

ADOPT-A-SITE *Plus*

Plan a site tour and litter cleanup: *Service-Learning Project*

Description – Plan a site tour and litter cleanup event. **Inspire** others to care for the Preserves. **Research, plan, and lead** a site tour and large-scale litter cleanup event at your adopted site. **Share** your experiences and interests with others and **show** them how they can make a difference by helping to maintain healthy habitats for wildlife and people.

Pre-visit Preparation

- Review** this entire document and plan your cleanup. These steps are intended to highlight important talking points, but please add your own stories and anecdotes to personalize the experience for your group.
- Notify** the Teen Service-Learning Project Coordinator about your litter cleanup at least two weeks in advance (cassie.hatzfeld@cookcountyil.gov).
- Locate** your site on a map and obtain directions to the site to share with the bus driver and teens.
- Plan with teens**
 - Copy** and hand out *Be Prepared to Get Outside, Get Active, and Give Back* to participants before the trip.
 - Discuss** trip preparation information with students and chaperones. Refer to *BE SAFE Procedure; Bag it, Move it, Leave it; Poison Ivy ID*.
 - Discuss** maps and **plan** to explore the site with students. Suggestion: split site into parts and assign teams to explore and report back to group; determine what event planning questions each group should answer. (Ex. terrain, accessibility, safety concerns, wildlife seen, mapping landmarks, estimate of number of people and time it would take for a litter cleanup, etc.)
 - Determine** what else group will need for exploration of site. Consider borrowing an Education Kit. Education Kits contain tools and activities designed to engage teens in nature and enhance their outdoor experiences. Leaders can borrow Education Kits for self-led educational activities in the Preserves. FPDCC staff is available as a resource and will offer training to teachers interested in using the kits. Learn about Education Kit options and request a kit from the Project Coordinator at least two weeks in advance (cassie.hatzfeld@cookcountyil.gov).
- Encourage** students to:
 - **Visit the Forest Preserve District website** (www.fpdcc.com) and learn about the **history** (<http://fpdcc.com/about/history>) and **mission** (<http://fpdcc.com/about/mission-vision>) of the FPDCC.
 - **Visit the Teen Service-Learning blog** (FPDCCteens.blogspot.com) to obtain resources and see what other groups are doing.
 - **Research the Preserve site** your group is visiting and find it on a map.
- Check** your supply kit:
 - **Count** gloves and bags. You will need one pair of gloves per person and one garbage bag per five teens. Bring extras too. If your group needs additional supplies contact Program Coordinator (cassie.hatzfeld@cookcountyil.gov) at least one week before your trip.
 - **Review** your permit (check the location, date, time, emergency numbers, etc). Be sure to keep it with your supplies and bring it to the cleanup.
 - **Make copies** of the *Preserve Scavenger Hunt*. Bring one copy per three students.
 - **Make copies** of the *Litter Obliterator Checklist*. Bring one copy per six students.
 - **Add pens or pencils** to your kit. One per three students will be needed for activities.

Activity Script

Introduction

1. **Discuss your first impression of the site.** Who has been to a Forest Preserve before? What did you do there?
2. **Locate** your starting point (typically a grove) at the Preserve site.
3. **Coordinate** with the bus driver on pick up time and exchange cell phone numbers.
4. **Know your location** in case of an emergency and communicate it to all chaperones. Cross-streets or an address will help authorities find your group quickly.
5. **Gather** participants at your meeting place in a circle, shoulder-to-shoulder. Ask for their **attention** and praise the listeners until you get everyone's attention. **Welcome** them to the site and remind them that they are there to complete a service activity, Litter Obliterators, and to get outside and enjoy nature. Set a few **rules** for having a safe and enjoyable day. (Ex. Stay with the group and listen when the leaders are giving instructions.)
6. **Getting Started** – Who in the group has visited the Preserves before? What did you do here? Besides recreation, like picnics, hiking, and biking, the Preserves are home to thousands of plants and animals. One of the goals of the Forest Preserve District is to maintain a healthy habitat for plants and animals. Who/what lives in the Preserves?

Preserve Scavenger Hunt – One way to find out what's in the Preserves is to get out there. We have a *Preserve Scavenger Hunt* to kick off the day.

1. **Establish boundaries and rules of the game.** Explore the Preserve and find items that fit the descriptions on the Scavenger Hunt. Write the items you find on the lines. Do not pick or take the items (leave no trace). If you do not know the items' names, just describe them. (Ex. medium-sized bird with dark back and red breast. White ring around eye. Or an American robin). Reminder – making things up is cheating! You must see, hear, or smell the things you write.
2. **Discuss animal encounters.** Don't approach any animals. Never touch or pick up an animal. Observe from a safe distance and enjoy!
3. **Discuss poison ivy.** Show the pictures from the *Poison Ivy ID sheet* and remind students to avoid any plants that have three leaves.
4. **Set a time limit and meeting spot.** Give students 15-20 minutes for the hunt.
5. **Organize** students in groups of three and pass out *Preserve Scavenger Hunt* and pens. Establish a group leader and timekeeper. Set them free!
6. **Gather the group** in a circle again. Discuss the results of the *Preserve Scavenger Hunt*. Each person should share something their group found. What was the coolest, weirdest, or most interesting thing you saw? Did your group find something that you did not expect to discover?

Litter Activity – You may have noticed on your Scavenger Hunt that, in addition to all of the plants and animals, you found things that do not belong in the Preserves – litter. One of the goals of the Forest Preserve District is to keep the land healthy for wildlife and people.

1. **Discuss what it means to be healthy.** (5-10 minutes)
 - a. How would you define a healthy habitat (*definition of a habitat*: the natural environment of an organism) or natural area? An unhealthy habitat or natural area?
 - b. Why is it important to care for the land and clean up litter?
 - c. Why should we care?
 - d. The two main goals of Litter Obliterators is to make the habitat healthier for people and wildlife and to set a good example for other Preserve users.
 - e. How might our litter cleanup cause a behavior change in other Preserve users? If they see us cleaning up litter, they will realize that someone cares for this land. It might make them think twice about littering and also inspire them to volunteer.
2. **Review *Be Safe Procedures and Bag it, Move it, or Leave it.*** Remind participants that if they don't know what an item is, don't touch it and tell an adult. "Don't know, don't touch."

3. **Where will you find the most litter?** Instruct students to focus on areas around parking lots, pavilions or shelters, along the edges of groves and on paths. Groups should stay on paths when possible.
4. **Remind students to look for little things.** Ex. Cigarette butts, bottle caps, pieces of plastic can be very harmful to wildlife. Litter may be hard to find, but with some practice, you will start to see the little things.
5. **When a group has filled a bag,** tie it tightly and place it next to a metal FPDCC garbage can.
6. **Determine a meeting place** and time and boundaries. Plan 30 minutes to 1 hour for the cleanup.
7. **Split up group into teams of six** (combine two Scavenger Hunt groups). Hand out gloves, bags, and *Litter Obliterator Checklist* (Assign jobs – one note-taker, one bag holder, and four litter pickup crew). Give one bag per group to start and tell them they can get extras at the meeting place.

Reflection – Discuss the results of your litter cleanup.

1. Was the litter cleanup what you expected? Was there anything you didn't expect?
2. What type of litter was most prevalent? Why?
3. How did your actions affect the community? Wildlife? Individual participants?
4. What is the importance of the resource being improved?
5. How can we take what we learned from the experience and continue to affect change?
6. If you had to describe your Forest Preserve experience in one word, what would it be?
7. What would you post on Facebook about your experience today?
8. If you were going to text your best friend about your experience today, what would you say?

Plan a site tour and litter cleanup

In addition to the preparation, action, and reflection activities above, complete the following steps:

First visit - Survey your site and begin to plan for a large-scale cleanup

1. **Explore your site** in teams. Answer predetermined event planning questions.
2. **Record** answers to questions and share with larger group.
3. **Determine** next steps in planning for your site tour and litter cleanup.
4. **Consider** these questions (and create your own):
 - a. When would you like to host a group? (Suggestion: late-spring)
 - b. How many people can the site accommodate?
 - c. What supplies will you need?
 - d. How would you like your guests to explore the site? Self-led Scavenger Hunt? Small group tours?
 - e. What will your event timeline look like? How long will you need for each activity? Keep in mind transition time, breaks, lunch, travel time, etc.
 - f. How many times will you need to visit the site between now and then?
 - g. What needs to happen before your next visit?
 - h. Plan your second visit to your site and determine goals.

Second Visit - Conduct a litter cleanup and work through the event details. (Ex. Brainstorm who you will invite and discuss the outcomes you would like to achieve. Determine your staging areas. Where will you meet? Who will give the introduction? Safety tips? Supply distribution? How will you split up the invitees? Etc)

Before the Site Tour and Litter Cleanup Event -

- **Invite visitors** and tell them the outcomes you would like to achieve.
- **Provide audience with preparation materials** including the *Be Prepared to Get Outside, Get Active, and Give Back* and *Photo Waiver* (request *Photo Waiver* from Project Coordinator - cassie.hatzfeld@cookcountyil.gov).
- **Determine method of documenting and recording** the event and experiences of your invitees. Who will be in charge of record keeping (taking photos, interviewing, etc)?
- **Send an email** to the Teen Service-Learning Project Coordinator with plans (cassie.hatzfeld@cookcountyil.gov). At least **three weeks in advance**, request **shelter reservations** and **extra supplies**. Be sure to include **time** of cleanup and **number of participants**.

Third Visit – Host the event and document (photos, interviews, video) for submission to the Teen Service-Learning blog. Consider displaying these at your school too.

Continuation Ideas

Take it one step further and give back at school or in your neighborhood.

1. **Take the “One-a-day challenge”** and pledge to pick up one piece of litter each day from your neighborhood or school yard.
2. **Organize a litter cleanup** near your school or in your neighborhood

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CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS – IL State Learning Standards

State goal	Description
Science	
11.A.4c	Collect, organize, and analyze data accurately and precisely.
12.B.4a	Compare physical, ecological, and behavioral factors that influence interactions and interdependence of organisms.
12.B.5a	Analyze and explain biodiversity issues and the causes and effects of extinction.
13.A.4a	Estimate and suggest ways to reduce the degree of risk involved in science activities.
13.B.5c	Design and conduct an environmental impact study, analyze findings and justify recommendations.
Social Science: Social Systems	
18.B.4	Analyze various forms of institutions (e.g. educational, military, charitable, and governmental).
Social Science: Geography	
17.A.5	Demonstrate how maps, other geographic instruments and technologies are used to solve spatial problems (e.g. land use, ecological concerns).
17.C.5b	Describe the impact of human migrations and increased urbanization on ecosystems.
Social Science: Political Systems	
14.C.4	Describe the meaning of participatory citizenship (e.g. volunteerism, voting) at all levels of government and society in the United States.
Mathematics	
7.C.4b	Interpret scale drawings and models using maps and blue prints.
Social Emotional Learning Standards	
1A.4a	Analyze how thoughts and emotions affect decision making and responsible behavior.
1B.5b	Evaluate how developing interests and filling useful roles support school and life success.
1C.4b	Apply strategies to overcome obstacles to goal achievement.
2A.4a	Analyze similarities and differences between one's own and other's perspectives.
2A.4b	Use conversation skills to understand others' feelings and perspectives.
2B.5b	Evaluate how advocacy for the rights of others contributions to the common good.
3A.4b	Evaluate how social norms and the expectations of authority influence personal decisions and actions.
3A.5b	Examine how the norms of different societies influence their members' decisions and behaviors.
3B.5b	Evaluate how responsible decision making affects interpersonal and group relationships.
3C.5a	Work cooperatively with others to plan, implement, and evaluate a project to meet an identified school need.
3C.4b	Plan, implement, and evaluate one's participation in a group effort to contribute to one's local community.
3C.5b	Work cooperatively with others to plan, implement, and evaluate a project that addresses an identified need in the broader community.