

**Programming With Intention:
Fostering Positive Youth Development Through Recreation**

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Abstract

The intent of this project is to create a staff handbook for Northern Star Kids, a non-profit organization in Prince George, B.C. that offers free quality recreation opportunities for children living in financial poverty. Research has shown that children living in financial poverty are less likely than their middle class peers to participate in organized recreational opportunities or to remain committed without support. The Northern Star Staff Handbook will help to address these issues by equipping staff with the tools to deliver a high quality program to the children in the organization's service area. The staff handbook has three main functions: a) to ensure the vision, philosophy, and goals of Northern Star Kids are sustained over time; b) to create a culture of consistency in the delivery of programs and staff interactions with youth; and c) to articulate a program focused on the unique needs of youth living in financial poverty.

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SECTION TWO

Section Two includes the staff handbook and it appears as it will be used by Northern Star Kids Organization.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this project is to create a staff handbook for the Northern Star Kids organization located in Prince George, British Columbia. Northern Star Kids is a non-profit organization that strives to have a positive influence on the healthy growth and development of children living in financial poverty by giving them access to a variety of free recreational activities. The term “living in financial poverty” is used in this paper to focus on limited financial resources rather than on more global aspects of poverty including emotional, mental, spiritual, and physical aspects. This use is consistent with Northern Star’s funding organization, Active Support Against Poverty.

The mission of Northern Star Kids is to foster positive youth development in children and youth living in financial poverty by intentionally designing programs that promote skill development, healthy friendships, positive role modeling, life skills and opportunities to experience success (Northern Star Kids, 2004). Organizations offering this type of program must have concrete supports and practices in place at the organizational level to assist the staff in helping young people meet intended outcomes. Recent professional literature justifies the use of organizational tools in youth organizations such as a shared vision of philosophy and goals, clear policies and procedures, comprehensive staff development, and a strategy for continuous growth and development in order to support their staff effectively (Monroe County, 2007; Senge, 1990/2006)

The theoretical foundation for this project is found in the overlap of the fields of organizational learning and positive youth development. Organizational learning provides a framework for viewing Northern Star Kids as a learning community and establishes the need for sustaining and building capacity in order to continue to have a

positive impact on children and youth living in financial poverty. Positive youth development offers a theoretical framework well grounded in resiliency, intervention, and prevention research. In particular, *the theory of intentionality*, which embodies positive youth developmental practice, provides an organizational approach that bridges theory and practice by encouraging youth organizations to be *intentional* in their purpose, planning and implementation of programs so they can maximize the learning potential and engagement. Intentional program design relies on research-based knowledge of topics such as resilience, protective factors, and processes of healthy childhood development. Further, effective program strategies are created when knowledge and experience of working with diverse groups of youth is attuned to the community life of program participants (Walker, Marczak, Blyth & Borden, 2005). The Northern Star staff handbook will be the blueprint for program design and delivery; intentionality will be the framework. Staff training and development will be tailored to encompass the philosophy, vision, and goals of Northern Star to ensure that daily practice of delivering recreation programs more closely match the intended outcomes of the organization and enable children and youth living in financial poverty to maximize their learning potential.

Statement of the Problem

Northern Star Kids is at a critical time in its growth and development as a youth organization. It has been operating informally for three years under the direction and guidance of five core volunteers who have professional experience in the areas of youth care, mental health counselling, education, social work, and law enforcement. This group of individuals serves as the executive committee and are committed to giving youth living in financial poverty the same opportunities for sport and recreation as peers from middle and upper class families. I was a member of the original executive committee and

took on the role of Program Director for our inaugural summer camp that was held at Camp Elkness in August, 2004. Since that time, I have been an active committee member and involved with hiring and developing the staff team.

The organization has been operating with a sense of shared vision but without a solid organizational framework of formalized policies and procedures and without a staff handbook. Due to the nature of our work and financial constraints, we depend on volunteers to be the backbone of our organization. Northern Star Kids has experienced a high turnover of volunteers in all areas: executive committee, program coordinator, youth mentors, and skill development instructors. The lack of formal documentation has exacerbated problems with staff turnover because there are no clearly stated guidelines to help new staff understand the philosophy, the design of programs, and the intended nature of interactions with youth. This lack of clarity has resulted in new staff delivering programs that appear to differ from the original philosophy of Northern Star Kids and have not met our standards of care for children and youth. For example, a couple of years ago, our winter program became more of a “drop-in” sports night and some nights had upwards of 40 participants with only 5 staff. This was a diversion from our original focus on skill-development, tracking the progress of youth, and low ratio of participants to staff. As well, this shift in philosophy increased the level of support required by the executive committee as they have been called to problem solve, supervise activities, and be engaged in front-line work. Continuing to function without formal operational policies and procedures and a staff handbook can be expected to lead to burnout of our most valuable resources, our volunteer staff members, and the loss of the history, vision, and founding principles of Northern Star Kids. This situation has led to my resolve to

create a staff handbook that will help establish a foundation for Northern Star and enable the organization to sustain and increase its capacity as new people join the team.

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this project is to develop a staff handbook for Northern Star Kids that will guide practice with philosophy, vision and beliefs that are rooted in current theory and empirical research. The staff handbook will equip the staff with the necessary tools to deliver quality recreational activities to youth living in financial poverty. The staff handbook has three functions: a) to ensure the vision, philosophy, and goals of Northern Star Kids are sustained over time; b) to create a culture of consistency in delivery of programs and staff interactions with youth; and c) to articulate a program focused on the unique needs of youth living in financial poverty.

The handbook is based on current research, theory and practice in the youth development and recreation fields in the areas of positive youth development, poverty, recreation, ecological systems theory, and resiliency. It includes practical, accessible information that will be used by staff to develop and deliver programs that meet the appropriate developmental needs of youth who participate in Northern Star programs. In addition to staff use, it is my hope that the staff handbook will be shared with funding organizations, potential staff members, and other groups in order to build collaborative partnerships and continue to positively influence the lives of youth through recreation. I currently have requests for the handbook from Christie Lake Kids, Camp Trapping, and British Columbia Recreation and Parks Association.

How I Identify With The Project

I was raised in a middle-class family who placed a high priority on organized sport and recreation activities throughout my childhood. My two siblings and I were

exposed to organized activities such as music, dance, sport, and Girl Guides and Scouts as early as age three. As a competitive gymnast, flatwater kayaker, and rugby player I had many diverse experiences that enabled me to grow and develop physically, mentally and socially. My positive experiences with sports as a youth and young adult established a life-long commitment to maintaining a healthy level of physical fitness that contributes to my general health and well-being. My formative personal experiences have led me to believe that access to organized sport and recreation programs should be considered an essential service like education and healthcare. If these programs were considered an integral part of our society, youth from many backgrounds, especially those living in financial poverty, would have opportunities to thrive despite adverse living conditions.

My professional experience as a recreation leader, youth care worker, teacher, and mental health counsellor affirms my belief that recreation is a necessary ingredient for the healthy growth and development of youth. This belief is based on interactions I have had with the youth in the classroom, counselling office, and the outdoors. Many of the youth I work with lack the opportunity to participate in recreational pursuits and miss out on developing skills and competencies. Much of their free time is spent socializing with peers partaking in health compromising activities such as smoking, using drugs and alcohol, and in a small number of cases, participating in criminal activity. I worked for two years as a youth care worker in a wilderness intervention program for first time offenders. Our mandate was to offer recreational experiences in the city and weekend wilderness trips to youth aged 13-18 over a period of three months. The goal was to offer an array of experiences that would foster a healthy sense of self-esteem and accomplishment, teach appropriate life skills, and encourage personal responsibility. Many of the youth appreciated the opportunity to attend the program, were proud of

individual achievements, and learned valuable skills. The problem with this type of intervention is the lack of services available to youth when the program ends; many youth fall back into their old lifestyle within days of completing the program.

When I left the wilderness program, I decided to focus my energy on prevention through recreation rather than intervention. For me, prevention is a more positive realm than intervention and I believe it can have a greater impact on children's lives. I believe if access to recreation were an essential service, these youth may have had the opportunity to develop, at a young age, interests that foster healthy self-esteem, build skills and competencies, and connect them with supportive adults by giving them something constructive to do outside of school hours.

The knowledge and skill base I developed through my years of working with youth at-risk in school and in mental health agencies, combined with the theoretical framework of positive youth development and my studies in graduate coursework, give me the ability to develop a staff handbook that covers a wide range of issues pertinent to youth living in at-risk situations such as poverty. Northern Star Kids is different from many other recreation organizations in that it offers activities free of charge, actively pursues youth in the surrounding neighbourhood by doing home visits, provides safe arrival and departure from activities, provides equipment for activities when necessary, offers snacks before, during and after activities, and is actively involved in the lives' of the youth. It is the combined effect of these services that keeps the youth connected to the program and gives them a sense of belonging and acceptance. The special connections Northern Star Staff make with our youth are cultivated by a culture of caring, consistency, and commitment to improve their life prospects. It is important to articulate our practice in a staff handbook in order to ensure that the philosophy, the vision and the

goals of Northern Star Kids stay with the organization as we continue to develop and grow.

Relevance to Counselling

I understand counselling as a process that enables individuals to create change in the way they live their lives so that they can fulfill their hopes and dreams and live in a more satisfying way. The counselling field, like many professional fields, can be viewed as a broad spectrum of services starting with programs that promote healthy development of individuals from prenatal care to adult residential programs that deal with serious, chronic mental health issues. Northern Star Kids is situated at the beginning of the spectrum acting as a vehicle to promote healthy development of children and youth living in adverse situations to keep them on a path of health and wellness throughout their lives.

There is no well-defined path that guarantees a successful transition to adulthood. However, there is a link between a healthy, opportunity rich childhood and future positive psychological functioning. Therefore, it is important to give all children and youth opportunities to have experiences that help them grow and develop into happy, healthy human beings. Sport and recreation in the form of organized activities is one of the few venues, aside from school and family, that may have the power to help children and youth reach their potential. Thus, this project is appropriate for a counselling degree because it provides organizational support to a particular organization, Northern Star Kids, that strives to influence the positive development of youth living in financial poverty. In order to realize our vision, Northern Star staff must be highly skilled and well trained in the processes that foster optimal growth and development in children. The staff handbook will serve as a foundation for this work and will complement staff training and development.

Clarification of Terms

Healthy Childhood Development. Healthy development of children and youth encompasses the physical, intellectual, emotional, and social development of the individual (Child & Family Canada, 2007a). To thrive, children need a healthy physical start that includes proper nutrition, sleep, exercise, immunizations, and a healthy living environment. To develop intellectually, children need a safe and stimulating environment where they can play, learn and explore. Finally, to ensure optimal emotional and social development, they need unconditional love from family, self-confidence and high self-esteem, encouraging teachers and caregivers, safe and secure surroundings, and appropriate guidance and discipline (Child & Family Canada, 2007b; Mental Health America, 2007).

Positive Youth Development. Positive Youth Development (PYD) is an approach to structuring services, systems, and supports for youth so that they develop the skills and competencies they need in order to prepare themselves for adult life (McCreary Youth Foundation, 2007). PYD refers to an ongoing growth process in which all youth endeavor to meet their basic personal and social needs to be safe, feel cared for, be valued, be useful, and be spiritually grounded as well as to develop skills and competencies that enable them to function and contribute to their daily lives (Pittman, O'Brien, & Kimball, 1993). One model of PYD suggested by Lerner, Fisher and Wienberg (2002) proposed that youth have achieved positive developmental outcomes when they can demonstrate the five Cs: a) *competence* in academic, social, and vocational areas; b) *confidence* or a positive self identity; c) *connections* to community, family, and peers; d) *character* or positive values, integrity, and moral commitment; e)

caring and compassion. Lerner (2004) and Pittman (2000) added one more “C”, which is *contribution*.

Recreation. The definition used by the Canadian Council on Social Development (2001) in their report on recreation and youth living poverty is adapted from McKay, Reid, Tremblay, and Pelletier (1996). “Recreation is defined as being all those socially acceptable activities that a person chooses to do in order to make their [sic] leisure time more interesting, more enjoyable and more satisfying” (Canadian Council on Social Development, 2001, p.37). The term “recreation” in this paper refers to structured activities that place emphasis on connecting with peers and adults while focusing on skill development in the areas of art, sport, music or leadership, promote competencies and mastery in an area of interest, and move the participant from a beginning stage to that of an expert (Mahoney, Larson, & Eccles, 2005). The skill development activities occur during non-school hours and are characterized by structure, adult-supervision, and a focus on building skills and competencies. Mastery of increasing skill levels affects self esteem and enables youth to gain confidence in their abilities to master aspects of their environment (Offord & Jones, 1983). To foster healthy growth and development, participation in activities must be blended with an understanding of the experience and the context in which the activity occurs (Caldwell, 2005).

Children and Youth. The terms children and youth will be used interchangeably throughout the paper and refer to individuals from age 9 to age 14.

Financial Poverty. Poverty in Canada is measured by using Statistics Canada’s Low Income Cut-Offs (LICOS). “The cut-offs are based on the concept that people in poverty live in “straitened circumstances” – that is, they spend a disproportionate amount of their total gross income (54.3% compared to the average of 34.3%) on food, clothing,

and shelter” (First Call: BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition, 2005, p.1) The term “living in financial poverty” is used in this paper to focus on limited financial resources rather than on more global aspects of poverty including emotional, mental, spiritual, and physical aspects. This use is consistent with Northern Star’s funding organization, Active Support Against Poverty.

Resilience. Resilience is defined by Masten (2001) as a “phenomena characterized by good outcomes in spite of serious threats to adaptation or development” (p. 5). A key requirement of resilience is the presence of both risks and promotive factors that either help foster a positive outcome or reduce a negative outcome (Fergus & Zimmerman, 2005). In the context of children and youth, a serious threat to adaptation or development may include living in financial poverty and/or a violent neighbourhood, experiencing or witnessing abuse, having a family member with a mental illness, or experiencing educational failure or parental styles that are inconsistent or neglectful. It is important to note that the presence of these risk factors in the lives of youth does not guarantee negative outcomes; it simply means there is a greater probability that negative outcomes will occur (Masten, 2001; Werner & Smith, 1992).

Protective factors. Protective factors and processes ‘buffer, modify, or ameliorate an individual’s reaction to an adverse situation that, in ordinary circumstances, would lead to maladaptive outcomes” (Kumpfer as cited in Perkins & Caldwell, 2005, p.156). Werner and Smith (1992) described three types of protective processes that emerged from their longitudinal study on children in Kauai, Hawaii: a) dispositional attributes of the individual; b) affectional ties within the family; and c) external support systems such as school, youth program, church. Participation in high quality recreational activities may foster resiliency and act as a protective process to youth living in financial poverty. This

participation can give youths an opportunity to access the resources that can foster healthy development and enable them to thrive despite the challenges and adversity they face. Research has demonstrated that all youth benefit from protective factors and processes in their lives; however, the effect is magnified for youth living in adversity (Werner & Smith, 1992).

Overview of the Project

The outcome of this project is a staff handbook intentionally designed to guide the delivery and daily practice of recreation programs at Northern Star Kids. The project will be presented in two sections. Section One will consist of three chapters, including a statement of the problem, a literature review and a description of the development and intended use of the handbook. This section provides insight into the importance of a staff handbook in supporting an organization in actualizing its vision and goals as well as articulates the theories and research that supports Northern Star programs. Section Two will consist of the staff handbook, which is organized into six major areas: introduction, Northern Star Kids Organization, key ideas, program design and delivery, staff health and wellness, and policies.

In this chapter, I have provided an introduction to the problem and the purpose of the project. I have explained how I identify with the project and I have clarified relevant terms. Chapter Two and Three will complete Section One. Chapter Two consists of a review of the literature from the areas of organizational learning and the youth development. Organizational learning theory provides a rationale for key resources and structures, such as a staff handbook, that organizations must have in place in order to support quality youth development practice. Youth development theory field highlights the importance of concepts such as resilience, positive youth development, and recreation

as necessary ingredients for healthy growth and development of children and youth.

Chapter Three provides a historical overview of Northern Star Kids and describe the development and intended use of the staff handbook.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Using recreation programs as a vehicle for the development of children and youth living in financial poverty requires that the concept and practice of intentionality permeate every aspect of the organization. In order to gain credibility in the community, the philosophy, vision, goals, and intended outcomes for youth must be rooted in theory and research that reflects promising practice in the youth development field. The purpose of this review of the literature is to position the Northern Star Kids organization as a learning community, provide insight into the importance of an employee handbook for an organization, and present the theory and research that provides a foundation for the staff handbook.

Learning Communities

In order to actualize our vision and dreams as an organization, our staff must continue to grow and evolve as a *learning community*, a term derived from the concept of *organizational learning* in the business world, which identifies the characteristics of an adaptive organization that can readily respond to changes in the environment (Brown, 2006). Learning communities came into prominence in education in the early 1990's when school district personnel were looking for ways to improve the capacity of teachers through collaborative reflective practice. The educational field adapted principles from organizational learning but identified the name learning community as a term more fitting for educational settings. The intended outcome of a learning community is to establish a culture of continuous improvement and lasting change that is ultimately reflected in students' learning and success at school. The Mitchell and Sackney (2000) learning community model is achieved through purposeful development of capacity at the organizational, personal, and interpersonal levels that results in a synergy that generates

energy, commitment, and hope (Brown, 2006). The learning community model is a good fit for Northern Star Kids as we are at the infancy stages of our growth and have a need to establish a culture of continuous learning for our staff, committee members and volunteers. To illustrate the theoretical framework for this process, I will use the analogy of the *Giving Tree* (Brown, 2006; Silverstein, 2004) to represent Mitchell and Sackney's (2000) learning community framework. The trunk and branches of the tree represent organizational capacity, encompassing formalized operations such as mandate, vision and mission statements, and tools for organizational consistency that include policies and documents such as a staff handbook. The personal capacity is illustrated by the leaves of the tree and represents the personal learning of each individual on the tree. The interpersonal capacity is represented by the fruit and the flowers on the tree and symbolizes the growth experienced when individuals collaborate with each other and enhance the organizational capacity. In terms of my own learning, the process of creating the handbook represents one of the leaves on the Northern Star Tree and will be a tool for collaboration, shared vision and team learning (Senge, 1990/2006). As I continue to consult with all members of Northern Star Kids, our tree will become stronger as a result of establishing solid roots for the organization and the resulting collaboration that is inherent in the process.

Importance of an Employee Handbook

An employee handbook is a written communication tool that is designed, published and distributed by management to help employees and supervisors to understand what the company expects of them and to ensure employees know what to expect from the company (Lawson, 2004). In the context of Northern Star Kids, the employee handbook will be referred to as a staff handbook. It will help staff understand

the philosophy, goals and objectives of the organization, the programs we offer, and how we expect staff to interact with children on a daily basis. It will also include what support staff can expect to receive from the organization as a volunteer or paid employee. The Northern Star Handbook will differ from most formal employee handbooks in that it will be more of a guide to designing and delivering quality experiences for children than a document containing typical information on employee benefits, working conditions, pay systems, and progressive discipline procedures.

Lawson suggests that an up-to-date employee handbook has numerous benefits for employees and employers. Following Lawson's suggestions, I propose that a staff handbook will benefit Northern Star by promoting consistency and management credibility, providing answers to important operating questions therefore saving valuable time, being used as an efficient new-staff orientation management and recruiting tool, providing staff with a shared vision and common ground for mutual understanding of their responsibilities to children in their care, and providing standard criteria for designing and delivering quality recreation programs. Lawson cautions potential authors of employee handbooks to remember their audience throughout the writing process. He stresses that handbooks should be written informally in a friendly, positive tone. The language should be in line with most writing for print media, television, and mass communication, which can be read by individuals with a grade 6 to grade 8 level of education. The handbook needs to be written in clear, concise language, be applicable to the intended environment, and accessible and inviting to all staff.

Theoretical Framework for the Staff Handbook

This section of the literature review articulates the theory and research that supports Northern Star Kids, so these aspects can be communicated clearly in the

handbook. The literature review will highlight three areas of research: out-of-school settings as developmental contexts, recreation as a strategy for optimal growth and development of children living in financial poverty, and using a positive youth development approach to designing and delivering recreation programs.

An Out-of-school Setting as a Developmental Context.

Vandell, Pierce and Dadisman (2005) reported that investigators have become increasingly aware over the last ten years of the potential role that out-of-school settings have on the developmental outcomes of children and youth. This awareness has surfaced due to a number of factors such as the need for parents to find after school childcare for their children, concerns of poor academic achievement in youth (particularly in the US), health and safety risks of children spending time unsupervised, and the increase in free time. Through their review of relevant literature, Vandell et al. uncovered a number of interesting findings regarding structured activities: participation under the supervision of caring adults was consistently linked to positive academic and social developmental outcomes, low income and at-risk children and youth appeared to derive the greatest benefits when compared to middle class peers, and finally, participation in structured activities may be a protective factor for students who are at-risk of dropping out of high school. Vandell et al. stressed that more research is needed to ascertain the social, cognitive, and linguistic processes by which participation in structured activities influences developmental outcomes, to identify other important developmental processes in structured activities, and to gain understanding of the effects of program content.

The idea of an out-of school setting as a developmental context is supported by Bronfenbrenner's (2005) bi-ecological systems theory, which looks at children's development within the context of the system of structures and relationships that shape

their environment. Bronfenbrenner sees the instability and unpredictability of modern family life as one of the most destructive forces for a child's development (Addison, 1992). Therefore he advocates for children to develop stable, long-term relationships with adults other than their parents in schools and community organizations. It is through these adults that youth may receive the appropriate mutual interaction that is necessary for their development. Bronfenbrenner contends that a child's biological makeup interacts with various layers of relationships embedded in the environment. These layers are comprised of immediate social structures such as family, school, and community organizations followed by the larger systems of society and culture and finally, the global world. A change in any layer has a ripple effect throughout the other layers and can impact the development of the child. The inner layer, which consists of family, school and other community organizations, has the greatest impact on the youth and can foster or hinder growth and development. Recreation programs that offer structured activities fall under the realm of community organizations and have great potential to positively influence the lives of youth.

Recreation - A Strategy for Optimal Growth and Development

Healthy growth and development is a goal all nations around the world have for their children. Guy (1997) states that children are our future; our most precious resource. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) contends that all children have the right to develop their "personality, talents, mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential" (p.8). In the western world, developing to the fullest potential requires having access to the opportunities and resources for a rich array of experiences for self-discovery and development. The Offord Center (2006) affirms that participation in sport and recreation is important for optimal growth and development in children and

youth. “Sport and recreation can enhance self esteem, increase academic performance, strengthen peer and family relationships, and reduce anti-social behaviours such as depression and anxiety” (p.1). As a child psychiatrist, Dr. Dan Offord dedicated his life’s work to improving the life chances of children and youth living in financial poverty. He believed that “positive experiences in sport and recreation help children become capable, caring adults who will contribute effectively to the community of the future” (HIGH FIVE®, 2003, p.1). This belief was evidenced by his 47 year tenure as Director of Christie Lake Kids, an organization in Ottawa, Ontario, that provides year-round recreation activities and summer camp to children living in financial poverty. His sentiments are supported by Bonne (2000) who proposes that sport and recreation be used as a strategy to promote healthy growth and development of youth. By participating in sport and recreation, Bonne suggests that youth can achieve developmental outcomes such as optimal physical well-being, learning readiness, secure attachments and identity, social engagement, competence, and “smart” risk taking.

Most children living in financial poverty grow up in environments that put them at a disadvantage when compared to their middle and upper class peers. Offord and Jones (1983) reported that starting from birth, children living in financial poverty have a lower life quality than middle class children, often from poor physical development, poor nutrition and physical health, poor emotional development, increased incidence of psychiatric disturbance and poor medical care. The lower life quality may be compounded by a multitude of problems such as single parenting, inconsistent parenting styles, having a family member with a mental illness, experiencing educational failure, substance abuse, and lack of financial resources to participate in non-school recreational activities.

Many of 1.2 million young children living in financial poverty in Canada come from families headed by lone mothers, recent immigrants, visible minorities, aboriginal peoples, and people with disabilities. British Columbia has the highest rate of child poverty at 23.9% compared to the national rate of 17.6%, which translates to 201,000 or 1 in 4 children (Canadian Parks and Recreation Association, 2007). Due to a combination of economic and environmental stressors on the family, the focus is often on meeting survival needs for food, clothing, and shelter. There is little money, time, and energy left for parents to invest in extracurricular activities for their children through tutoring, organized sport and recreation, and other youth affiliated organizations. Many activities that occur outside of school hours require expensive user fees, transportation to the location, and equipment costs.

As sanctioned by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, all children have the right to participate in recreation; however, youth living in financial poverty are often denied this right (Child and Family Canada, 2007b). According to Statistics Canada (1996) children in low-income families are much less likely than children in high income families to participate in organized sports (25 percent as compared to 75 percent) and in arts and cultural activities (19 percent, as compared to 32 percent). There is some evidence in the research that children living in financial poverty benefit more from extracurricular activities when compared to children from middle and upper income levels (Mahoney, 2000; Mahoney & Cairns, 1997; Marsh, 1992; Marsh & Kleitman, 2002).

However, there is a lack of empirical studies that provide evidence of the actual effects of recreation on development. Jones and Offord (1989) conducted one of the first studies when they investigated the effects of a recreational skill development program for

youth living in two different housing projects in the Ottawa-Carleton region. Over a duration of two years, researchers found that although there were no spillover effects on school performance or behaviour at home or school, there was a significant reduction of vandalism in the housing complex and a reduction of calls to the police and fire personnel during the time the intervention was in place. Another Canadian study by Ott et al. (2006) offered free recreation for families on social assistance for the duration on one year. A recreation programmer actively recruited the families and children via phone and home visits and helped them to choose programs, fill out application forms, and arrange transportation. After one year, the annual per-person expenditure for mounting the subsidized recreation paid for itself by the lower use of healthcare and social services by the children and their parents.

Posner and Vandell (1999) implemented a longitudinal two-year study and investigated whether participation in after-school activities in grade three predicted adjustment in grade five. They found that children who attended structured after-school programs spent more time on academics and extracurricular activities and were better adjusted in grade five. This study supports the contention that after-school programs can provide low-income children with experiences similar to those experienced by middle class children who have access to an array of coached sports and academic tutoring. Lastly, Herbert (2002) found that the single most important factor in educating youth from low-income backgrounds was the supportive adults in their lives who looked beyond their background, recognized their talent and abilities, held high expectations for them and nurtured their strengths.

Positive Youth Development-An Approach to Designing Programs.

Positive Youth Development (PYD) emerged in the early 1990s in the US as academic researchers, front-line youth workers, and health initiatives worked collaboratively to respond to the growing concern about the development of children in a fast changing, technology driven world. The primary goal of PYD is to provide young people with opportunities, supports, and services to fully prepare them for life as an adult: simply being free of problems in life does not mean that a youth is fully prepared to take on the myriad of responsibilities that come with adulthood (Pittman et al., 1993). Because proponents of PYD want children and youth to thrive and reach their highest potential, there was a shift toward youth preparation and development rather than merely problem prevention and deterrence (Pittman, Irby & Ferber, 2000).

Theoretically, PYD is supported by contemporary developmental systems theories and has been heavily influenced by lifespan developmental psychology, bioecological developmental psychology, life course sociology, and community psychology (Lerner, Almerigi, Theokas, & Lerner, 2005). It emphasizes that youth have resources to be managed rather than deficits to “fix”. Roth and Brooks-Gunn (2003) stressed that a universal definition of PYD is elusive and evolving despite the number of programs using the term or the importance of their objectives. PYD has been defined in the literature as a developmental process for youth (Pittman et al., 1993) a philosophy or approach to working with youth (Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003, McCreary Foundation, 2007), community-based human development and asset-based community development (Bensen, 2002), and a conceptual model for psychosocial health (LeBlanc, Talbot & Craig, 2005). For this project, PYD is used as an organizational approach to deliver high quality recreational activities to youth living in financial poverty. The fundamental

principles and theory of PYD will be actualized in the daily practice of program delivery as supported by the staff handbook. Specifically, I will focus on the recent literature explaining the *theory of intentionality* which integrates research, theory, and promising practice in the positive youth development field.

Walker et al. (2005) present the theory of intentionality as a framework that captures the dynamic relationships between developmental outcomes, youth engagement, and intentionality in the philosophy, design and delivery of positive youth development programs. The theory of intentionality includes three ideas that form the basis of the theory, six principles of the ethos of positive youth development, and three components of successful learning opportunities. The three ideas that form the basis of the theory are related to the design and daily implementation of effective learning opportunities for young people: 1) programs are most effective when attention to long-term developmental outcomes for children and youth permeates the design of learning opportunities and the philosophy guiding the youth worker interaction with youth; 2) youth are most likely to achieve desired developmental outcomes when they are actively engaged in their own learning and development; and 3) youth engagement results in a good fit between young people and the learning opportunities in which they engage. All three of these key ideas can be actualized in daily practice when youth workers ground their work in the *ethos of positive youth development*, which is an intentional way of working with youth and shaping their learning opportunities. The *ethos of positive youth development* is grounded in the following six principles (Walker et al., 2005).

1. Learning opportunities designed to address the basic developmental needs of children and youth authentically draw in and create youth engagement

2. Choice and flexibility provide important ways for young people to have a voice in their learning and development
3. Opportunities for development and learning are grounded in their everyday lives giving a chance for application and practice
4. Learning opportunities are conceived as a cohesive whole rather than constructed out of a series of fragmented events and activities
5. Structured supports and opportunities are guided by an asset-based approach that values their strengths and does not define them by their problems.
6. Learning and development are enhanced when young people are engaged in active co-creation with adults and other youth.

The three components of successful learning opportunities are highlighted by Walker et al. (2005) who found from their recent review of the literature that young people benefit developmentally when they are engaged in non-school activities that emphasize *relationships, activities, and contextual connections*. These components increase the likelihood of a goodness of fit between what a program offers and what a young person needs and is especially pertinent when dealing with diverse groups of children and youth. Being intentional about program design is given the highest priority; offering a program for youth that come from a middle class, suburban Caucasian neighbourhood will be much different than a program that serves inner city Aboriginal youth.

There is a growing body of research that supports each of the components and the function they have in engaging youth in experiences that contribute to their growth and development. Relationships have long been emphasized as the critical ingredient to encouraging resilience in children and youth. Werner and Smith (1992) and

Bernard (2004) found early on in their research that relationships with positive, adult role-models can act as a protective process in vulnerable youth and can positively influence the lives of all youth. McLaughlin, Irby, and Langman (1994) found that successful youth workers exhibit a highly relational stance in their work as they focus on youth and their potential rather than their deficits. Their approach is genuine and sincere and emphasizes mutual trust, valuing, mattering, and respect (Walker et al., 2005). The activities are the vehicle through which staff and participants experience learning opportunities, build relationships, and ideally, achieve developmental outcomes. It is important to consider the subject matter content, the environment, and the pedagogical method when designing the activities. The subject matter grabs the attention of the children and youth, the environment is the physical space, the atmosphere created by the staff sets the stage for learning and the pedagogical method is the approach chosen to deliver the activity. The last component of successful learning opportunities is contextual connections, which include settings such as schools, neighbourhoods and workplaces; people such as family members, peers, teachers, and neighbours; and social forces such as culture, spirituality, gender roles, and socioeconomic status. Children and youth identified the best youth programs to be the ones that were part of the community and reflected an in-depth knowledge of the place, the situations and the families that took part (McLaughlin, 2000). The staff were sensitive to the ethnic, racial and cultural character of the community and were respectful, caring and empathetic.

Summary

Literature from the organizational learning field supports the process of Northern Star developing as a learning community while sustaining the original philosophy and

vision of its founding members. It provides a rationale for developing administrative structures and tools, such as a staff handbook, to enable staff to actualize intended outcomes in their daily practice with youth. Literature from the youth development field informs the content of the staff handbook, which is intended to be the point of reference for staff training, staff recruitment, and networking within the community. This literature offers insight on promising practices in the youth development field derived from research in the areas of resilience, healthy developmental contexts for children and youth, sport and recreation, and positive youth development.

CHAPTER THREE: DEVELOPMENT AND INTENDED USE OF THE STAFF HANDBOOK

In this section I will give a more in-depth look at the programs offered at Northern Star Kids, the method and process for designing a staff handbook, and recommendations for using the handbook.

History and Operation of Northern Star Kids

The creation of Northern Star Kids was the lifelong dream of Dan Poulin, a former employee with Intersect Youth and Family Services. He wanted to replicate the program he experienced as a youth living in financial poverty in Ottawa, Ontario. Dan's vision was supported by two colleagues from Intersect who helped to establish the organization. Dan, Maureen Davis and Brenda Hansen spent hours doing community based research to ascertain need for the program, apply for initial grants, and seek a parent organization to support their vision.

Northern Star Kids serves low-income children who live in the Ospika North and South neighbourhoods and attend Quinson and Spruceland Elementary Schools. In the winter of 2002 a needs assessment was completed by Dan and Maureen. The purpose of the assessment was to determine the child population in greatest need of this service. The needs assessment was supported by the Early Child Development research conducted by Dr. Clyde Hertzman and the team from the Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP) at University of British Columbia (Kershaw, Irwin, Trafford, & Hertzman, 2005). The research found that a significant percentage of the children who live in the Ospika North and South neighbourhoods were deemed at-risk on a variety of measures. For a full report of the findings refer to the HELP website (Human Early learning Partnership, 2007). Based on the needs assessment, research findings, and knowledge of resources in

the city, Dan and Maureen ascertained that the Ospika North and South neighbourhoods were underserved in Prince George and in need of recreation programs.

Active Support Against Poverty (ASAP) was the agency that took on the legal, administrative and financial support of Northern Star. ASAP is a non-profit agency located in Prince George, BC that provides assistance to lower income people dealing with various government agencies including services for disabled, acts as a guide for the empowerment of education and self-determination of the poor, acts as an agent of change for inclusive community and provides management for a downtown emergency shelter (Shared Learnings on Homelessness, 2007). It is governed by a board of directors and funded largely by the Law Foundation, United Way and the City of Prince George. Active Support Against Poverty would also like to acknowledge the financial assistance of the Province of British Columbia, BC Housing and the Housing Partnership Strategy(HPS) from Service Canada.

Northern Star Kids is an organization modelled after a program in Ottawa, Ontario that was overseen by the late Dr. Dan Offord, a world-renowned child psychiatrist and member of the Order of Canada. Dan Offord devoted his life's work to increasing the life chances of youth living in disadvantaged situations. He was the executive director of Christie Lake Kids, which provides a year round extracurricular program and summer camp opportunity to kids living in financial poverty. The year round *Skills Training Through Activities and Recreation* (STAR) program offers skill development programs to children and youth age 9-14 who live in poverty. The skill development program offers organized activities in art, sport, music or leadership and promote competencies and mastery in an area of interest. One of the goals of STAR is to introduce children to an area of interest at a young age and develop their level of

competency so they can integrate into a mainstream program with their peers. The activities are taught by qualified instructors who deliver a ten to twelve week curriculum designed to increase the skill level of each participant so they can move to the next level.

A unique aspect of both STAR and camp is the ratio of adults to participants. At STAR we strive to have five youth mentors plus the skill development instructor for each group of 20 children. The role of the youth mentors is to build a connection with the children by participating with them and offering guidance and support where necessary. Ideally, the youth mentors are also camp staff, so they stay connected to the children all year long. At camp, the overall ratio of staff to campers is two to one, although many of the staff are in support roles such as cooking or instructing the skill programs.

In each cabin, there are two counsellors responsible for five campers and this group of adults and children spend the majority of their time at camp together. The youth have the opportunity to attend summer camp, starting at age nine and continuing through to age fourteen. Camp life is very structured, with the focus being on accomplishing a given level in one of the four skill development areas: Naturelore (environmental education), Canoeing, Swimming, and Campcraft (outdoor survival). Usually a camper gains a skill level each year; by year five the camper has obtained a level of mastery in each area. At age 14, campers have the option of participating in a junior leadership program and start on the path to becoming camp counsellors. A compelling aspect of Christie Lake Kids and Northern Star Kids is the longitudinal design and the commitment to stay connected to kids from age 9 to 14 during the critical developmental years.

The program design and implementation of both STAR and the summer camp has been a culmination of information provided by Christie Lake and the expertise of the Northern Star committee. Northern Star currently offers recreational activities for three

sessions of 10 to 12 weeks throughout the school year to a cohort of approximately 40 children and youth who range from age 7 to 14. We strive to offer one sport and one cultural activity for example, music, dance, and theatre each session. The children and youth are also invited to week-long summer camp at Camp Elkness on Ness Lake. We currently operate on a surprisingly small budget of 40,000 a year. This funds one part-time, paid staff member who is our program director for STAR and camp, the week at camp, a small honorarium for our camp counsellors and instructors, and food and supplies for STAR. The committee, youth mentors, and skill-development instructors are all volunteers committed to giving children and youth living in financial poverty access to recreation so their life chances will be more similar to those of their middle class peers.

Development of the Staff Handbook

The development of the Northern Star staff handbook required the convergence of many sources of information: my knowledge of the Northern Star Kids organization, my personal and professional experience of working with youth, consultation with experienced supervisors in the human resources field, examples of handbooks gathered from colleagues, friends, and the internet and finally, research and theory on the essential ingredients of developing a handbook. I wanted the handbook to stand alone as an orientation tool for new staff members and potential funders. Therefore, it had to contain our history as an organization, mission statement and goals, our philosophy and daily practice of working with youth and important policies and procedures. The policies and procedures listed in the handbook pertain to the general safety and supervision of children at Northern Star with an emphasis on the STAR program. Specific policies and procedures for the operation of the summer camp are beyond the scope of this handbook.

In my quest to gather information for the Northern Star Kids Staff Handbook, I consulted Christie Lake Kids in Ontario, telephoned local organizations in Prince George and searched the internet. Christie Lake Kids has been offering STAR for almost twenty years and are currently formalizing their documents into a staff handbook. They graciously lent me what they had and I agreed to share the results of my project with them. Although they have a much different mandate than we do, a few local organizations in Prince George, such as Camp Trapping and Big Brothers, Big Sisters were willing to share their information.

In the latter stages of researching information for the handbook I learned about the HIGH FIVE[®] organization which was developed by Ontario Parks and Recreation. HIGH FIVE[®] is a quality assurance and accreditation system to help children's recreation and sport programs measure the quality of their programs and to support them in their quest for quality (HIGH FIVE[®], 2007). (Incidentally, Dr. Dan Offord was a member of the HIGH FIVE[®] strategic advisory council.) HIGH FIVE[®] is the standard training for all recreation leaders in Ontario and is quickly becoming the standard for North America. I was fortunate to attend a HIGH FIVE[®] workshop in Smithers, B.C. on *The Principles of Healthy Development of Children Through Sport and Recreation* and was impressed by the quality of the material: the information was exactly what I was striving to present in the handbook. Consequently, I have used parts of the HIGH FIVE[®] Leaders Handbook (HIGH FIVE[®], 1999) that are applicable to our organization. I also used the HIGH FIVE[®] – Guide to Best Practices (Russell-Haas & Bowie, 2001) to format and develop the policy and procedure section for the handbook.

Aside from HIGH, FIVE[®] I was able to find little on the internet in the way of staff handbooks, particularly ones that included information on positive youth

development, recreation, and poverty. However, the sample handbooks were helpful in providing examples of tables of content and writing style. To be successful the Northern Star Handbook needs to reach members of a diverse audience. It is user friendly and appealing to youth as young as 16 yet professional enough to share with other organizations and gain credibility among people who may look to provide us with funding. A large portion of our staff is young and computer literate; therefore it makes sense to put the information on a website where it can be accessed at anytime. Consequently, the handbook is written in simple, user-friendly language that may be transferred easily to a website format at some future date. Humor and graphics were intentionally included to keep the attention of the younger readers who may not understand the importance of reading the entire document.

From Print to Practice

The writing is complete, the graphics look great, and the material is ready to be shared with the staff. However, the staff handbook could become just another item that sits on a dusty shelf in someone's office. It will only have meaning to the Northern Star Kids organization if it is used by the staff facilitating the programs. How can Northern Star Kids ensure that the *print* evolves into daily *practice* with the youth attending programs? Here is a list of suggestions:

1. Use the topics in the handbook as a framework for summer camp staff training or STAR staff orientation.
2. Create a test or a quiz to be completed after the material is covered alone or in a group.
3. Hold weekly discussions on various aspects of the handbook particularly the sections on program design and delivery and policies and procedures.

4. Role play scenarios from various topics, such as the managing behaviour section, so that the material comes alive in practice.
5. Set weekly goals that involve taking an aspect of the text and using it during program nights, for example, using everyone's name and having the youth call each other by name.
6. Have staff assess the information in the handbook and provide feedback to the program director or to the executive committee.

The Northern Star Staff Handbook is intended to be a useful tool for staff members and the organization and is therefore a working document that can be modified as needed so it fits with the Northern Star mandate and represents the work we do with children living in financial poverty.

Summary

Northern Star Kids operates two programs in Prince George BC for children living in financial poverty. STAR takes place from September to May and the summer camp is held in August. The Northern Star Handbook is a synthesis of information from many sources, including personal experience, consultation with professional educators, academic research, Christie Lake Kids, HIGH FIVE[®], and local organizations in Prince George. It is intended to be a blueprint for creating quality recreation experiences, a keeper of Northern Star history and culture, and guide to help foster healthy growth and development in children living in financial poverty.

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STAFF HANDBOOK

2008

WELCOME to the Northern Star Family!

We are a diverse group of individuals who have a passion for working with kids! We are committed to supporting the development of healthy children and youth through our year-round recreation program. We offer children and youth (age 9-14) from low-income families the opportunity to participate in skill development activities throughout the school year in the areas of sport, music, dance, theatre and computers; we also offer a summer camp. We are always keen to share what we do with others. You can join our staff team as a committee member, a youth mentor, a skill-development instructor, a camp counsellor or a camp cook! Jump in, get your feet wet, ask lots of questions and be prepared to have fun!

Pages 21, 26, 27, 29, 40, 67 & 66 have been reprinted with the permission of HIGH FIVE®. Sincere thanks to HIGH FIVE® for the contribution to the Northern Star Handbook and its' commitment to promoting high quality sport and recreation programs that support the healthy development of children.

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Lastly, this work is a tribute to the incredible work of the late Dr. Dan Offord for his 47 year tenure as Camp Director at Christie Lake Kids' Summer Camp and the development of the STAR Program. Dr. Dan Offord was a renowned child psychiatrist and founding director of the internationally recognized Offord Centre for Child Studies at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario. Dr. Dan devoted his career to improving the life prospects for Canadian children living in financial poverty and earned him the Order of Canada in 2002. Regardless of how busy he was with his professional responsibilities, he would return to Christie Lake every summer and spend most of his time at the waterfront encouraging kids to learn to swim. His hands-on approach to working with youth and commitment to 'leveling the playing field' for children living in financial poverty has inspired many to follow in his footsteps.

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INTRODUCTION

The development of the handbook

...setting the stage for what's to come.....an
overview and definitions..



“When children play, they are developing the physical, emotional, social and cognitive skills they need to succeed in life. Sport and recreation programs are the most common ways children participate in organized play. A quality recreation program can help children learn new skills, feel good about themselves and have friends. Positive experiences in sport and recreation help children become capable, caring adults who will contribute effectively to the community in the future.”

Dr. Dan Offord
(HIGH FIVE®, 2003)

Overview and Purpose of The Handbook

This handbook was written as a guide for the Northern Star Kids Organization. Northern Star Kids delivers quality sport and recreation programs to youth living in low income families in the Quinson/Spruceland neighbourhoods in Prince George, B.C. Due to Northern Star's large volunteer base and high turnover of staff we need a way to share our vision, values and goals with new members of the organization. The use of the handbook will create a culture of consistency in how we interact with youth, help us stay true to the original mandate of Northern Star Kids and enable us to continue providing the quality programs for which we are known.

The handbook intends to prepare leaders to engage in purposeful interaction with youth and provide an understanding of the organization's purpose. It consists of six sections: an introduction to the handbook, an overview of Northern Star Kids Organization, key ideas that serve as our foundation, program design and delivery, staff health and wellness, and policies that ensure the supervision and safety of youth. A policy section was included in the handbook because the policies pertaining to the safety and supervision of our youth provide a basis for all of our work.

The focus of the handbook is on building relationships with youth through sport and recreation activities. At Northern Star Kids we do this by creating a supportive learning environment where youth can participate at their level and feel a sense of mastery over the skills they are learning. We have to work hard at maintaining a fun yet challenging atmosphere so they keep coming back! Our goal is to keep children and youth connected to the Northern Star family from age 9-14 so they have something constructive to do outside of school hours.

The content of the handbook is a culmination of information taken from various sources such as: Christie Lake Kids, HIGH FIVE® Leaders Handbook and Best Practice Manual, Diane Gossen's book on Restitution, academic research from various child development areas and personal experience. All materials from outside sources are acknowledged and identified on the reference page.

This handbook was developed as a Masters of Education project and the complete project, including academic rationale, is available at the UNBC library.

Note: The Northern Star Staff Handbook provides a general overview of the organization, our mission and core beliefs, a snapshot of our programs such as STAR (Skills Through Activity & Recreation) and summer camp and our vision of how to build relationships with kids through a supportive learning environment in sport and recreation. It does not contain a comprehensive list of all our policies and procedures specific to each program or the operational information for summer camp. There is an additional booklet for camp staff.

Definitions

For the purposes of this handbook the following definitions and terminology apply:

Northern Star Kids Northern Star	All used interchangeably.
Summer Camp Camp	One week summer camp held at Camp Elkness.
STAR	<i>Skills Through Activity and Recreation.</i> Weekly recreation activities offered to youth from September-May
Children Youth	Used interchangeably; refers to children age 9-14
Staff	Anyone involved in Northern Star Kids organization; this includes volunteer and paid positions.
Youth Leader Leader	Used interchangeably; refers to any staff member who works directly with youth during STAR activities or summer camp.
Youth Mentor	Staff members that attend STAR nights and support youth during the skill development sessions.
Recreation	Structured activities that place an emphasis on connecting with peers and adults while focusing on skill development in the areas of: art, sport, theatre, music, leadership, and technology (Mahoney, Larson, & Eccles, 2005).
Financial Poverty	The youth who attend Northern Star Programs live in families who struggle with financial poverty. Financial poverty in Canada is measured using Statistics Canada's Low Income Cut-Offs. (LICO's). LICO recognizes that people living in financial poverty spend a disproportionate amount (54.3% or higher compared to average of 34.3%) of their total gross income on food, clothing and shelter (First Call: BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition, 2005)
HIGH FIVE®	HIGH FIVE® is the only quality assurance system in North America designed for children's sport and recreation. It was designed to help program leaders and parents ensure that sport and recreation programs are delivered in ways that support the safety, well-being and healthy development of children. (HIGH FIVE®, 2007)

NORTHERN STAR KIDS ORGANIZATION

Who are we and what do we do?

...some history and background information
on our programs....an interesting read...pay
attention!



History of Northern Star Kids

Northern Star Kids is modelled after *Christie Lake Kids*, a year-round recreation program based in Ottawa, Ontario. The program started in 1912 when Judge John McKinley founded a summer camp as an alternative to jail. Christie Lake Camp was designed not only to be fun but to be a place for children to learn skills, build friendships, and find opportunities for success. In the 1960's the camp staff started organizing sports activities as a way of touching base with the campers over the winter. In 1985, the Skills Through Activity and Recreation (STAR) program began and Christie Lake Kids became a year round operation for children living in low-income families. Christie Lake Kids gained nationwide recognition for its programs due to the 30 year involvement of Dr. Dan Offord, a world-renowned child psychiatrist and a member of the Order of Canada. Dr. Dan, as he was affectionately known at camp, worked tirelessly during his career to improve the life chances of children and youth living in financial poverty. Despite his numerous professional commitments he returned to Christie Lake every summer as Camp Director and was a key figure on the waterfront teaching kids to swim. His passion and inspiration to help kids develop to their fullest potential has led many to follow in his footsteps.

It was the dream of Dan Poulin, a Christie Lake Alumni and former Intersect employee, to offer a similar program to children and youth in Prince George. He worked tirelessly with Maureen Davis and Brenda Hansen, who were also Intersect employees, to establish Northern Star Kids as a program under Active Support Against Poverty and secure our first year of funding. Maureen is still at the helm as our financial advisor and funding "guru" and we wouldn't be here without her efforts. The inaugural camp was held in August, 2004 on the shores of Ness Lake at Camp Elkness and the STAR program planted its roots at the Kinsman Centre in the fall of 2004. We have stayed connected to a core base of 30 youth and have provided services to over 50 youth during the last three years. We have offered skill-development activities such as basketball, volleyball, soccer, claymation, ballroom dance, hip-hop, singing and snowboarding. Snowboarding is offered through the CHILL Program which is funded by Burton snowboarding company and aims to give disadvantaged youth the opportunity to experience snowboarding over a six week period during the winter months. We are able to offer all our programs due to the financial assistance of the Province of British Columbia and we are continuing to seek additional funding to expand our services and remain a strong force in the lives of youth from low-income families for many years to come!

Mission Statement, Philosophy, and Goals

Mission Statement

To provide a safe and supportive environment for youth from low-income families by offering quality year-round community and camp programs to promote recreation, healthy friendships, positive role modeling, life skills and a chance to succeed.

Philosophy

At Northern Star we believe that:

- All kids deserve a safe, healthy childhood.
- All kids deserve the opportunity to learn, to achieve, and to succeed.
- Teaching skills of all kinds not only builds particular skills, it also builds self-esteem, social skills, and other positive qualities.
- Children from low-income families deserve the same recreational and skill development opportunities as other children.
- Caring for children and youth is not just a private issue, but a collective responsibility.

Goals

Children at Northern Star Kids are given the opportunity to:

- ❖ Develop skills and become competent in activities that interest them the most through exposure to a wide variety of diverse and stimulating experiences.
- ❖ Achieve success in order to build their self esteem and confidence.
- ❖ Feel a sense of emotional well-being, belonging and security by making connections with the Northern Star Community and developing relationships with nonparental adults and peers.
- ❖ Develop as considerate, cooperative and caring individuals who show concern and respect for themselves, others, and their community.
- ❖ Develop as individuals who are capable of participating in activities that require decision making, problem solving, responsibility, team building, and self management.
- ❖ Develop life-long leisure skills by participating in physical fitness, creative activity, and healthy living.

**So how will these core beliefs and goals affect our daily practice with kids?
What will the kids notice about our youth leaders?**

The youth leaders:

participate with them ~ focus on the positive ~ teach in different ways ~adapt to their learning needs ~phone them if they miss a session ~ take time to learn about their lives ~ walk them home ~ lend them equipment so they can participate ~ let them help plan events ~ work on challenging behaviours ~ teach them how to get their needs met in a positive way ~ have fun, laugh and play

The Northern Star Difference

We have modelled our organization after Christie Lake Kids in Ottawa, Ontario. The following information comes from Christie Lake Kids (2006b) and gives an explanation of how both organizations differ from other recreation programs.

~ Volunteerism ~ Civic Community ~ Low Income Families ~ Active Recruitment ~ Consistency ~ Youth Focused ~ Community Approach ~ Skill-Development ~ Tracking ~ High ratio of staff to youth

Volunteerism

- A group of volunteers from Intersect Youth and Family Services were the origins of Northern Star Kids (NSK). Members of the inaugural committee were: Maureen Davis, Dan Poulin, Brenda Hansen, Elizabeth Thideman, Doug Tedford, Belinda Hanlon, Jonathon Palmer, Cheryl Tedford, and Adele Link.
- Programs are run almost exclusively by volunteers. Our program coordinator is the only paid position and it is for 18 hours a week.

Civic Community

- Everyone's feedback is valued, regardless of experience or status.
- Everyone works to get the job done.
- We respect and value the kids and fellow staff members.
- Self-motivated not top-down motivated.
- We all agree to follow the same rules to set an example. Walk your talk.
- We are working towards inclusions of all races, religions, genders, sexual orientations, etc.
- We are a team!!

Youth from Low Income Families

- Many organizations move away from youth from low income families when middle-class youth start knocking on the door for two reasons: 1) middle class youth can pay and 2) they are easier to serve. Usually, middle class youth have more support to attend and use the services with less effort from the organization.

Active Recruitment of Youth

- We ensure that youth who would not traditionally participate in recreation programs are given the opportunity. These include youth who may be at-risk of crime, abuse, and emotional, behavioural and psychological maladjustment.
- We actively follow youth to keep communication open so we can identify barriers preventing a child from attending and support families in overcoming those barriers.

The Northern Star Difference

Consistency

- We strive to have the same staff each year, which allows the building of a positive rapport. Many of the youth we serve may have life challenges that interfere with an ability to maintain a primary attachment. Positive attachment has been identified as a protective factor from maladjustment.
- We are consistent in the way we deal with behaviour.
- We continue to welcome and include youth despite the challenging behaviour they might display. We are committed to working with youth to help them improve their behaviour and will not remove children from our programs unless they are negatively affecting the health and well-being of other youth in the program.
- We guarantee youth a spot in our programs from age nine to fourteen. Returning campers and STAR participants always receive priority, despite political pressures to take on additional youth.
- We keep many important traditions such as "opening campfire" at camp and STAR AWARD nights while we try to adapt to the changing needs of our population.
- Children who move out of financial poverty remain welcome in NSK programs.
- Programs are NOT DROP-IN. This assures better tracking and engagement of participants as well as enabling us to stay true to our purpose of teaching skills.

Youth-Focused

- Fun is number one!
- We are compassionate and caring.
- We do home visits and get to know our youth and their attachment base.
- We leave adult conversations and hanging out with friends until after program time.
- We listen to youth and provide opportunities for them to offer their opinions and explain their needs.
- We strive to ask youth for their input when trying to deal with their challenging behaviour.

Community Approach

- We welcome all youth living in low-income families from age nine to fourteen who live in the Ahbau/Quinson/MacIntyre neighborhoods and attend Quinson & Spruceland Elementary School, or Lakewood Junior Secondary.
- A community approach to recruiting prevents stigmatization with targeting only those in trouble or other at-risk groups.

Skill-Development

- Earn badges, award tags and certificates.
- Increase self-esteem.
- Competency with skill level is one area that may be a protective factor from maladjustment.
- No previous skills are required. Our youth have a chance to catch-up to middle class youth who have more access/practice in these areas of skill development.

The Northern Star Difference

Tracking of Attendance and Skill Development

- A measure to assure youth are developing skills and moving through skill levels.
- A chart provides a visual way for youth to see their progress and feel pride and accomplishment.
- Leaders take attendance and follow up with a phone call when sessions are missed.

High staff to participant ratio

- Our population needs more attention and support, as there are frequently more complex needs, less family resources and increased family stress.
- Higher ratio allows us to ensure safety and the means to resolve challenges.

Programs at Northern Star Kids

	STAR	SUMMER CAMP
Who?	Children and youth age 9-14	Children and youth age 9-14
What?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly skill development activities offered in the areas of sport, art, music, and dance. Sessions delivered by skilled instructors in their field and supported by youth leaders. Northern Star strives to offer one sport and one other activity per week so we can target various interests of the children and youth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One week summer camp Camp focuses on skill development in the following areas: swimming, canoeing, campcraft and naturelore Campers work to achieve one skill level per summer in each area and have the opportunity to participate in the LIT (Leadership in Training Program) during their 6th year at camp.
When?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skill sessions are offered once a week for 10-12 weeks, three times a year, during Fall, Winter and Spring. Activities are typically held in the evenings between 6-8pm. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Usually held during the second week of August each summer. The long term goal is to offer three camps a summer each lasting two weeks.
Where?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northern Star Office at the Kinsman Centre or venues around town such as the swimming pool, Tabor Mountain. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Camp Elkness on Ness Lake The long term goal is to own and operate our own camp facility.
Why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To give youth living in financial poverty equal access to, equal participation in and equal benefits from skill development programs as their middle class peers. To have a positive influence on the growth and development of youth living in financial poverty. See goal section of handbook. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To give youth living in financial poverty equal opportunities to experience summer camp as their middle class peers. To have a positive influence on the growth and development of youth living in financial poverty. See goal section of handbook.
How?	An enthusiastic program coordinator and a fantastic team of volunteers!	An enthusiastic program coordinator, skilled summer staff, and a fantastic team of volunteers!

Northern Star Staff Positions and Responsibilities

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- Provide guidance and direction for all programs at Northern Star.
- Fundraise, network in the community, provide professional support.
- Responsible for hiring program director and all other staff.
- Support and collaborate with program director on all Northern Star programs.
- Develop and ensure consistent application of policies and procedures.
- Attend regular monthly meetings as scheduled.

STAR

PROGRAM DIRECTOR

- Plan and implement STAR activities under the guidance and direction of the executive committee. Attend all STAR nights.
- Attend monthly committee meetings.
- Work in conjunction with the committee to recruit certified instructors/coaches to run the skill development programs.
- Recruit youth leaders who work to support kids in their activities.
- Track weekly attendance, cleaning schedule, volunteer participation, behaviour and first aid incidents.
- Make weekly phone calls to kids who are not attending and find out why.
- Ensure safe arrival and departure procedures are in place for kids.
- Purchase and organize food for nightly snacks.
- Maintain inventory of program and cleaning supplies.
- Organize AWARD nights at the end of each 10-12 week Skill session.
- Build partnerships in the community.
- Organize fundraisers.
- Provide timesheet and petty cash reports to committee accountant.
- Keep open communication with executive committee; let committee know of any concerns regarding family circumstances or child well-being.

SKILL DEVELOPMENT INSTRUCTORS

- Design and deliver developmentally appropriate skill development programs in the areas of sport, music, art, or dance.
- Present a copy of curriculum to program coordinator before the start of a 10/12 week session.
- Track progress of children and youth and encourage skill development over the duration of the session.
- Attend AWARD night.
- Create an environment that maximizes learning potential
- Set expectations, be positive, and have fun.

STAR MENTOR

- Support the skill development instructors by ACTIVELY participating in all activities with the youth. Be a positive role model.
- Build relationships with the youth & help them be successful at STAR.

Northern Star Staff Positions and Responsibilities

SUMMER CAMP

CAMP DIRECTOR

- Supports program director and oversees all aspects of camp.
- Builds relationships with staff and campers.
- Facilitates significant events such as opening and closing campfire.

PROGRAM DIRECTOR

- Coordinate all tasks for preparation of camp such as: organizing staff training, menu planning, transportations, games and activities, issuing curriculum for award heads, conducting home visits, gear lists, communication with parents, preparation for the final banquet, camp newsletter, first aid supplies, ordering clothes and award tags.
- Participate in all aspects of staff recruitment and hiring process.
- Facilitate staff training by creating a schedule and organizing instructors.
- Create a welcoming, supportive atmosphere for both staff and campers.
- Conduct camper home visits.
- Be the "go to" person on site.
- Support staff in all areas: staff/camper interactions, activities, theme nights, groups and clubs, and campfire.
- Plan and deliver "ALL CAMP" activities twice a day.
- Work in conjunction with camp director to ensure campers have a safe, rewarding, fun time at camp!

SENIOR COUNSELLORS

- Responsible for the care, health and well-being of 5 campers for the week.
- Actively participate in all aspects of camp with campers: award sessions, swim times, meals, all camp activities, groups and clubs, campfire etc.
- Complete tasks as directed by Senior Staff. (Award Heads, Program and Camp Director)

JUNIOR COUNSELLORS

- Support senior counsellors in taking care of the health and well-being of 5 campers for the week.
- Learn the role of senior counsellor.
- Actively participate in all aspects of camp with campers: award sessions, swim times, meals, all camp activities, groups and clubs, campfire etc.
- Complete tasks as directed by Senior Staff.

FIRST AID

- Responsible for first aid needs of all campers and staff.
- Work in conjunction with program director to ensure all first aid supplies are provided.

LIFEGUARD

- Responsible for all activity occurring at the waterfront. This includes swim programs, canoeing and other water-based activities.

AWARDHEADS (Naturelore, Campcraft & Canoeing)

- Plan and implement curriculum according to the skill level and age of participants.
- Create stimulating activities and capture the interest of the campers.
- Evaluate the progress of the campers throughout the week and award levels to those campers who have met expectations.

CAMP COOKS

- Responsible for menu planning, coordinating the food purchases, and feeding 18-20 staff members and 20 campers for the duration of camp.

CAMP MOM/DAD

- Provide emotional support to anyone at camp who needs it!

ROVER

- Drives back and forth to town countless times a week picking up supplies and doing odd tasks to support camp in one way or another.

Recruitment of Youth

Northern Star Kids serves low-income children who live in the Ospika North and South neighbourhoods and attend Quinson and Spruceland Elementary Schools. In the winter of 2002 a needs assessment was completed by Dan Poulin and Maureen Davis. The purpose of the assessment was to determine the child population in greatest need of this service. The needs assessment was supported by the Early Child Development research conducted by Dr. Clyde Hertzman and the team from the Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP) at the University of British Columbia (Kershaw, Irwin, Trafford, & Hertzman, 2005). The research found that a significant percentage of the children who live in the Ospika North and South neighbourhoods were deemed at-risk on a variety of measures. For a full report of the findings refer to the HELP website (Human Early Learning Partnership, 2007).

Northern Star Commitment

Once youths participate in a program at Northern Star, ideally at age 9, we are committed to providing them with STAR activities and summer camp until they turn 14. At age 14 they can apply to our L.I.T. (Leader In Training) Program and have the opportunity to become a STAR mentor or summer camp counsellor.

Initial Recruitment of Youth

In May 2004, a member of our executive committee gave a presentation on Northern Star Kids to the staff at Spruceland and Quinson Elementary Schools. She explained who we were, what we did and how kids qualify for the program. In order to qualify for the program, the students: had to be age 9-12, live in families struggling with poverty, were not able to access organized recreation and sport activities due to financial constraints, and demonstrated a need for support outside school hours. The teachers and staff at the school had a period of a couple of weeks to recommend 20 students to our summer camp program. Once we received the recommendations, we did a home visit with each family to confirm that they qualified for our program and their child was interested in attending the summer camp.

Our Current Status

Since the summer of 2004 we have retained 10-12 of our original youth and welcomed many more through word of mouth. Many of the youth who attended summer camp in 2004 brought their friends to STAR the following fall and we haven't had to do a formal recruitment at the school for four years. Because of our long-term commitment to each youth and our limited resources we only have openings when children move away or become youth mentors.

Vision for the Future

Research demonstrates that the best time to engage children and youth in sport and recreation is between the ages of 6-8 because of the natural curiosity to try new things and socialize with peers. After this window of time, children tend to fall behind in skill development in comparison to their peers and miss the opportunity to become interested in a particular activity. The lack of engagement can have a negative effect on their self-esteem and self-confidence (Offord, 2002). We hope that one day we will have the resources to recruit children each year in grade 1 from Quinson and Spruceland Elementary and get them involved in STAR activities at an early age. We also would like to create a fund to sponsor kids who show potential or develop an interest in a chosen area so they can participate with mainstream peers.

KEY IDEAS

Why do we do what we do?

...Stimulating BRAINY STUFF....



Key Ingredients of Healthy Child Development

There are many researchers working hard to discover what kids need in order to experience a happy, healthy childhood.

Here is a list of the basics from the Mental Health America (2007) website:

- Nutritious food
- Adequate shelter & sleep
- * Exercise *
- Immunizations
- Healthy living environment
- Unconditional love from family
- * Self- confidence & high self- esteem *
- * Opportunity to play with other kids *
- * Encouraging teachers & supportive caretakers *
- Safe and secure surroundings
- Appropriate guidance and discipline

*Starred items can be found in high quality recreation programs.

Importance of Recreation for Healthy Child Development

Research indicates that participation in recreation programs enables children and youth to:

- Develop skills and competencies.
- Be exposed to positive role models.
- Achieve better physical and emotional health.
- Develop psychosocial skills.
- Improve self-esteem, academic performance, peer & family relationships.
- Acquire pro-social skills and develop life skills such as leadership, decision-making and problem-solving.
- Form healthy habits that can be transferred into their adult lives.
- Participate, volunteer and take pride in their community.
- Have fun and be with friends.

(Canadian Parks and Recreation Association, 1997)

HIGH FIVE® Principles of Healthy Development Through Sport and Recreation

At Northern Star Kids we follow the principles of **HIGH FIVE®**, a Canadian organization that promotes quality programs for sport and recreation (HIGH FIVE®, 1999). We ensure that the following five principles guide the design of all our activities:

Caring Adults ~ Friends ~ Participation ~ Play ~ Mastery

Principle	Importance
A CARING ADULT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acts as an anchor and a model for the roles children and youth will try on. • A mentoring relationship with at least one successful adult who is available over the long-term can protect children from adverse circumstances (Werner & Smith, 1992).
FRIENDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce children to the bigger world beyond family. • Help create a safe environment. • Create a space where children can talk about feelings, learn social skills and work out conflicts.
PARTICIPATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gives children the opportunity to have a voice, make choices, and do things by and for themselves. • Asking children and youth to help plan activities, set rules, lead games and solve problems enables them to feel independent, involved and competent.
PLAY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engages the imagination. • Gives children and youth the freedom to shape their environment and be who they want to be. • Lets them control their environment without input from adults.
MASTERY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mastering new skills (physical, social and intellectual) is the key way children develop self-esteem and a positive identity.

The HIGH FIVE® principles are supported in *environments* that foster healthy development. (HIGH FIVE®, 1999) Youth leaders who create environments that foster healthy development:

1. Understand the *developmental stages* of children and youth and *offer age appropriate activities*.
2. Respect and support the children and youth by honoring their *uniqueness and diversity*.
3. Create *safe places* to play, both physically and emotionally, by establishing boundaries that everyone can live by.

Positive Youth Development – Protective Factors and Resilience

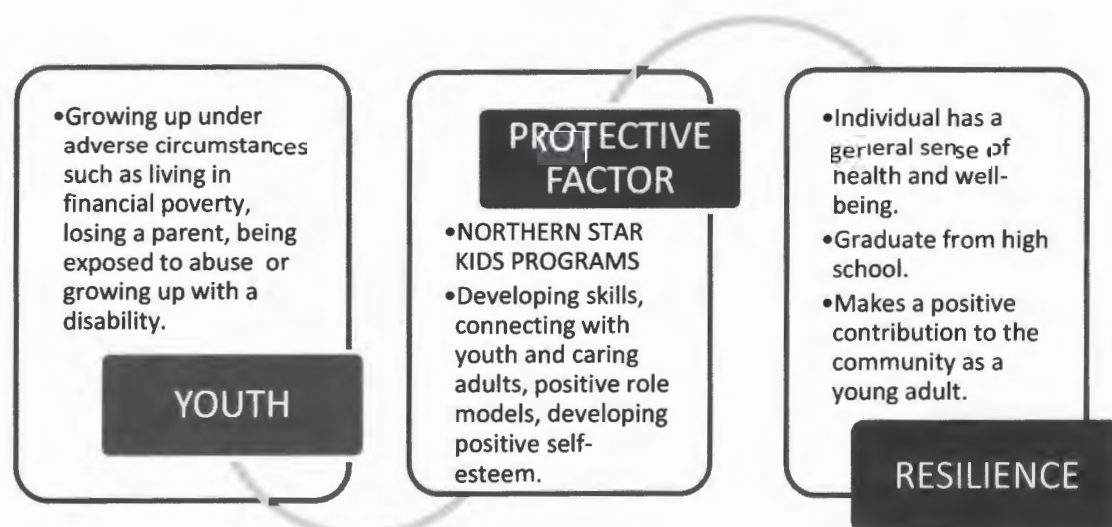
Positive Youth Development is *an approach* to working with children and youth to help them develop to their highest potential. (McCreary Youth Foundation, 2007; Witt & Caldwell, 2005) Youth workers using the Positive Youth Development approach focus on the strengths of the youth in their care rather than on their challenges. Research has shown us that quality programming in supportive environments is essential for helping kids to succeed.

First of all you need to know about two important words: **PROTECTIVE FACTORS** and **RESILIENCE**.

Protective Factors – protective factors are supports in a person's life that help them become resilient such as a caring teacher, belonging to a sports team or youth group or having a youth mentor like a Big Brother/Big Sister.

Resilience – resilience means that people who experience difficult life experiences such as living in financial poverty, having a parent die at a young age, being exposed to abuse, or growing up with a learning disability still do okay despite the troubles they experience along the way!

Northern Star strives to be a protective factor for kids living in financial poverty. We offer kids caring relationships, cool stuff to do, and special ways to develop skills so they become resilient despite the circumstances of growing up in financial poverty!



Positive Youth Development – Designing a Program

(Walker, Marczak, Blyth, & Borden, 2005)

KEY IDEAS OF POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT:

1. Before we plan programs we need to know **WHAT** we want kids to learn and **WHY**.
2. Kids need to be involved in their learning and development.
3. We need to give kids what they need based on their interests, skills, and life circumstances. This is called having a **“GOOD FIT”**.

THE BEST LEARNING WILL HAPPEN WHEN:

1. The activities match the age and skill level of children and youth. In other words, experiences need to be challenging – not too easy and not too hard.
2. The children and youth have choice in what they do.
3. Opportunities they participate in during program time are something they can do on their own.
4. Youth workers focus on the strengths of the children and youth; they do not focus on their problems.
5. Kids and adults work together to plan programs.

HIGHLY SKILLED YOUTH LEADERS (like the ones at Northern Star) consider three factors when they design programs:

RELATIONSHIPS	ACTIVITIES	CONNECTIONS
A key protective factor for encouraging resilience in kids!! Be sincere, genuine, and REAL when working with kids as these qualities build TRUST ~ they will know if you are just putting in time!	Grab the kids' attention, make the learning interesting, and make the surrounding safe!	Get to know the background of your kids - the world they live in which includes family, school and neighbourhood.



Challenges of Living in Financial Poverty

Reading about the challenges of living in financial poverty does not make one an expert in the subject nor does it replace an individual's "lived experience". Living in financial poverty is different for everyone; it is critical to not assume you understand or relate to how other people live unless you have experienced it firsthand. Even then, it is important to realize that individuals respond differently to similar situations. It is appropriate to describe some of the challenges of living in financial poverty so that we can better understand our kids when they come into the program.

Christie Lake (2006a) reported that the need for a program for kids living in financial poverty arose from years of research that revealed three important findings:

1. Economically disadvantaged children are at a far greater risk of poor physical and emotional development than their middle class counterparts.
2. Involvement in physical activity improves children's physical development, while gaining skills in the arts and sports improves their positive emotional development.
3. Sadly, such programs, known to be beneficial to children are not easily accessed by those living in financial poverty. In fact, the National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth (NLSCY) revealed that more than three-quarters of poor children had almost never participated in arts or community programs, and the same was true of sports for more than one-half of poor children (Statistics Canada, 1996).

Children and youth living in financial poverty have a greater risk of health problems, disability and death and are more likely to: (Public Health Canada, 2005)

- Drop out of school.
- Have emotional problems and mental health disorders.
- To get in trouble with the law.
- Engage in risk-taking behaviour and die as a result of the injuries.

Barriers to Participation in Recreational Programs

- Transportation, registration costs, and equipments costs.
- Cultural (limited experience in swimming and ice skating).
- Linguistic (many people living in financial poverty are newcomers to Canada).
- Educational (can't fill out form if you cannot read it).
- Family commitments.
- Gender (females not as encouraged to play sports).

Financial Poverty in BC (CPRA, 2005; First Call: BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition, 2006)

- BC has the highest rate of child poverty in Canada (23.5% vs. national rate of 17.6%) which translates to nearly 1 in 4 children.
- Most of the income for those living in financial poverty goes towards food, clothing, and shelter.
- Lack of access to organized sport and recreation reinforces social exclusion.
- Children in low-income families are much less likely than children in high income families to participate in organized sports (25 % as compared to 75 %) and in arts and cultural activities (19 %, as compared to 32 %).

PROGRAM DESIGN AND DELIVERY

HOW do we do it?

The fun stuff...WAKE UP!



Being a Leader

The youth leaders at Northern Star have the responsibility to work with all the youth in our programs, regardless of their ability or background, to help them develop intellectually, socially, physically, and emotionally by creating opportunities for them to learn and play. As long as you give the kids your best effort and quality time you will be doing a fantastic job!

Leader's are:

- Facilitators** who create environments and activities that help children shine.
- Mentors** who make themselves available to listen to children and provide guidance and support as needed.
- Teachers** of new skills.
- Role models** for children to look up to and learn positive behaviours.
- Ambassadors** for the program, who welcome parents and children into the broader community.

(adapted from HIGH FIVE® – A Handbook for Leaders, 1999)

A mentoring relationship with at least one successful adult who is available over the long-term protects children from adverse circumstances. (Werner & Smith, 1992)

HIGH FIVE® Principles in Daily Practice

Caring Adults ~ Friends ~ Participation ~ Play ~ Mastery

Here is how we put the HIGH FIVE® Principles in *ACTION* in our daily practice with youth at Northern Star! (HIGH FIVE®, 1999)

Principle	What does it look like?
A CARING ADULT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use each child's name. • Greet all children when they arrive and say goodbye as they leave • Make eye contact when children talk to you and actively listen to what they have to say • Take time to have at least one brief conversation with each child every day. • Smile & have fun! • Uses appropriate physical contact eg. a handshake or a pat on the shoulder
FRIENDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce the kids to each other and new kids to the rest of the group. • Ask the children to use names when they talk to other people • Do not tolerate name calling, teasing, scapegoating, personal vendettas or sarcasm and never use these yourself. • Organize games and activities that require kids to work with different people. • Support and celebrate the diversity of cultures within a group. • Challenge the group as a whole to solve problems and work together toward a common goal.
PARTICIPATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve children in planning, carrying out, and evaluating activities. • Give them choices about what they can do, make, or play. • Respect their views and ideas. • Make sure everyone participates regardless of ability.
PLAY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give children enough time to do the activities they want. • Build play into structured activities. • Keep a sense of humour. • Be fair in how you manage games and activities.
MASTERY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use descriptive feedback to help children understand what they do well. • Provide challenges that are age developmentally appropriate. • Praise children when they succeed. • Find something each child can be successful at and give him or her opportunities to demonstrate this mastery. • Recognize each child's uniqueness and build on his or her strengths. • Children learn by doing – minimize standing around.

Building Relationships

Building relationships with the kids who come to STAR and Camp is the most important thing you can do as a youth leader. *It is your most valuable tool.* Research shows that it takes one important person in a child's life to help them overcome difficulties they may face at home, school or in the community.

The Essential Ingredients

Remember why you chose to work for Northern Star – to make a difference in the lives of kids living in financial poverty. For this reason, they are your focus during program time.

Be yourself

Share personal learning experiences when appropriate. Be real, genuine, and sincere. Use each child's name

Be interested

Ask about life outside of Northern Star –interests, movies, music, hobbies, school etc. Have at least one brief conversation with each child every day.

Be dependable

Always do what you have said you will do. Avoid making promises that will be difficult to keep.

Be an example

"Lead by example". Be on-time, be respectful, do what you expect the kids to do, model good behaviour.

Be present

Give kids your undivided attention. Make eye contact with children when they talk to you and validate what they say.

Be safe

Set appropriate boundaries to keep kids emotionally and physically safe. You can interact in a playful manner but remember your role as a mentor.

Be respectful, honest, and trustworthy

Value the unique strengths by finding ways that children can be successful when they are in your care. Acknowledge the good things they do everyday.

Connections to Home: Communication With Parents or Other Family Members

Parents are key partners in their child's healthy growth and development. It is important to encourage parents to be involved in Northern Star at whatever level they choose. They are welcome to visit programs in session, volunteer to do various tasks, be involved with program evaluation, and attend special events such as STAR Awards Nights. We want parents and other family members to feel welcome at Northern Star Kids and feel secure about their child's involvement.

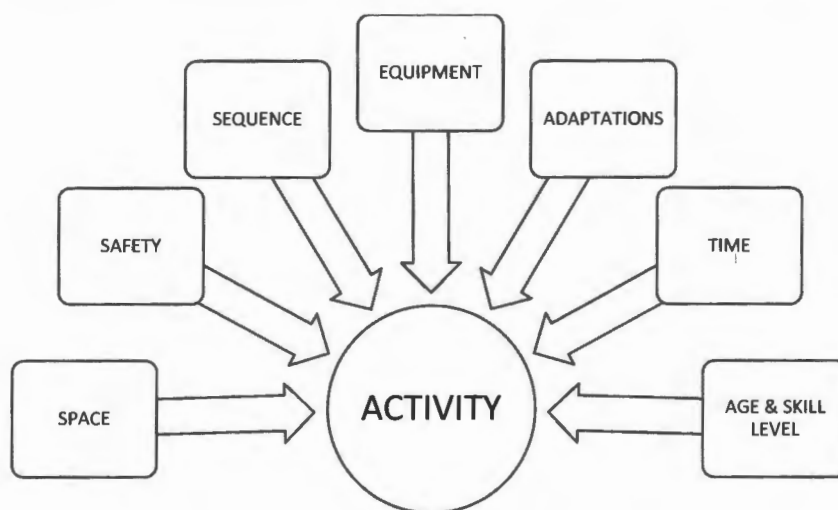
We like to maintain an open communication policy with parents by:

- Sharing daily information on their child's experience. (if requested)
- Informing parents of any incidents their child is involved in. (if appropriate)
- Providing access to the staff handbook including policies and procedures.
- Keeping parents up-to-date with events and activities through the monthly newsletter.
- Requesting that they evaluate Northern Star Programs.
- Contacting home if the child is not attending and working with parents to determine what support is needed for attendance.

TIPS FOR BUILDING HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS WITH PARENTS (HIGH FIVE®, 1999)
❖ Make parents your partners in making sure their child has a good experience.
❖ Get to know parents by name and initiate conversations to show that you are attentive to their child; ensure that children and parents know your name.
❖ Remember that parents are concerned about their child, not about the other children or how hard your job is. Support them in their concerns about their child.
❖ Talk to parents about the principles of healthy child development and how you use them in your program.
❖ Enlist the parents' help in problem-solving.

Facilitating Activities

OK...so you have all the theory memorized from chapter one....you have picked an activity to do for Naturelore or a STAR night or clubs at CAMP. You know what you want the kids to learn, you have made sure it is something they are interested in and it is developmentally appropriate...so now what? How will you actually deliver the material? How will you create a learning environment that fosters healthy growth and development? You need to consider the following when planning an activity:



SPACE – Is the area away from distractions? Will the kids hear you? Is the sun in their eyes? Are there any hazards? Is there enough room to do what you want? Do you need to set up physical boundaries with pylons or other markers?

SAFETY – This means both physical and emotional safety. For example, emotional safety may require a reminder of behaviour expectations and physical safety may involve a survey of equipment and area in which the activity takes place. How will you respond to an emergency?

AGE & SKILL LEVEL – Consider the developmental needs of your group. Is the activity challenging to the group? Think of how you will adapt the activity if it is too easy or hard?

ADAPTATIONS – Consider the unique needs of individual kids in the group. Know their strengths and challenges. Do you need to modify the rules, have small breaks, offer more adult support or provide visual instructions so they can be successful?

TIME – How much time do you have? Plan out every minute of your activity so there won't be any surprises. But even careful plans can go awry! Be flexible and plan extra activities in case you need them.

EQUIPMENT – What do you need in order to do the activity? Have all equipment on site and in place before you start the activity.

SEQUENCE – What will you say first? How will you get the kids attention? What expectations do you have? How will you have kids form groups? What is your back up plan in case the activity doesn't work? Activities unfold differently with every group even for the most seasoned leaders – as mentioned previously, it is always good practice to have PLAN B in your back pocket.

Behaviour Philosophy

At Northern Star we choose to help kids learn how to manage their behaviour so they develop a sense of control over what they are doing. The ultimate goal is to *strengthen the youth* and *give them tools* to use in the future. The material for this section of the handbook comes from the *Restitution Work* of Diane Gossen (Gossen, 1996; Gossen, 2006). The foundation of Gossen's work is a counselling theory called Reality Theory that was developed by Dr. William Glasser (Glasser, 1965). Gossen combined aspects of Glasser's work with her experience in addictions counselling and her observations of First Nations Elders working with young offenders to create her model of Restitution. In order to use the principles of Restitution at Northern Star Kids Programs, we need to re-think four common beliefs about disciplining children and youth.

OLD BELIEF	NEW BELIEF
We can control people	We can't control anyone! When people do what we want, it is because they want to. They allow us to control them.
All positive reinforcement works and is good for kids.	<i>Constant</i> positive reinforcement is a way of controlling people. It makes kids dependent on external rewards and they start doing things to please others instead of for themselves. We need to teach kids to do things for themselves because it gives them satisfaction. We can do this by using descriptive feedback which helps them see their own strengths in comparison to criteria. When they do something well we can ask them what they think of their performance and have a discussion about that instead of constantly heaping on the praise. The key word here is CONSTANT – it is okay to use praise at appropriate times.
Criticism and guilt build character.	Punishing kids using criticism and guilt make kids feel bad about themselves. We want them to become stronger by learning from their mistakes. We talk about changing their behaviour so they can be more effective in getting what they need.
Adults have the right to coerce (force) kids. Force can be persuasion in a friendly manner, threats of a loss of privilege, or at the extreme end, warnings of physical harm.	Adults need to work with kids to teach them how to manage their behaviour so they are effective in getting their needs met. This means spending time getting to know the kids they work with and working through difficult situations without resorting to coercing kids into behaving in a <u>certain way</u> .

Behaviour Philosophy

Why do some youth engage in disrespectful or disruptive behaviour?

Dr. Dan Offord, Christie Lake Kids Camp Director, as well as William Glasser, founder of Reality Therapy, believed that people are always behaving in one way or another in order to meet one of their **FIVE BASIC NEEDS** (Glasser, 1965). The five basic needs of human beings are: survival, love and belonging, freedom, power, and fun. Here is a more detailed look at the five needs:

SURVIVAL	Food, shelter, protection, clothing.
LOVE & BELONGING	Feeling connected to and cared for by family, friends, and groups.
FREEDOM	Being independent, making decisions for yourself.
POWER or COMPETENCY	Feeling worthwhile, succeeding in areas of interest, mastering skills.
FUN	Experiencing pleasure and enjoyment in life.

It is much easier to work with youth who are displaying challenging behaviour if we stop and think about what need they are trying to meet instead of only focusing on the disrespect or disruption.

Example # 1: Every mealtime, Sam is pushing and shoving other campers so he can be the first to get his food. His behaviour is causing fights among the cabin members and making mealtime a challenge for the counsellor. Instead of the counsellor trying to stop the behaviour by laying out consequences, he/she can have a private conversation with Sam about what he needs at mealtime and work on a plan on how he can meet that need more effectively. He or she can then model and practice the replacement behaviour with Sam and give descriptive feedback about his new behaviour. *It is possible at Sam's house that in order to "survive" you need to push and shove at mealtime so you get enough to eat.*

Example #2: Callie is constantly putting down another girl in the hip-hop dance group. She is influencing two other girls in the group to do the same thing. A staff member can discuss with Callie what need she is trying to meet by excluding the other girl and come up with a plan for her to meet her needs in a positive way. *Chances are she is trying to belong to the group but does not know how to connect in a constructive way.* The staff member can model and practice the replacement behaviour with Callie and give her descriptive feedback about her new behaviour.

Okay, I understand the theory. How do I actually manage difficult behaviour at STAR or CAMP? What steps do I take?.....

First of all the kids must know what the expectations are.....see next page.....

Northern Star Behaviour Policy

One of the best ways to prevent unwanted behaviour is to keep kids busy and engaged in activities. This means that you need to be organized and in tune with where your kids are at and how they are doing at any given moment. The kids need to know ahead of time what will happen if they do not meet Northern Star expectations.

The Northern Star behaviour policy needs to be visible at *STAR program locations* and *summer camp*. All staff must review the policy with youth at the beginning of every STAR or CAMP session and be consistent in reminding youth when they are and are not meeting expectations. Staff will have the most success with managing behaviour if they model the behaviour they expect and are consistent with their follow through.

NORTHERN STAR BEHAVIOUR POLICY

Staff and youth at Northern Star Programs believe in showing respect for themselves, other people, and their environment.

This means that we:

1. Listen to one another.
2. Give our best effort during all program activities.
3. Encourage people to do well instead of putting them down.
4. Take care of our equipment and our surroundings.
5. Recognize that when we hurt someone or make a mistake we come up with a plan to deal with it. Examples of "dealing with it" are: doing something for the person you have hurt, volunteering to help staff, fixing something you break, or coming up with a plan to better manage your behaviour next time. If making a plan is difficult for some kids the leader may help them make a plan.

Northern Star Staff are committed to working with youth and giving them ample opportunity and support to change unwanted behaviours. As an organization, we do not believe in coercing kids to behave in a certain way through loss of privilege. However, we do need to have a **bottom line** that protects the safety of all our youth. Therefore, youth who consistently display behaviour that is harmful to the health and well-being of other youth will be asked to leave the program.

Managing Behaviour

There is no magic formula for dealing with disruptive or inappropriate behaviour. PREVENTION (as mentioned on the last page) is the best way to help prevent unwanted behaviours. Many situations depend on the needs and characteristics of the child you are working with. At Northern Star we are kid-focused and want our kids to learn from their mistakes. We want to make them STRONGER. The following STEPS are a guide for dealing with unwanted behaviour and will work with **MOST** but not **ALL** of our youth. There is an additional section for dealing with kids with specific learning needs or social/emotional difficulties who display unwanted behaviour(see pg. 33).

STEP	PURPOSE	ACTION
1	Assess your leadership	<p>Do a quick assessment on the situation and yourself.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is the activity organized, engaging, and developmentally appropriate? 2. Is the ratio of staff to youth sufficient? 3. Did the youth understand the instructions? 4. Did I give the instructions in a clear manner, one step at a time? 5. Did I model the behaviour I want? 6. Did I post instructions visually?
2	Youth awareness of unwanted behaviour	<p>Give the youth information about the unwanted behaviour. This is meant to be a short, simple piece of feedback. Keep it positive. Do this in the group or take them aside taking care not to embarrass them in front of their peers.</p> <p><i>"John, I notice that you are talking while I am giving the instructions for the game. I need you to pay attention so you will understand what to do"</i></p>
3	Problem solving with youth	<p>Staff member removes youth from the activity and has a private conversation using the four questions below. <i>These four questions will only work if the youth understands cause and effect and can take responsibility for behaviour.</i> This is not appropriate for kids who have Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) (See next section (pg.36) for tips on dealing with youth with FASD)</p> <p>If the kids can't answer the questions, the staff member can tell them what they need to see in order for them to continue the activity</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What do you want? <i>This is what I need from you...</i> 2. What are you doing? <i>This is what I see...</i> 3. Is it working? Does it fit with the Northern Star Behaviour Policy? <i>It's not working....</i> 4. Do you want to make a plan? Can you figure out a better way to get what you want? <i>This is what I want you to do...</i>

4	Continued problem solving ~ add the consequence	When youths continue to display the unwanted behaviour they should be removed from the group and asked to spend more individual time with a staff member. They need to review their plan for getting what they want, make amends for their behaviour, and reintegrate as a member of the group. They may choose to do something for the instructor or the whole group when they have disrupted an activity.
5	Get support for yourself and the youth	It can be draining and frustrating dealing with difficult behaviour. If the youth is still acting out at this point, the leader can ask the Program or Camp director for advice or to deal with the youth directly.

Issues with a group of youth

If there is an issue that is affecting the entire group, it is important to find a solution with everyone involved. A front-line staff member should take the lead on facilitating the discussion and have the program coordinator or camp director sit in for support. Use the questions above when addressing the entire group.

1	Give the expectations of a group discussion:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No names are used even if the issue is with a specific camper in the group. <i>"People" are being picked on instead of Sam is picking on Tyler and Joe.</i> No one may interrupt when another person is talking. It is important to respect and listen to others when they are sharing their feelings.
2	State and define the problem.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What do you want? What is happening? Is it working for the group? Coach the youth to use "I" when they speak to the group and try to get them to say what they feel. <p><i>I want the cabin to get along because I feel frustrated when everyone is fighting all the time.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each person takes a turn speaking to the group. The leader then summarizes what has been said by stating different points of view and highlighting the statements of agreement.
3	Identify skills and solutions to the problem.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What can we do differently? Can you think of a plan that will help the group? Ask each youth what <i>they are prepared to do</i> to contribute to the solution instead of having them determine what other people should do. Remind each person in the group about things they do well and then brainstorm the solution to the problem.
4	Decide on a mutually agreed upon goal for the group and a time frame for accomplishing the goal.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The group needs to come up with a plan for themselves if they accomplish the goal (a celebration) and an alternate one if they don't.
5	Review their progress at an appropriate time
at camp that might be the next day...at STAR it might be the next session.

Managing Behaviour

What do you do if you have tried every trick in the book and still can't help a youth change his/her behaviour? **SCREAM? PULL YOUR HAIR OUT!**

NOT YET! ...keep reading....

The brains of some youth are wired in a way that prevents them from understanding cause and effect of their behaviour. They may do something inappropriate and deny it immediately. Their brains cannot make the connection that their behaviour has an effect on others. This is very often the case with youth who have FASD or other special behaviour difficulties.

For these youth you need to be very direct with your instructions. Here are some strategies:

1. Give one instruction at a time.
2. Be aware of the sensory stimulation of the environment (is there a lot of noise? color? distraction?) If this is the case, take the youth to a quiet place so he or she can "calm down" and then continue.
3. Write out instructions to games/activities/daily schedules.
4. Keep your language short and specific.
5. Only give two choices at a time.
6. Model and practice the behaviour you want (over and over).
7. Allow extra time for processing – State the request or instruction, count to 10 and state again, count to 10 and state again. You may have to repeat a few times and have them repeat instructions to you in their own words.

(Provincial Outreach Program for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, 2007)

STAFF HEALTH & WELLNESS

How do we stay sane?

.....important stuff.....we need to take of
ourselves & each other.....



Self Care for Leaders

The old saying goes...*if you don't take care of yourself, you can't take care of others*. So next time you think about missing an exercise session or passing up a healthy meal for a quick stop at Burger King remember the friendly faces you work with every week. Working with children and youth can be an exhausting job and working with youth at Northern Star can be even more demanding due to the various challenges in their lives. It is important that you learn to take care of yourself so you can stay healthy and maintain the work you are doing.

General Self-care Strategies

1. Avoid overworking - when you get a break or time off –TAKE IT!
2. Know your limits - be aware of what tasks or situations leave you depleted and get help with them or delegate them to someone else.
3. Maintain a healthy diet-eat nutritious food and drink lots of water.
4. Maintain a regular sleep schedule – the recommendation is 7 hours sleep at night.
5. Exercise regularly – recommendation is 3 cardio workouts a week.
6. Make connections with staff - have someone you can debrief with after difficult situations.
7. Remember your social needs - spend time with family, friends and significant others.
8. Make time for yourself – make time every week to do something you enjoy.
9. Know when to seek help – talk to senior staff or a health professional if you are having difficulty managing circumstances at work and it is interfering with your quality of life.

Self Care Strategies for Camp Counsellors (Muchnick, 2002)

Life at summer camp is hectic and people can get frustrated with one other due to the intense nature of the job and the amount of time they spend together. Muchnick (2002) created a list of self-care strategies that help summer camp leaders take care of themselves and their staff team. He listed them under four themes: promote health, challenge expectations, provide support, and schedule staff events.

Promote Health

- Extra sleep-ins, lazy days, early nights
- Importance of self care and humour (humour team, joke board)
- Relaxation training, yoga (throughout the summer)
- Special theme meals, silent meals, meals to music
- Build and maintain support networks

Challenge Expectations

- Changes in day's routines (eg. change in activities)
- Unanticipated free time
- New games throughout summer
- "Stop & think" problem solving sessions
- New staff members during the summer

Provide Support

- Staff appreciation (appreciation circles)
- Informal staff meetings
- Motivational speakers and other professional through the summer
- One person be designated "staff resource" person
- Debriefing opportunities

Schedule Staff Events

- Recreational and sport activities for staff only
- Staff talent show
- Out-of-camp trips
- "Secret friends"
- Costumed events

Working as a Cohesive Staff Team

At Northern Star Kids we pride ourselves on working as a family unit. We don't always see eye-to-eye but we respect each others' opinions and ensure everything we do is in the best interest of the youth we work with. When you join the Northern Star Team you will notice (HIGH FIVE®, 1999):

~ Our team effort ~ Discretion with confidential matters ~ Use of appropriate language and behaviour ~ The focus of our work is on the children, not on relationships with other staff ~ Openness, trust ~ We are willing to support each other ~ The supervisors are approachable, accessible people and the staff are comfortable talking to them ~

TIPS FOR BUILDING HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN THE STAFF TEAM (HIGH FIVE®, 1999)
❖ Never discuss the youth in your group in front of others
❖ Use discretion with confidential matters concerning youth in the program
❖ Use appropriate language and behaviour with your peers
❖ Do not ignore children or make them wait while you talk with other leaders
❖ Choose to be with youth during mealtimes, activities, and events, instead of with your peers
❖ Support your peers and offer assistance if needed
❖ Seek advice from experienced peers or your supervisor
❖ Let your supervisor know immediately if a child is hurt or in danger
❖ Be inclusionary with your peers; DON'T FORM CLIQUES!
❖ Work as a team to produce a high-quality program
❖ Have fun with your peers in an appropriate manner when you are off duty

Recruiting New Staff

Recruiting new staff is essential to the Northern Star Kids Organization because we rely on volunteers. We like recruiting through organizations that maintain stability over time such as a school or university program. We have a strong network with Lakewood Junior Secondary, DP Todd Secondary School, Intersect Youth and Family Services, and are making inroads with the UNBC rugby team.

Hiring Procedure

Volunteer Positions: committee member, skill development instructor, youth leader

1. The applicant applies in writing to the executive committee by filling out a *Volunteer Application Form* and enclosing a resume.
2. The applicant completes the criminal record check.
3. The executive committee reviews the information and conducts a formal interview.
4. When an applicant is successful, he or she must undergo an orientation session with the program director and/or a member of the executive committee before commencing work with the Northern Star Kids organization.

Paid Positions: Program Director (STAR & Summer camp), Summer Camp Staff (small honorarium)

1. The applicant applies in writing to the executive committee by filling out a *Staff Application Form* and enclosing a resume .
 2. The applicant completes the criminal record check.
 3. The executive committee reviews the information and conducts a formal interview.
 4. When an applicant is successful, he or she must participate in ALL aspects of staff training as designated by the program director and/or executive committee
- ❖ The program director will receive orientation training from one of the executive committee members

Screening Criteria For New Staff (High Five®, 1999)

Does the applicant have...

- Genuine interest in children.
- An understanding of child development.
- A caring attitude toward children.
- Experience working with children.
- Knowledge and skills to provide quality leadership to children.
- A satisfactory criminal record check.
- Recognized certification in first aid and/or willing to take training.
- Positive reports from reference checks.

POLICIES

SUPERVISION & SAFETY of YOUTH

How do we keep kids safe?

The Important Stuff.....



Importance of Policies

Policies are official written instructions that ensure leaders know their role and understand their tasks clearly. They also ensure consistency of procedures by all staff members and give leaders the support they need to do their job well. The following section is not a comprehensive list of all the policies at Northern Star, which is beyond the scope of this handbook. The policies that are listed deal directly with the safety and supervision of children in Northern Star Programs.

List of Policies (adapted from Russell-Haas & Bowie, 2001)

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| Section 1 | Leader Behaviour |
| | 1.1 Treatment of children |
| | 1.2 Prohibited practices in the treatment of children |
| | 1.3 Managing confidential information |
| | 1.4 Dealing with inappropriate behaviour by youth |
|
 | |
| Section 2 | Emergency Preparedness |
| | 2.1 Crisis management procedures |
| | 2.2 First aid kits, equipment checks, telephone access |
| | 2.3 Safety of equipment and environment |
| | 2.4 Access to telephones |
|
 | |
| Section 3 | Child Abuse Prevention, Detection and Reporting |
| | 3.1 Leaders receive training on detecting and reporting child abuse and on dealing with a child's disclosure of abuse |
| | 3.2 Procedures are in place for dealing with and reporting suspected child abuse |
|
 | |
| Section 4 | Injury and Illness Prevention |
| | 4.1 Safe and secure greetings and departures |
| | 4.2 Supervision of youth |
|
 | |
| Section 5 | Child Supervision |
| | 5.1 Information files for each child |
| | 5.2 Dealing with sick youth |
| | 5.3 Administering medication |
| | 5.4 Participation of youth with illness or health conditions |
| | 5.5 Sanitary procedures |
| | 5.6 Safe preparation & serving of food |
| | 5.7 Transportation of youth by Northern Star Staff |

STAFF refers to anyone involved in the Northern Star Kids organization; this includes paid and volunteer positions.

LEADER refers to any staff member who works directly with youth in programs at camp and STAR.

Leader Behaviour*Policy 1.1 Treatment of youth*

All youth who use Northern Star Kids programs and facilities are treated in a positive manner that supports healthy development.

All staff are obligated to:

- Treat youth with respect, acceptance, and honesty.
- Interact with youth in a patient, interested, understanding and caring manner.
- Promote feelings of competency and self-esteem.
- Make youth feel physically and emotionally safe and secure.
- Encourage responsible, safe and mutually-respectful behaviour through positive methods, such as role-modeling, setting reasonable limits, providing choices and recognizing appropriate behaviour.
- Guide inappropriate conduct by using positive child-guidance and behaviour management practices.
- Accommodate individual differences and make all youth feel equally welcome regardless of gender, race, culture, economic status, religion, personal characteristics, life circumstances or ability.

Deviation from this policy will result in:

- Documentation of the situation.
- An investigation.
- An intervention such as re-training and disciplinary action if necessary.

Expected Outcomes:

- ❖ Youth are observed modeling the positive behaviour of leaders.
- ❖ Youth feel secure, safe and good about themselves while participating in programs.

Leader Behaviour

Policy 1.2 Prohibited practices in the treatment of youth

All youth will be treated respectfully, in ways that protect their well-being, individuality, self-worth and self-esteem

The following behaviours are unacceptable:

- Corporal punishment, physically-aggressive or harmful treatment of youth.
- Sexual abuse and sexual harassment of youth.
- Leaving youth unattended.
- Depriving youth of nurturing care and not meeting their basic, human needs.
- Any form of prejudicial behaviour or derogatory comments directed at youth due to their race, ethnicity, religion, gender, ability, socioeconomic status, personal characteristics or life circumstances.
- Mocking, ridiculing, embarrassing, threatening, intimidating, evoking fear or any other form of verbal, emotional or psychological abuse of youth.
- Use of alcohol, tobacco products or narcotics while caring for youth.
- Swearing at or in front of youth.

Deviation from this policy will result in:

- Immediate removal of staff from contact with youth.
- A full investigation into his/her conduct.
- An intervention such as re-training, disciplinary action or dismissal depending on the circumstance.

Expected Outcomes:

- ❖ Youth are protected from inappropriate behaviour that compromises their well-being.
- ❖ Youth will experience role modeling of healthy conflict resolution strategies.

Leader Behaviour

Policy 1.3 Managing confidential information

Northern Star Kids protects the privacy of the youth and families involved in our programs.

All staff members are obligated to:

- Keep confidential information pertaining to youth and their families secure at all times by securing files, attendance forms, registration binders or any paper records so they are not accessible or left unattended in program and public areas. This includes information about medical conditions, family status, personal information, personal issues or delicate matters regarding a child and his/her family.
- Shred or otherwise properly dispose of paper containing confidential information.
- Refrain from engaging in casual conversations about youth and their families with third parties, such as other youth and parents, teachers, personal acquaintances, staff not directly involved in leadership or supervision of Northern Star programs.
- Take precautions to avoid being overheard when discussing confidential information or concerns about a child or family with co-leaders.
- Keep all confidential records on site unless required by organization officials or those with legal entitlement.
- Only release (verbal or written) information about a youth or their family with consent from youth/family and program director.

Deviation from this policy will result in:

- Documentation of the situation.
- An investigation.
- An intervention such as re-training and disciplinary action (if necessary).

Expected Outcome:

- ❖ Youth and families trust the Northern Star organization and their leaders and feel confident that information about themselves or a family situation is safe and secure.

Leader Behaviour

Policy 1.4 Dealing with inappropriate behaviour by youth

All youth who participate in Northern Star programs and facilities are expected to treat others in a respectful manner. Bullying, racism, sexual harassment, substance use, and disrespectful behaviour will be dealt with by staff in an appropriate manner.

All staff members are obligated to:

- Follow the Northern Star Behaviour Policy (see pg. 33 in handbook).
- Document incidents that occur and inform the supervisor at STAR or CAMP.
- Participate in behaviour interventions as directed by supervisor.

Deviation from this policy will result in:

- Documentation of the situation.
- An investigation.
- An intervention such as re-training and disciplinary action (if necessary).

Expected Outcome:

- ❖ Youth feel protected and cared for by program leaders.

Emergency Preparedness

Policy 2.1 Crisis management procedures

All leaders are aware of how to handle emergency situations.

Leaders are equipped to deal with emergency situations by having the following conditions in place:

- Evacuation procedures are practiced monthly at STAR and twice during the week at camp.
- Evacuation procedures are documented for each program location and filed centrally and on-site for regular review.
- Location of the nearest telephone and emergency telephone numbers.
- Each leader has a complete list of all registered youth, information about special health conditions, Care Card number, and emergency telephone numbers.

In the event of an emergency the following steps must be taken:

- In case of a fire – evacuate the building, close all doors adjoining the fire and prohibit access to the facility to all but fire department personnel.
- In the case of an injured or sick child who requires immediate medical attention:
 1. Have one person take charge of the situation. This will be “designated first aid person”.
 2. Have a responsible person call 911 and report back to the designated first aid person.
 3. Remove all youth from the scene of the emergency and have a leader supervise them.
 4. Notify the parents of the youth involved in an emergency situation as soon as immediate steps have been taken to manage the crisis.
 5. The program coordinator will contact a designated individual on the executive committee to disseminate information to parents, caregivers, and the media.
- All emergency situations (serious illness, accidents, fires, facility hazards and violence), whether life-threatening or not, are reported to the supervisor verbally within one hour of the incident and documented in writing within 12 hours.

Expected Outcomes:

- ❖ All program/facility users and personnel are protected from harm when a crisis occurs.
- ❖ In the event of a personal injury, appropriate steps are taken to administer first aid and seek assistance from emergency services.

Emergency Preparedness*Policy 2.2 First aid kits, equipment checks, telephone access*

First aid kits are adequately stocked and readily available at all facilities and program sites. In the event of an off-site trip or outdoor activity, a first aid kit is taken along. First aid kits must be checked on a weekly basis to ensure they are fully stocked

All leaders must be aware of:

- The central location of first-aid kits and extra supplies.
- The minimum required contents of first-aid kits.
- The responsibility for re-stocking kits.
- The obligation to carry first-aid kits during all off-location activities.

Expected Outcome:

- ❖ All minor injuries requiring first-aid treatment are tended to quickly and appropriately.

Emergency Preparedness

Policy 2.3 Safety of equipment and environments used by youth at Northern Star

All equipment and environments are thoroughly checked by leaders prior to use to ensure conditions are safe.

Program leaders must:

- Know how to detect problems with equipment and how to conduct daily inspections.
- Know how to conduct a risk assessment of an outdoor area that will be used for an activity.
- Have up-to date information on wildlife in the area as well as a current weather forecast when embarking on outdoor trips. ****See section the summer camp handbook on conducting outdoor trips.
- Remove damaged equipment immediately or erect a barrier to prevent youth from using it.
- Supervise youth appropriately to prevent them from using hazardous equipment.
- Make equipment repairs an immediate priority.
- Discard non-repairable equipment and inform committee members so a replacement can be considered.

Expected Outcome:

- ❖ The risk of injury to youth is reduced because the environment is kept safe.

Emergency Preparedness

Policy 2.4 Access to telephones

Leaders have immediate access to a telephone or reliable communication device at every program site so that they are able to call for emergency support services at all times.

Phone Protocol at STAR	Phone Protocol at Camp
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telephone is available at the office and emergency numbers are posted on the wall. • When walking youth home or playing outside within the vicinity of the office, youth leaders will have access to a cell phone. When a group is at a venue outside the office such as a swimming pool, ice rink, and/or Tabor Mountain, all staff will be briefed by site personnel on emergency procedures at that particular site. • Phone or two-way radio. If using a two way radio – one of the people with a radio must be in close proximity to a telephone. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pay phone is available in the dining room; all emergency numbers and directions to camp are posted on the wall beside the phone. • In the event that the pay phone will not work, there is a phone located in the caretaker's residence.

Expected Outcome:

- ❖ Emergency services are telephoned immediately in all cases when they are required.

Child Abuse, Detection and Reporting

Policy 3.1 Leaders will receive training on detecting and reporting child abuse, and on dealing with a child's disclosure of abuse.

Northern Star Kids is committed to protecting youth from abuse and is obligated by law under Section 14 of the Child, Family and Community Service Act to report cases of suspected abuse. Leaders are trained on how to detect and report suspected cases of child abuse, and on how to handle a child's disclosure of abuse. Northern Star will support leaders in understanding and fulfilling their obligations for reporting disclosures or suspected abuse.

Staff training will include:

- The moral and legal obligation of all leaders to report disclosures of abuse or suspicions of abuse and the consequences on not reporting.
- The various types of abuse and how to respond to a disclosure.
- How to listen to a child's disclosure with compassion.
- Knowledge of the procedures for reporting and documenting child abuse and for filing all related documents.

Expected Outcomes:

- ❖ Leaders are sensitive to and supportive of youth in abusive situations and handle cases appropriately and discretely. Youth trust the leaders and feel supported by them.
- ❖ All suspicions and disclosures are reported to the Ministry of Children and Family Development promptly and in accordance with legal requirements. The Ministry of Children and Family Development is responsible for determining any interventions required for ensuring that the safety and well-being of the child are protected.

Child Abuse, Detection and Reporting

Policy 3.2 Procedures are in place for dealing with and reporting suspected child abuse.

As required by law under Section 14 of the Child, Family and Community Service Act staff will follow procedures outlined in the staff handbook to report suspicions or disclosures of child abuse to the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

Staff will follow the protocol for reporting a disclosure of child abuse.

1. **During the disclosure** – let the child tell their story without interruption. Do not ask him/her questions about the facts. ***Leave this to the professionals.*** Reassure the child that you are here to support them. Tell the child that you have to do two things in order to help keep him/her safe: Report the abuse to your supervisor and make a report to the Ministry of Children and Family Development. Ask the youth what they need from you during this process – appreciate the fears that reporting might cause in the youth and ensure they are not left alone.
2. **Notify the site supervisor immediately.** This will be the STAR Program Director, Camp Program Director, or Camp Director. If the person suspected of abuse is a Northern Star staff member he/she will be immediately removed from all duties that put him/her in direct contact with youth while his/her conduct is being investigated.
3. **Document the suspected abuse with the support of the supervisor.** Your report should include:
 - Date and time of report.
 - Child's name, address, telephone number, date of birth, gender, school, parent contact information and names of siblings.
 - A factual and detailed description of the child's story.
 - Whether parents are aware that a report is being made.
 - Whether the suspected abuser is aware that a report is being made.
 - The name, address and phone number of Northern Star, and position of staff making the report.
 - Signatures of supervisor and staff member.
4. **Phone in the report to the Ministry of Children and Family Development (310-1234).** Tell them that you are phoning to report suspected abuse.
5. **File the report with the supervisor.** The report must be kept in a secure filing system either at the Northern Star Office or at CAMP.

Expected Outcomes:

- ❖ The Ministry of Children and Family Development will determine if they will investigate and if intervention is required.
- ❖ Northern Star Kids' Organization provides the staff member with support, such as the option of talking to a counsellor if he/she is having personal difficulty dealing with the situation.

Child Supervision

Policy 4.1 Safe and secure greetings and departure

Leaders follow all procedures to ensure safe and secure greetings and departures for all Northern Star Programs. This includes releasing youth to adults other than parents, planning safe-arrival and daily attendance.

The following procedures must be followed by all program leaders:

ARRIVAL

- Set up program areas before youth arrive, so that the attention will be focused on them as they arrive.
- Have a leader at the entrance who is responsible for greeting and supervising youth as they arrive.
- Greet the youth by name with a smile!
- Take attendance within the first 10 minutes of the program.
- If a child does not arrive 10 minutes into a program take the following steps:
 1. Ask other youth in the program if they saw the child on their way to the program.
 2. Conduct a quick scan of the immediate area to see if the child is playing or detained for some reason.
 3. Call the child's home and/or the parent's place of work to determine the child's whereabouts.
 4. Call the emergency contact number in the event that the parents cannot be reached at work or home.
 5. Call the program supervisor within 20 minutes of the program's Start time to advise him/her of the situation and to seek further direction or assistance.
 6. In the event that a child cannot be located and has not arrived at the program by the time parents had expected, the parent should be advised to alert police.

DEPARTURE

- Organize and supervise the release of youth to adults at the end of the program.
- If the youth are allowed to leave the program on their own, the parents must sign a waiver; indicating this at the time of registration.
- Under no circumstances will youth be released to unauthorized individuals until verbal or written consent is obtained directly from the parent. If an unauthorized adult arrives to pick up a child, the program director should phone the parent to get consent to release the child. Ensure that the child remains with you while you make the phone call.

Expected Outcomes:

- ❖ Youth are safe and feel secure while at the program.
- ❖ Parents are aware of the safety procedures in place at Northern Star and feel comfortable and confident that the youth are safe and secure.

Child Supervision

Policy 4.2 Supervision of Youth

Program leaders are to supervise youth appropriately at all times.

Leaders must ensure that:

- Youth get permission from a leader if they have to leave the group.
- Youth must have a leader or buddy accompany them when they leave the group.
- Youth are supervised by a staff member at all times. If one leader needs to leave the program area, he/she must arrange for another leader to supervise the group.
- Leader-child ratios facilitate effective supervision and are appropriate for the developmental level of youth.
- Assess risks before introducing an activity and adjust the program plan and supervision accordingly.
- Restrict unauthorized individuals from program rooms or transition areas.

Expected Outcomes:

- ❖ Youth are safe and feel secure at all times during a program.
- ❖ Parents feel comfortable and confident that their youth are well supervised.

Injury and Illness Prevention*Policy 5.1 Information Files for Each Child*

Basic personal information for each child is on file in a safe and secure location and accessible to all staff. Leaders carry this information when they are participating in activities away from the Northern Star facility.

The following information is recorded for each child registered in a Northern Star Program:

1. Name, address and phone number.
2. Date of birth.
3. Name(s), address(es) and phone number(s) of parent(s) and emergency alternates.
4. BC Medical Number.
5. Health Conditions record (allergies, medical conditions, and directions for administering medication).
6. Any medication he/she is currently taking.
7. Any medical procedures he/she is currently undergoing.
8. Name of doctor, pediatrician, and specialists.

Northern Star staff will be trained during their orientation on how to:

- Record, maintain and store accurate child information.
- Maintain confidentiality.
- Keep personal information when away from the Northern Star Office and at Camp.
- Record and file pertinent medical information that must be passed along to emergency personnel in the event that a child requires medical attention.

Expected Outcomes:

- ❖ The well-being of the youth is protected at all times during the program.
- ❖ In the event of an emergency, or if there is a concern for a child, leaders are able to immediately contact the child's family and communicate crucial medical information to emergency-services personnel.

Injury and Illness Prevention*Policy 5.2 Dealing with sick children*

If a child shows signs of illness while participating in a Northern Star Program, leaders follow procedures to help the child receive proper care and protect other youth from getting ill through the spread of contagious germs.

If a child is ill, a leader will:

- Take the child to a designated “sick room” or “quiet spot” where the child can rest under supervision until feeling better, or picked up by a parent, or transported by ambulance to the hospital.
- Call the parents or an emergency contact to advise of the child’s condition and request that the ill child be picked up.
- Document the child’s illness, using the illness report form. Forward a completed copy of the report to the supervisor for review and signature.
- **IN THE EVENT OF SERIOUS ILLNESS**, call 911 immediately and notify a supervisor.

Expected Outcomes:

- ❖ The chance of youth being infected by contagious illness is reduced.
- ❖ Sick youth receive appropriate treatment and care, resulting in a speedy recovery.

Injury and Illness Prevention

Policy 5.3 Administering medication

Under no circumstances are leaders to administer prescription or non-prescription medication to a child unless an *Authorization for the Administration of Medication Form* has been completed in advance by the parents or guardians. In the case of administering medication at CAMP, the form must be filled out and medication will be kept secure and administered by the First Aid Attendant for all staff and campers.

In order to administer medication to a child the first aid attendant must:

- Have a copy of a completed *Authorization for the Administration of Medication Form*.
- Ensure the medication is in its original container and has the prescription label. If non-prescription medication, ensure the container has its original label with dosage amounts and instructions. When a unit of measurement is prescribed for dosages, the parents must supply a dosage measurement with the medication.
- Ensure the medication is stored in a locked box out of the reach of youth and kept at a temperature recommended on the label.
- For self-administered items, such as epi pens or ventolin inhalers, the extra set should be locked away and only used if the child loses the original.
- Any medication that is not used, or whose prescription term has expired, is to be returned directly into the hands of the parents in the original container.

When administering medication, the first aid attendant will:

- Observe proper hygiene by washing their hands and the measurement implement.
- Administer medication at the exact time and in the dosage prescribed.
- Observe the child if the medication is to be self-administered.
- Clean the measurement implement and return it with the medication to the locked storage box.
- Complete and sign the chart on the *Authorization for the Administration of Medication Form*.
- Observe the child for side effects. If side effects occur, the parents should be notified immediately and information regarding the side effects be recorded on the chart.

Expected Outcomes:

- ❖ The administration of medication by program personnel has positive effects on the child's health and well-being.

Injury and Illness Prevention

Policy 5.4 Participation of children with illness or health conditions

A child may be restricted from participating in a Northern Star Program if he/she has contracted a contagious illness or a condition that could affect the health and safety of others, or if his/her continued participation in an activity or program could have negative implications for his/her own health and safety.

In the event that a child develops signs and symptoms of infectious or contagious diseases Northern Star staff must:

- Follow the procedures for dealing with a sick child (see policy 5.2).
- Notify a supervisor immediately in cases where a child is infected with an illness or a condition that warrants denying access to a program.
- Notify all parents as soon as possible if a child with a contagious illness, such as chicken pox or head lice, have been present in the program.

Expected Outcomes:

- ❖ Sick children do not participate in programs until they feel well and are not contagious.
- ❖ The risk of other children, facility users, and staff becoming infected is reduced.

Injury and Illness Prevention

Policy 5.5 Sanitary Procedures

Sanitary practices such as washing hands, cleaning necessary equipment, and cleaning all areas of the program space that are used, are followed for all Northern Star Programs.

At CAMP

Counsellors are responsible for ensuring that campers:

- Wash hands with antibacterial hand soap
 1. Before every meal or food prep.
 2. After using the washroom.
 3. After sneezing or coughing.
 - Do not share drinks, cups, or water bottles.
 - Keep their cabin clean and share in the duties of keeping the washroom clean during camp.
- Designated counsellors are expected to clean the washroom facilities (sinks/toilets/showers/removal of garbage) daily.

At STAR

All leaders are responsible for ensuring that program participants:

- Wash hands with antibacterial hand soap
 1. Before every meal or food prep.
 2. After using the washroom.
 3. After sneezing or coughing.
 - Do not share drinks, cups, or water bottles.
 - Clean up after themselves.
- Program director/leaders are expected to clean the washroom facilities (sinks/toilets/ /removal of garbage) following each program night.
- Program director is expected to vacuum the office space on an “as needed” basis.
- Program director is responsible for keeping an inventory of supplies and replenishing as needed. This involves the purchasing of: antibacterial hand-soap, toilet paper, paper towel, garbage bags, and cleaning materials.

Expected Outcomes:

- ❖ The spread of germs and illness is reduced.
- ❖ Youth develop sanitary health habits.

Injury and Illness Prevention

Policy 5.6 Safe preparation and serving of food

All staff members follow safe procedures at all times when food is being prepared, served and stored. Precautions are taken to prevent food-related illnesses resulting from allergies, bacteria or other forms of contamination.

AT CAMP:

Camp cooks must have *FOODSAFE* certification or an equivalent. Anyone cooking at camp outside of the main meals or assisting the cooks must be supervised by someone with food safe certification at all times in the preparation, serving and storing of food.

AT ALL NORTHERN STAR PROGRAMS staff must adhere to the following procedures:

Allergies Alert:

- Be aware of medical information on each child at the time of registration.
- Have access to a list of youth with allergies. The list can be posted in the office, kitchen, or in a binder where food is being prepared.
- Advise youth that sharing food is prohibited because of food allergies.
- Read food labels to identify ingredients that may trigger an allergic reaction.
- Ban any food product and all foods containing the allergen as an ingredient if there is a youth with a life-threatening allergy such as peanuts.

Store Food Safely:

- Store food safely at a cool temperature to prevent the growth of bacteria that can cause food poisoning.

Cleanliness:

- Wash their hands prior to preparing food and when switching between preparing one type of food to preparing another, to ensure that foods causing allergic reactions are kept separate.
- Clean preparation areas, counters, and all utensils and serving dishes with hot, soapy water prior to use, with anti-bacterial soap.

Expected Outcomes:

- ❖ The risk of food-related illness or allergic reaction is greatly reduced.
- ❖ Parents feel comfortable and confident that food will be handled safely by program personnel and that efforts are being made to protect their youth's well-being.

Injury and Illness Prevention

Policy 5.7 Transportation of youth by Northern Star Staff

In the event of an emergency, staff can transport youth in the vehicles if they have the appropriate insurance and have been approved by the committee.

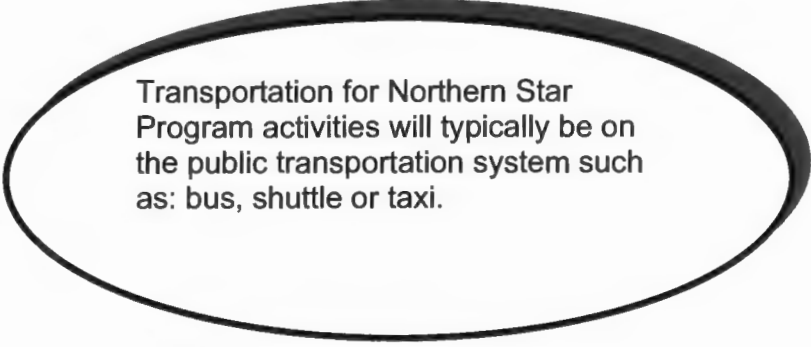
An example of an emergency requiring transportation would be sprained or broken limbs, a cut that needs attention, a possible concussion. The transport must be approved by the certified first aid person on site.

Any staff transporting youth in their vehicle must have:

- Business insurance on their vehicle which enables them to use it for work purposes.
- The maximum amount of liability insurance on the vehicle.
- Approval from the parents of the youth that you are transporting. A form should be filled out at the time of registration for the duration of the specific session.
- Proof of regular maintenance of their vehicle.

Expected Outcomes:

- ❖ Youth will be transported safely by Northern Star Staff.



Transportation for Northern Star Program activities will typically be on the public transportation system such as: bus, shuttle or taxi.

APPENDIX

Forms and Checklists

Yawn...paperwork & more paperwork.....



Northern Star Staff Application Form

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Name: _____	
Address: _____	
Home Phone: _____	Cell Phone: _____
E-mail address: _____	
Place of Employment: _____	
School: _____	Grade: _____

POSITION YOU ARE INTERESTED IN (check one)

<input type="radio"/> Executive Committee	<input type="radio"/> Program Director	<input type="radio"/> Youth Leader
<input type="radio"/> Senior Counsellor	<input type="radio"/> Junior Counsellor	<input type="radio"/> Canoe Awardhead
<input type="radio"/> Naturelore Awardhead	<input type="radio"/> Campcraft Awardhead	<input type="radio"/> Lifeguard
<input type="radio"/> First Aid	<input type="radio"/> Camp Cook	<input type="radio"/> Skill Development Instructor

FOR PEOPLE INTERESTED IN A POSITION WITH THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

<p>You are expected to attend monthly meetings and sit on one working committee. Where do you see your expertise and interests best utilized?</p>			
_____ Personnel & Staffing	_____ Policy & Procedure		
_____ Finances & Fundraising	_____ Training & Development		
<p>How long are you prepared to be committed to the executive committee?</p>			
6 months	1 year	2 years	3 years

How did you hear about Northern Star Kids and what is your understanding of its role in the community?

What are you hoping to contribute to the organization?

Northern Star Kids is a program under the auspices of Active Support Against Poverty – what are some of your views about financial poverty and the people/children who live under such financial limitations?

Please describe any experiences you have had that are relevant to the position that you are applying for and beneficial to working with our youth. (employment, education, volunteer work, personal skills, hobbies, teams or clubs)

What do you hope to gain from working with Northern Star Kids organization?

PLEASE ATTACH A COPY OF YOUR RESUME TO THE APPLICATION FORM

Staff Training Guidelines

Leaders should know: (Russell-Haas & Bowie, 2001)

CORE TRAINING

- The developmental stages, characteristics and needs of children (cognitive, physical, social and emotional).
- Activities appropriate for each stage of development.
- How to access developmental ability to maximize participation and to promote mastery.
- The principle that every child is different and requires consideration of his/her needs.
- How to promote friendships, sharing and teamwork among children.
- How to handle conflicts between children in a positive manner.
- The philosophy and goals for children's programs.
- How to plan, implement and evaluate high-quality a program in a way that includes children in the decision making process and allows for "play".
- How to make the best use of an environment, equipment and materials so that children are stimulated, interested, safe and enjoying their experience.
- How to communicate appropriately and effectively with children, other leaders and parents.
- All relevant policies and procedures.

CHILD BEHAVIOUR

- Why some children may display disrespectful behaviour.
- How to effective and positive interventions for disrespectful behaviour when it does occur.
- How to provide positive reinforcement and specific feedback to children to encourage appropriate behaviour.
- How to anticipate negative behaviour
- How to guide children to resolve their own conflicts and interpersonal problems.
- How to facilitate individual and group discussions with children about their thoughts and feelings as a means of prevention.
- How to lead groups through the process of developing a "code of conduct" based on positive values such as mutual respect, caring and responsibility.
- How to promote mutual respect, sharing and cooperation through team activities.

CHILD SAFETY & HEALTH

- Child release procedures.
- Attendance-taking and safe arrival procedures.
- Reporting and handling disclosures of child abuse.
- Procedures for administering medication and record keeping.
- How to recognize the signs and symptoms of infectious diseases or contagious illness.
- Safe handling procedures for preparing, serving and storing food.
- Sanitation procedures.
- How to record, maintain and store accurate child information.

EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

- How to detect problems with equipment and conduct inspections as needed.
- Evacuation procedures.
- How to manage emergency situations.
- Why reports are important.
- Required timing for written and verbal reports.
- Types of incidents that require reporting.

Leader's Self-Evaluation Form

Use this form from the HIGH FIVE® Handbook for Leaders (HIGH FIVE®, 1999) to reflect how you use a child-first focus in your work ☺

When people watch me working with children, they would say that I:	Yes	No
Show warmth and interest.		
Smile and make direct eye contact.		
Speak kindly with a calm and friendly tone.		
Give children priority at all times.		
Consistently use the children's names.		
Make sure that the children in my group know each other's names.		
Encourage the children to include everyone in the group.		
Help children cooperate with one another.		
Help children resolve their conflicts without fighting.		
Treat everyone with respect.		
Show that I accept and appreciate all children.		
Show that I am aware of their individual needs.		
Always make sure that I am available to the children.		
When people watch me work with other leaders, they would say that I:	Yes	No
Always use appropriate language and tone of voice.		
Don't chat and make children wait.		
Don't talk about other children, except in a positive way.		
Try my best to cooperate and support my peers.		
When people watch me interact with parents or other family members, they would say that I:	Yes	No
Know them all by name and show that they are always welcome.		
Try to include them in their experience.		
Look for ways to communicate with them.		
When people watch the programs and environments that I design for children, they would say that they:	Yes	No
Are appropriate to the age and interests of the children.		
Allow for each child's individual pace.		
Allow for plenty of choice and participation.		
Provide opportunities for each child to experience success.		
Provide a balance of structure and unstructured activities.		
Ensure that the children are challenged and having fun.		
Avoid "dead time" between activities where children have to wait.		
Make good use of appropriate equipment and materials.		
Stress participation and fun, not winning.		
Ensure that there is enough space for the program.		
Provide protection from physical harm.		
Provide protection from emotional harm.		
When people watch me supervise children, they would say that I:	Yes	No
Know where they are at all times.		
Supervise more closely in a high risk activity.		
Am concerned and aware of issues related to children's safety and security.		

A List of Forms & Checklists Used in Northern Star Kids Organization

1. Participant registration form which includes:
 - a. Name, Address and Home telephone number.
 - b. Date of Birth.
 - c. Parent's Names and alternate phone numbers.
 - d. Emergency contacts if the parents are in accessible.
 - e. Name and number of school.
 - f. BC Medical Number.
 - g. Medical Information such as: allergies, current medication and/or conditions.
 - h. Family Doctor's Name and number.
 - i. Names of those authorized (with parent signature) to pick up child.
2. Staff Information Form (include all information listed in participant form)
3. Emergency Contact Information – Off Site Form
4. Consent for release of confidential information
5. Emergency/Incident Report (for emergencies life threatening or not, behaviour incidents & illnesses)
6. Reporting Suspected Child Abuse
7. First-Aid contents checklist
8. Authorization for the administration of medication
9. Home Visit Form
10. Attendance Tracking Form
11. Skill Development Tracking Form
12. Staff Application Form
13. Staff Contract
14. Staff Orientation Checklist
15. Leader's Self-Evaluation Form
16. Staff Evaluation Form (evaluated by program director)
17. Program Evaluation Form (evaluated by parents)

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