



Build Your Activity Steps



PROMOTING ACTIVITIES

Young people are not interested in being “prevented” from doing something. All of our anti-smoking and anti-drug promotions are just that: they promote something that most young people are not interested in. As a group, young people believe and live the credo of the three I’s. Teenagers are *Immortal, Immune* and *Infertile*.

A teen audience needs to be approached differently than an adult demographic. It has been shown that it is more effective to offer teenagers the benefits of improvements in personal appearance or monetary savings for giving up smoking, rather than a reduction in the long-term risk of cancer. Most teenagers don’t believe that they will be smoking ten years from now. It is far more effective to tell them that cigarettes make them “smell” than threaten them with possible death from cancer.

So how do you prevent students at your school from boredom? Don’t tell them lack of physical activity will make them obese; they won’t join your sports teams. Don’t tell them that it’s good for their resumé to have a list of activities that they have participated in. Students will choose to participate because of an energy and an inclusiveness that they are attracted to. When your Activities have energy your students will add the fourth I to their credo list: they will become *Involved*.

Every school needs a full complement of activities and events outside of the classroom. However, implementing a year-long plan for Activities seems like a monumental task because you have to get people believing in the importance of Activities. Think of running a dry popsicle stick across your teeth. Did you create a tingling sensation in your back by just thinking about the action? You can think and act your way to more than a tingling sensation if you follow these five steps for your Activity Plan.

State it: At every possible opportunity, state what you believe about student activities and what you believe it can do for students in your school. Use the school newsletter to highlight your points to parents and the community. Talk about the power of student activities to staff and how a positive program will affect the atmosphere of your school.

Model it: Your own practice and implementation of letting students lead major events at your school will build the activity plan from real school events. Show that there is a plan for activities that engage all students at your school on an ongoing basis.

Organize for it: Put all of the year’s events in the school planner and calendar. Make sure that your website highlights upcoming events. Let staff know at staff meetings what activities will disrupt the school day, and let students present this information to staff.

Protect it: There will be times when negative feedback from peers will jeopardize student-run events and activities. Show that your students learn from their mistakes and will make changes according to positive staff input. Invite the media to cover your school’s activity by faxing a calendar of events to local community papers.

Reward it: Provide public recognition for student leaders and staff who advance the activity plan in a positive way. Support coaches and advisors who keep the plan alive with small thank-you notes or school spirit items.

A healthy Activity program generates more than a tingling feeling of school spirit. A plan for a year-long activity calendar will create an energized atmosphere that all will feel and benefit from. ■

Leadership Legacy

“A man cannot ride on your back unless it’s bent.”

Martin Luther King

7 SECRETS FROM NORM

Norm Hull is an experienced trainer and speaker who presents at many schools and leadership conferences across North America. Norm teaches that everyone can be a part of the solution! “Deeds... not just words” is a credo he lives by as he seeks to offer solutions. He emphasizes that blaming is non-productive and words are simply not enough.

The following are his “7 Secrets of an ExtraOrdinary Activity Program”:

- Know and recognize the difference between activity-based and leadership-based programs.
- Embark on a self-development path and become your own resource.
- Be in control of your program and let others know that you are!
- Most people do what does not work, but believe doing it harder will make it work.
- Blind and silent allegiance keeps you in the same place, getting the same thing.
- Know what gets your juices going, and start acting on your passion.
- Embrace an idea; try it, adapt it, and try it again before you decide on the true results.

You can find out more about Norm Hull, and his presentations and programs at www.normhull.com



The *Leadership Legacy Project* is similar to a summative project in that it asks leadership students to demonstrate and utilize the skills they have gained over the entire semester or year, but it also asks that they leave a tangible Leadership Legacy behind them as they finish their course work.

Assignment

Legacy is defined as: a gift or anything handed down from the past. Your Leadership Legacy will come in the form of a project that will have a direct impact on future students from this school. You have been provided with a list of suggested projects, but you are not limited to this list; you are welcome to design your own Leadership Legacy Project. You must discuss it with your teacher prior to beginning your work. You may work in a group of up to four people.

Format

The format of the project can take on many forms including, but not limited to: video, brochure / pamphlet / booklet, power point, webpage(s) or seminar material.

Potential Topics

- Co-curricular Guide – a list of all co-curricular activities within the school
- Why get involved? – the importance of being involved at school

- The school community – the community agencies and neighbourhood around the school
- Giving back to our community – ways to volunteer in and around the school
- Things every grade 9 should know
- Things every new student should know (designed for transfer students or those who arrive mid-semester)
- Celebrating our diversity
- Leadership and Peer Support promotion package

Evaluation

Content /50

Written progress reports /40

The group is required to submit four progress reports over the course of the semester. The report should include any problems that have been encountered, concerns, successes and the intended plan of action for the rest of the project.

Polish /10

All projects should be submitted in hard copy as well as digitally. This piece of work is a culminating activity and as such it should be a polished, edited piece of work. ■

*Lori Armstrong
Beal Secondary School, London*

10 Pages to Visit on the CASAA Website

CASAA put the first webpages for student leadership on the Internet over 12 years ago. The site is still the best student leadership site on the web for free resources and activity ideas. It has over 550 unique visitors a day perusing the many pages of information and lesson plans. This is just a small sampling of 10 things you should know about just the Resources section of the CASAA website:

1. Peer Helping resources and lesson plans are available to assist in your mentoring or peer helping programs.
2. Preview pages are available for all three CASAA publications. You can see, print and test the lesson plans and ideas contained before you purchase the resource.
3. Lesson plans and questions for 17 leadership movies are available for download in pdf format.
4. All of the CASAA resources available for purchase are listed on the site and can be ordered from the site. You will find materials not listed in the print catalogue.
5. A complete thematic index of all the CASAA resources is available for download as the CASAA Resource Index. You can find which resource contains the most goal setting information or where to find time management activities.
6. Every back issue of the *Above and Beyond* newsletter is available in pdf download.
7. A wiki archive of leadership videos will give you a sampling of excellent student produced videos for assemblies and activities along with many classic leadership moments from the masters.
8. Powerpoint lesson plans ready for your class are available for download.
9. A listing of Canadian and US based assembly speakers gives website and contact information.
10. The *Idea Share Shop* has the highest traffic of all the pages as there are over 200 great ideas with pictures of the events and activities.

You must visit www.casaaleadership.ca It will enrich your leadership knowledge and enhance your leadership and activity program. ■



“The mark of the immature man is that he wants to die nobly for a cause, while the mark of a mature man is that he wants to live humbly for one.”

Wilhelm Stekel

SPIRIT RALLY IDEAS

Matharama

Ten participants hold a piece of paper with the bold number printed on both sides. Each team holds every number from zero through nine. In the center of the teams is a bell or horn. The audience is asked to not shout out the answer. The game is played like this: A math question is given. Example: “twenty divided by two minus six plus one.” The person(s) from each team holding the correct number(s) run out and rings the bell or honks the horn. If the answer is correct, the team gets a point. If it is incorrect, the team loses 2 points. Use creative questions such as: “today’s date plus three.”

Thick, Foamy and Funny

One participant from each team sits down in a chair and another member of the same team is given a can of shaving cream. The member with the shaving cream attempts to build the highest possible pile of shaving cream on the top of the seated person’s head. Use a thirty second time limit.

The above ideas are from *Spirit Works: Turn it On!* available through CASAA.



The Kraft Domino Challenge for Hockey



There was enough KD to keep a university kid fed until the end of a PhD program!

Hockey mania gripped Elmira District Secondary School as the Woolwich region attempted to be declared the town of *Hockeyville* by Hockey Night in Canada. Students decided to run a pep rally with the full school decked out in hockey jerseys and a unique spirit event in the gym.

In less than 5 days, students and staff from the school collected over 1,250 boxes of Kraft Dinner with donations coming from the local Foodland and mom's cupboard. The object was to spell *HOCKEYVILLE* in Kraft Dinner boxes that would be set up on edge like dominoes. The home room that brought in the most boxes would have the opportunity to drive the Zamboni after the boxes were toppled over on the gym floor. A lucky grandson of a teacher was selected to knock over the first box.

Cassie Campbell, of Olympic Hockey fame, along with the CBC TV crew showed up to film the event, and all of the fallen Kraft Dinner was then donated to the local Woolwich Food Bank.



Patience and a steady hand helps to set the boxes upright for the cascading finale.



It's finished and there are anxious moments as the vibrations of 1150 students file in

Fast Dinner Challenge Keyville



Everyone wants to be the Zamboni driver, and the winning home room cleaned up.



This future NHLer got the nod to knock over the first box with his powerful slap shot.



to the double gym to witness the tumbling towers of KD.

Event Details

The boxes will stand on edge quite well, but they also fall over with no problem. To avoid major catastrophes during setup, have sections of around 50 boxes defined, where two boxes are removed from the path of destruction and laid on their sides to avoid a complete meltdown of the project due to an errant foot or shaky hand.

Fancy splits and multiple direction changes can be achieved, but these should be tested prior individually in isolation from the planned flow prior to the actual event. The fancier you make it, the more opportunities for misfires.

Depending on the nature of your wooden gym floor, having 1000 students enter in proximity to your loaded KD can cause some anxious moments. Plan to have them enter in a path that is defined and away from the action.

*Pictures courtesy of
the Woolwich Observer*

Making Group Decisions

“Never let the difficulty of a task stand as an adequate reason for not acting; force yourself to identify precisely what is to be gained in the long run by delay. In most cases you’ll find you can’t.”

Edwin C. Bliss

PRIORITIZING YOUR PRIORITIES

Busy people get things done. Why? They have learned that things that must be done require more effort than those things that are “nice to do.” Busy people get the work done first and then they focus on those things that are lower on the priority list.

The accomplished person will classify jobs according to a simple priority pyramid.

The pyramid begins at the bottom level with the *MUST DO* jobs: these must be done or opportunities will be lost. They take the most work and are often avoided because of this fact.

The second level is the *SHOULD DO* jobs: they deserve attention after the 1st priority jobs are done. They take less time and resources than *MUST DO* jobs.

The final level is the *NICE TO DO* jobs: these are enjoyable and when you complete them you can rest and look down the pyramid at all that you have accomplished.

Attempting to make a decision as the leader of a group is a daunting task for student leaders. They are often conflicted by the notion that they “don’t want to hurt anyone’s feelings” and will avoid making a decision just to keep everyone “happy.” Student leaders must learn that not making a decision is still making a decision. Not deciding is often a choice that causes the group to lose focus or interest because of the lack of direction. Once student leaders learn that there are a variety of decision-making strategies available, it becomes easier for them to make a decision. The following are three strategies that don’t follow the default strategy of Majority Voting.

Chance Strategy

This is a valid strategy that can be used in low-level decisions involving a small number of group members. It may seem silly, but the group leader doesn’t have to take the responsibility for making the decision. It should be used when deciding between two possibilities that are equally appealing to the group. Paper, rock scissors is one example or throwing dice or cutting cards are other possible strategies. This must not be used for decisions that require careful consideration and input from different committees.



Fist to Five

This strategy gives an immediate gauge of the feelings of the group. It identifies if there is major opposition to an idea, and it indicates that time is needed for further discussion by members of the group.

The proposal is stated to the group, and on the count of 3, participants raise their hand to show their decision as follows:

- Fist: I’ll fight the idea
- 1 finger: I don’t like the idea
- 2 fingers: I’m neutral
- 3 fingers: The idea is good
- 4 fingers: I really like the idea
- 5 fingers: I will help the idea happen

The group leader can tell immediately what support the idea has and further discussion follows rather than precedes the idea to influence members.

Priority Ranking

When you have many items that require attention, a visual map of priorities can be helpful in selecting the ones to focus on. This strategy takes time and needs input from all stakeholders, but it promotes a high level of ownership in the decision because each group member has input. Each participant lists the items under discussion. #1 and #2 are compared and the one of greater importance gets a tick beside it. Item #3 is now considered as compared to #1 and then #2 with individual comparisons receiving a tick mark. This is continued until all items have been compared with one another. The items are then rank ordered according to the total number of ticks beside them.

Once students are aware of the choice of strategies available, they are better able to make decisions and choose which one to use. ■

Nine Steps to Taking Action

- **Team Up** – your project will be better if you work with friends and other students.
- **Get Started:**
 - Talk to students and teachers about their ideas on how to make school more interesting and engaging.
 - Conduct a survey to find out how students see a particular problem. Find out how others have worked to create change around an issue like yours.
 - Check out what other students have done or search for other ideas on your own.
 - Make a list of potential projects and choose one great idea.
 - Learn more about the issue you want to tackle. Brainstorm with your group to come up with original, creative ideas.
- **Create a Project Plan** – After choosing a project, create a plan of action including:
 - Timelines
 - Budget
 - Who will do what
- **Know your Goals** and how you will carry out the plan:
 - Be clear on what the specific action or idea that your group agreed to take on. Think about how you could make this idea workable.
 - Consider your school culture and environment and make projects fit the current needs of your school.
- **Take Action** – Go ahead and start your project. Get other students involved and use assemblies, meetings and P.A. announcements to promote and recognize your project.
- **Keep Track of Your Efforts** – Keep notes as you go along.
A record of events will help you keep track of remaining tasks, as well as accomplishments. Clip stories from school and community newspapers. Take pictures or film your event in action.
- **Assess Success** – Debrief after you finish your project. Think about what you have done to see if you achieved your goals. Identify possible next steps and consider continuing your project if possible.
- **Share Your Ideas**, successes and even the pitfalls you encountered. People can learn from what you have done.
- **Celebrate Your Successes!** Celebrations can let others at your school see the possibilities open to them and may encourage them to get involved. You deserve acknowledgement for all the work that you have done!

This handout is from: Speakup: You are the student voice. Find more information at the Ontario.ca/speakup website.

“When you battle with your conscience and lose, you win.”

Henny Youngman

DECORATING LARGE AREAS

It is difficult to decorate large areas effectively on a budget, but here are a couple of ideas that help you put some spirit colours on that drab chain link fence or full gym wall.

Buy rolls of plastic tablecloth in your school colours. The desired lengths can then be cut in half and bunched at the ends. This makes great swaths of coloured bunting that can be hung in gyms or outside areas for football games. The plastic survives inclement weather and can be removed, rerolled and reused.

Large banner posters on rolls of paper take a long time and creative effort to make. You want to make sure that your work is displayed properly and not damaged by wind or the elements. Some schools seem to have interior conditions that dry out the masking tape, and gravity takes over when the banners peel off the wall. Some problems with long banner posters include that they are awkward to tape on walls and difficult to hang outside on bricks or chain link fence. To make this easier, put a patch of duct tape on each of the back corners of the banner. Cut a slice through the duct tape and paper corner with a pair of scissors. Use plastic zip ties to secure the poster to a chain link fence or use clear fish line to secure the hanging poster in place.



*“You don’t get harmony
if everyone sings the same
note.”*

Doug Floyd

Above and Beyond

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To learn more about membership, go to www.casaaleadership.ca/join.html

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**Canadian Association of
Student Activity Advisors**

Resources

Be sure to visit the CASAA website for more lesson plans, activity ideas and a complete list of resources.
casaaleadership.ca



CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF
STUDENT ACTIVITY ADVISORS
EMPOWERING YOUTH TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

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Time in a Bottle

Time management is very difficult to teach to busy student leaders because their life experience of time has been fleeting at best. The best way to illustrate a time management principle is with a physical demonstration like the following.

Supplies

A clear one or two liter plastic bottle with a small pinhole drilled in the bottom. A second bottle of the same size without the pinhole in the bottom. Place a balloon in each of the bottles and stretch the opening of the balloon over the lip of the bottle.

Instructions

Hand the bottle without the hole to a participant. Ask them to blow up the balloon inside the bottle. You can demonstrate with your bottle—don’t put your finger over the hole at the bottom of your bottle. Because the participant’s bottle is full of air, with no place to escape, the participant will be unable to inflate the balloon inside the bottle. You can place fresh balloons in the bottle and ask others in the group to attempt to inflate the balloon.

Explain to the group that the balloon cannot be inflated unless there is a way for the air to escape. Now you can let them know about the little pinhole in the bottom of your bottle.

Next have a participant inflate a balloon inside your bottle with the pinhole. Once the balloon is inflated, place a finger over the pinhole and the balloon will remain inflated until you uncover the pinhole again. As long as the pinhole remains covered, the balloon will not deflate until there is a way for the bottle to refill with air.

Processing

- How does trying to inflate the balloon in the airtight bottle relate to your present time management?
- What are you doing when you use the pinhole bottle in your time management?
- How can we best decide on which things to invest our time?
- What is happening when the hole is covered and the balloon remains inflated?
- How can we guard against over-filling our lives?

Summary

Like the bottle, there is a limit to how much we can put into our lives. We all have 24 hours every day, and there is no way to increase this time allotment. Time management is essentially making the best use of our time by doing those things that are most important to us and achieving our goals. ■

This is from ‘10 Minute Lessons’ by Ron Jones. This book is available from CASAA.

