FOCUS ON NATURE: Exploring the Role of the Volunteer

Volunteers with Focus on Nature were invited to share their experiences with the program through focus groups and an online survey. 12 people answered our questions – this is what they told us.

Enablers to Volunteering

Learning: Volunteers with a background in education want to continue to interact with children

Growth: Children’s growth is a central gratifying component and positive experience

Recruitment: Volunteers found recruitment strategies to be limited, unclear and intimidating

Training: Training is needed to learn methods that can help reduce difficulties in the classroom

Time and Balance: Volunteers want to strike a balance between volunteer and personal commitments

Vision and Mission: Mismatch between program values and the vision and mission statements

Barriers to Volunteering

Enablers to Volunteering

CONSIDERATIONS

Key takeaway messages for Focus on Nature to consider in volunteer recruitment and management

① Recruitment
Emphasize that volunteers do not require photography or arts-based skills; advertisements should ensure roles and responsibilities are clear

② Balancing Time
Set boundaries to ensure volunteers are not overburdened; implement regular check-ins to ensure volunteers do not feel overbooked

③ Volunteer Training
Provide training to identify methods that alleviate behavioural difficulties; increase communication and dialogue with teachers

④ Vision and Mission Statements
Update statements to include the concepts of connection with nature, science and environmentalism

For more information see the full report: http://hdl.handle.net/10214/16564 or visit: http://www.focusonnature.ca/