Assessment of an Outdoor Recreation and Education Program

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Assessment of an Outdoor Recreation and Education Program

National Association for Interpretation
Region 8 Workshop
February 18, 2006

Daphne Sewing
Dr. Jeanne Klockow
UNLV Public Lands Institute
Session Outline

1. Overview of Discover Mojave Outdoor World Program.

2. Describe assessment tools and methodology.

3. Present results.

4. Encouragement/suggestions to include assessments in your programs.

5. Questions/discussion.
Discover Mojave Outdoor World program delivered by UNLV’s Public Lands Institute.


Funding is provided through the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act.
Discover Mojave Outdoor World

Program Goals:

- Introduce economically disadvantaged urban youth, ages 8-12, to outdoor recreation and education.

- Foster a belief that outdoor recreation plays an important and positive role in the health and fitness of America’s youth.
Participating Groups: 2005-06

- RecMobile, Clark County Parks and Community Services.
- 5th grade after-school club, Paradise Professional Development School.
Watch This!

Video link
The Big Question

Does the program promote knowledge, attitudes, and performance among at-risk urban children?
1. Knowledge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRE-ACTIVITY</th>
<th>POST-ACTIVITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What do you know about using binoculars?</td>
<td>What did you learn about using binoculars?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do you know about watching birds?</td>
<td>What did you learn about watching birds?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Skill Performance

- Rubric completed by instructors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demonstrates Skill</th>
<th>Does Not Demonstrate Skill</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participant uses binoculars to find and focus on a bird</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant uses binoculars to describe something specific about a bird</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Attitude

- 5 specific attitude-related items:
  - Bird watching is fun. (Pre-activity)
  - Bird watching was fun. (Post-activity)
  - I would tell my friends to do this bird watching program. (Pre- and post-activity)

- 4 general attitude-related items:
  - I know about how people can live on the land without hurting it. (Pre-activity)
  - I learned about how people can live on the land without hurting it. (Post-activity)
Results

1. Knowledge – Dramatic Increase!

121 participants, 13 events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-activity</th>
<th>Post-activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partial</td>
<td>Partial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More Complete</td>
<td>More Complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Canoeing – largest increase.
2. Skill Performance – Successful!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Some</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canoeing</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bird watching</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.A. Specific Attitudes

- Increased significantly.
- Very favorable for all 3 events.
- Some events rated as more favorable than others.
  
  Example: Canoeing rated more favorable than birding.
- Attitudes more favorable after the event.

3.B. General Attitudes

- Did not change significantly.
Conclusions

1. Tools comprehensive and capable of assessing program.

2. Program has significant and positive effect.
Tweaks!

For Paradise Elementary after-school club:
• Teacher Checklist.
• Parent Checklist.
• Standardized protocol for post-program focus group interviews.
• Measurement of general attitudes pre- and post-program.
• Methodical, directed use of journals.
Suggestions for You

- Make a plan for assessing your program.
- Get help!
- Main goals/purposes define what will be measured.
- Use multiple data collection methods.
THANK YOU!