

Best Practices in UWEX Service-Learning

Youth Environmental Projects of Sauk County (YEPS) 4-H Youth Development

<http://sauk.uwex.edu/4h/YEPS.html>

Youth Environmental Projects of Sauk County (YEPS) is an environmental stewardship, service-learning program for all youth, families, and youth organizations of Sauk County. The program began in March 2004 as a partnership between UW-Extension, the Baraboo Range Preservation Assoc., and the Sauk County Land Conservation Dept.

Through service-learning projects, YEPS:

- Involves youth in environmental stewardship projects.
- Provides opportunities for youth to gain an appreciation of local natural resources.
- Teaches about human's impact on the environment.
- Fosters a lifelong commitment to earth stewardship.
- Involves youth in all stages of selecting, planning, and executing stewardship projects.
- Provides an opportunity for community groups and individuals to work together toward a common goal of involving youth and families in the environment.

Each YEPS project incorporates the following elements:

- A hands-on educational program about the project and why our work will help the environment.
- An environmental stewardship project that will help Sauk County natural resources
- Deliberate reflection activities (group debriefing and individual completion of stewardship records)

Community-Based YEPS Projects:

These projects are typically co-organized by a sponsoring organization. The sponsor proposes an environmental stewardship project to the YEPS planning committee and works with the committee to arrange the details. YEPS committee members publicize the event, register participants, and facilitate the deliberate reflection activities. Sponsoring organizations supply snacks and provide leadership for the educational and project specific facilitation.

School-Based YEPS Projects:

UW-Extension provides equal opportunities in employment and programming, including Title IX and ADA.

If you need this material in another format, please contact Amy Hilgendorf, AmeriCorps*VISTA, (608) 262-4584.

YEPS committee members work with schools and staff to help classrooms implement environmental stewardship, service-learning projects into their curriculum.

Self-Directed YEPS Projects:

Youth have the opportunity to complete a selection of YEPS self-directed projects on their own time. Project handbooks, recording sheets, and stewardship records are provided to help the participants. Current self-directed YEPS projects include Blue Bird house monitoring and bat house monitoring. Future projects will include beetle rearing, rain garden development, and Gypsy moth monitoring.

Contact information:

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