend to devote more time to activities outside of the house and paid work.



Participation: How to Engage the Quiet Zone

- “Quiet Zone” here is used to refer to the 19 – 50 age demographic.
- This zone consists primarily of students, parents and working professionals, who may lack time and resources to be available to volunteer.

We will break into groups, with each being assigned a demographic. Please brainstorm the following for your assigned demographic:

- ❖ Limiting factors to engagement in volunteerism
- ❖ Programs or Events which may suit this volunteer demographic
- ❖ Methods of reaching this demographic
- ❖ Incentives specific to this demographic



Engaging the “Quiet Zone”

- University Student
- Nursing Student
- Stay at home parent
- Small Business Owner
- Single Parent
- Early Retiree
- Trade Worker
- Adaptive Adults (those with support needs)



How to engage your volunteers: PARTICIPATION

Let's take a few moments to share our insights and ideas with those around us.


- ▶ How does your organization recruit new volunteers?
- ▶ What kind of assistance/tasks do your volunteers provide?
- ▶ What sorts of incentives do you provide your volunteers?
- ▶ What training opportunities do you offer to your volunteers?


We will reconvene and share following small discussions.



City of Courtenay Recreation's Volunteer Engagement

How does MY organization recruit new volunteers?

- Quarterly visit to Highschools in the area
 - Quarterly Volunteer Information Sessions
 - Social Media Posts
 - Site Specific Message Boards (Outdoor Signage, Facility TV Ads)
 - Word of Mouth
- 



City of Courtenay Recreation's Volunteer Engagement


What kind of assistance/tasks do OUR volunteers provide?

- ❑ Children's programming supports (camps, daily programs)
 - ❑ Special Events
- ❑ Adapted Programming supports (sewing, kitchen programs, sports, etc.)



City of Courtenay Recreation's Volunteer Engagement

What sorts of incentives do you provide your volunteers?

- Random Acts of Kindness
 - Volunteer Reward Program
 - Letters of Recommendation
 - Placement training, resume building
 - Volunteer Appreciation Games Nights
 - Employment Opportunities
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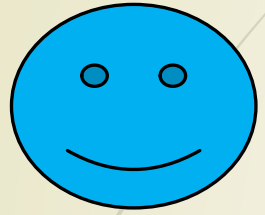


City of Courtenay Recreation's Volunteer Engagement

What training opportunities do WE offer to our volunteers?

- ❑ Strengthening Communities Grant for various community based trainings
- ❑ Summer Volunteer Training- Previously 1x 4 hour session, this year 4x 2.5 hour sessions.
- ❑ Volunteer Information Nights offer insight to the role of the volunteer, rights and responsibilities of a volunteer, opportunity to receive detailed volunteer program information
- ❑ Leaders in Training Summer Programs (LIT and LIT JR)

The Volunteer Process



Inquiry

Application

Initial
Contact

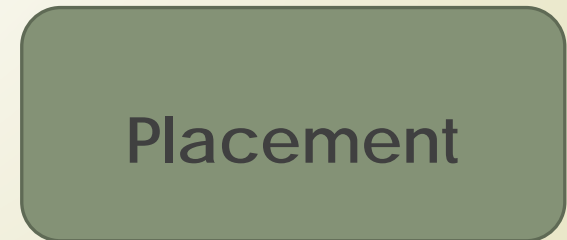
Volunteer
Meeting

Maintain
Contact

Positive
Reinforcement

Feedback
Tracking

Placement





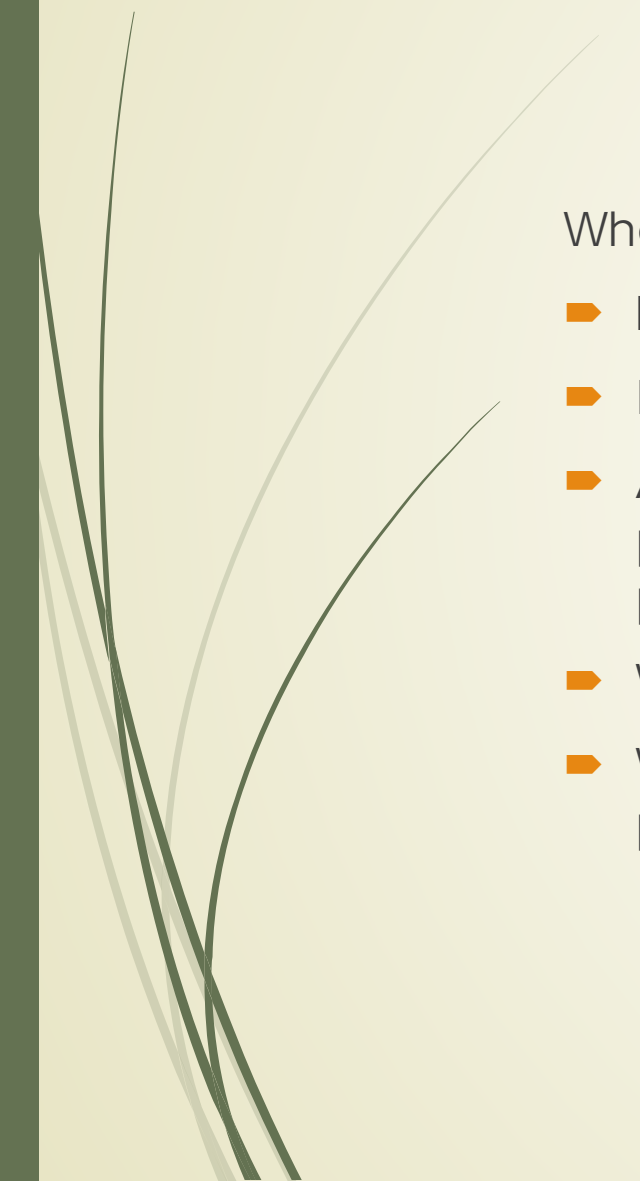
Intake Break Down

- ▶ Introductions
 - ▶ Reviewing Application Information
 - ▶ Role of the Volunteer
 - ▶ Duties and Do Nots
 - ▶ Goals of the Volunteer
 - ▶ Communication (Logs and contacts)
 - ▶ Upcoming Opportunities
 - ▶ Facility Tour
- ▶ By the end of the first meeting with our volunteers, we've established expectations and the role of each volunteer and we got to know a little bit about more our volunteers than our application form can provide.




Intake Meeting –The Benefits

When we take the time to get to know our volunteers, immediately, we have:

- ▶ Laid the ground work to create a welcome, person first environment.
 - ▶ Demonstrated that we value this person as a part of our team.
 - ▶ Allow them a glimpse into the passion we pour into our community programs. This is likely to encourage them to find and put forward their passion for community that brought them here.
 - ▶ We find the best opportunities for them to meet their goals.
 - ▶ We get a better idea of who they are, what they're good at and passionate about, so we can offer a better volunteer experience
- 



Volunteers: Leaders of Tomorrow

- ▶ Volunteers demonstrate time and time again why they are so crucial to us and our community. Each volunteer brings their own sense of connection, passion, creativity to our programs.
 - ▶ Volunteers will often gain skills and tricks of the trade while interacting with staff and participants, which provides invaluable training.
 - ▶ Some volunteers have certain skill sets that really set them apart. These volunteers are the ones who may just be our future leaders.
- 



Volunteers: Leaders of Tomorrow

- ▶ Leisure Buddies is a role our team has created based on the success we saw when encouraging volunteers in our summer camps to spend an extra moment with a participant who needed it in their day. (IE Shy kids who might feel better having a big buddy introduced to listen, play and connect.)
- ▶ When we become aware that this extra moment of connection could improve a young participants overall enjoyment in the program, we do our best to set them up with a leisure buddy.
- ▶ And when no leisure buddy is available? We always seem to be able to count on our volunteers to see these moments of connection.
- ▶ The Leisure Buddy role is often the first opportunity young volunteers get to transition into a Leader.




Noticing the Leaders of Tomorrow

One of the most memorable moments of the summer volunteer program in 2023 :

A young volunteer was seen getting to eye level with a participant and saying "I know a little french". He proceeded to converse with a francophone child who just felt more comfortable speaking French their first day. This made the child's entire experience at camp more positive.

This year, because of his exemplary work including but not limited to this instance, he has joined our staffing team as Leisure Buddy!



Positive Experiences to Leaders of Tomorrow

"Thank you so much for allowing [my daughter] this opportunity. I can't believe she wanted to volunteer as much as she did, but she absolutely loved it and made some friends along the way... I know this has boosted her self esteem and I can see a change in her ... This has been her best summer yet and she is looking forward to next summer! "

"She is talking about wanting to become a camp leader ... She really wants to be a leader."

"Thank you so much for the kind words and support. She has a tough time making friends, etc. so this experience has been awesome for her."

-Parent of Volunteer



Volunteers of the Past: Leaders of Today

- ▶ Many of our amazing staff began their recreation careers as volunteers.

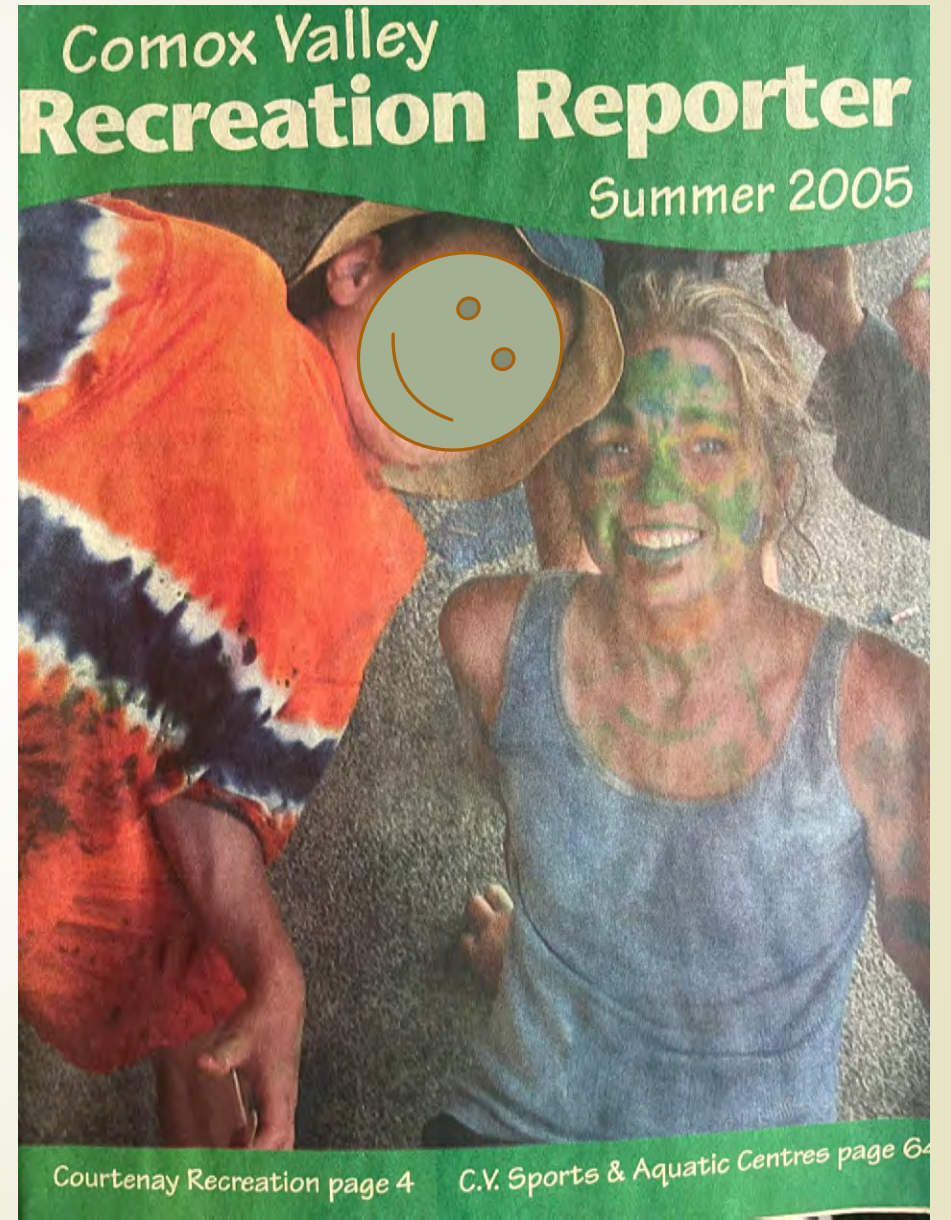
SJG began their Courtenay Recreation experience as a camper, witnessing the passion and commitment to community our past summer leaders demonstrated. Once they reached volunteering age, they began to support our summer camps and we quickly saw their own passion develop and confidence grow. In my time as Summer Coordinator, we saw SJG take chances to lead activities, assist in group management and always do their best to be a positive role model.

Today, SJG is a University student who is returning for their 5th year as a camp leader. We have seen them grow and feel more confident in taking on the leadership roles, guiding campers and volunteers through fun science experiments, creative art projects and so much more!

Volunteers of the Past: Leaders of Today

Our Children and Youth Supervisor also began as volunteer many a moon ago. She then transitioned into a summer camp leader, before stepping into run our LINC Youth Centre, and now oversees the entirety of the Children and Youth Programming for our facility.

In fact....





In Conclusion...

A strong volunteer program can have many benefits, including:

- ▶ Successful Program Delivery
- ▶ Community Wellness
- ▶ Individual sense of Accomplishment and Development
- ▶ Fresh Perspectives
- ▶ Identifying changing needs of the Community
- ▶ Finding those Leaders who will continue our Legacy and Passion for Community



In Conclusion....

The most important ingredients are:

- ▶ Person First Approach

- ▶ Passion

- ▶ **FUN**

Thank you to each of you!

For sharing your passion with your community.

For helping to build up your Leaders of Tomorrow.

For being here today.

I hope you enjoy the rest of the conference!

THANK YOU FURRY MUCH



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