

2003 National Link Service Challenge -Information and Resource Package

Introduction

This document is meant to provide background information, ideas, and suggested resources to help Link members participate in the 2003 National Link Service Challenge. The Service Challenge Working Group members ask that the Provincial Link Advisers make this information available to all Link members who are interested in participating in this challenge.

Official Announcement

TAKING CARE OF YOU AND ME

All Link members are encouraged to participate in the 2003 National Link Service Challenge, "Taking Care of You and Me". In spring 2003, Link members across Canada will carry out various service projects united by the common theme of health – taking care of herself, or helping girls and others learn to do the same. These projects can involve:

- service to Guiding such as helping in a girls' unit
- community service such as helping an existing health-related charity
- or perhaps both (coordinating girls' participation in a community service project for instance).

Possible ideas for carrying out the challenge include: incorporating the WAGGGS' Initiative on Preventing Adolescent Pregnancy (with hopefully a National Twinning Project to do with this initiative should be announced soon), working on the new Bone Building Challenge with girls, or any other service project you can come up with that is health-related.

Project ideas plus resource information will be compiled and made available via the Provincial Link Advisers and the National Link e-group/ mailing list. We have purposely left this Challenge very flexible, to allow for the varying circumstances of Link members and their local communities. You can participate in this Challenge individually, with a few other Link members, or with your entire Link unit.

We want to promote this Challenge within Guiding, so that people learn more about Link and realize that Link members are active contributors to Guiding and to their communities. If you want to help by sending an article to your local Guiding newsletter about this Challenge, let us know and we can send you information to get you started.

Once you've done a service project, the National Link Adviser wants to hear about it. Participants will be recognized in the National Link newsletter, and interesting projects may be featured in more detail.

Think of the National Link Service Challenge as a step toward building more "National Link Spirit", and think of ways that you can participate!

(Service Challenge Working Group members: Tirian Eynon -AB, Nancy Ferguson - NS, Sunita Mathur -BC, Kara O'Brien – ON/PEI, and Jennifer Walker- National Link Adviser)

Content possibilities

(Direct comments from the working group and/or National Link mailing lists are indicated in italics).

- General Health and well-being
- WAGGGS' Initiative on Preventing Adolescent Pregnancy
 - Information at
<http://www.wagggsworld.org/aroundtheworld/projects/sensitive.html>
<http://www.wagggsworld.org/pyw/inform/sensitive/index.html>
 - Possible upcoming National Twinning Project to include this initiative.
 - *Some questions that could be explored include: "why relationships are important?", "How would having a child change my life?", "Could I support a child?", "What makes a good parent?", "If I get pregnant what are my options, supports, resources?", "What / How will sex change my relationship?", "What should I think about before I have sex?", "Why do I want to have sex?", "How is my relationship with my boyfriend different than that with my best friend?", etc.*
- Osteoporosis /Guides Canada Bone Building Challenge –
 - <http://www.girlguides.ca/what-new/bonebuild.htm>
 - Link Members could visit units or organize events to cover the requirements for this challenge.
- Aids/ STD awareness
 - AIDS badge curriculum - listed on WAGGGS website (<http://www.wagggsworld.org/aroundtheworld/projects/un aids.html>)
 - *Why not pair up with the public health units and talk about STD's?*
 - *If choosing to deal with adolescent pregnancy and/or AIDS/HIV I believe it would be important to spend time with the units before the project day to determine the maturity level of the girls and adjust any ideas or challenges to the needs of the girls.*
- Butterfly/Papillon 208 essay/ art contest - [http:// www.bp208.ca](http://www.bp208.ca)
 - *A project of the National Youth Committee co-sponsored by CIDA and the Canadian Coalition for the Rights of Children, the contest focuses on awareness of international development issues such as HIV/AIDS, basic education, health and nutrition and child protection.*
- Global Youth Service Day - <http://www.gysd.net/home/> , the 2003 date is April 11-13, 2003, Link Members may want to tie into this.

Project Ideas

Arts: Murals, posters, CD covers, Theatre Sports, perform or write a play or make your own information video or anti-smoking commercial on other health issues. Make information coasters for coffee shops. Write and produce songs about health issues.

- *poster campaign - once all of the activities are over with, the posters will be up in schools and other areas to remind the girls of what they have learned. We could even turn the poster thing into a provincial wide or national wide contest for Pathfinders age and up, then pick out 5 different posters to place everywhere.*

Awards: give out awards to people businesses that promote a healthy environment/lifestyle. Or Make your own agency/school healthy.

Children's Hospital: visit the hospitals, make IV bag covers, donate extra Halloween candy, craft kits,

Contests: Hold contests (writing, art etc.) for younger kids with healthy lifestyle themes

Campaigns/Existing Programs: participate in existing campaigns (Go Girl, Participaction etc.), implement programs that already exist.

- *Link Members could do service for the agencies that do the work- I'm sure teen health clinics and Planned Parenthood, etc. are constantly looking for volunteers, or material, or something that their staff just doesn't have time to do.*

Environmental Issues: Create programs around local businesses, communities for keeping areas clean and healthy.

Festivals: Hold a local healthy living information fair for your community, or participate in existing health fairs

Fun Runs, etc.: Participate in fun events such as: Run for the Cure, 30 Hour Famine or do your own "a-thon" by choosing a charity and getting pledges for being healthy and active, etc.

Fundraising: Bake sales, garage sales, bottle drives, car washes, art auctions, penny carnivals and donate proceeds to recreation campaigns or healthy lifestyle/health related charities.

Guest Speakers: Invite speakers to talk at your organization, school, community etc.

Media Awareness: sessions on how the media influences our lives and our health.

Presentations: Give presentations on things such as pregnancy, active life styles to younger kids, put up facts on bulletin boards in your area.

Surveys: in your area on health issues and publish an information booklet

Survival Kits: Assemble what you think should go in a survival kit for kids in your area (condom, phone #'s, STD pamphlet etc.)

Support groups: Start a lunchtime/evening support group in schools or other organizations for youth who are trying to get information or need a place to share feelings and experiences.

Social Activism: Write letters to politicians, newspapers and other concerned parties about youth and health issues that you are interested in and are passionate about

Younger Children: Run tutoring and mentoring programs for younger children.

Website: Create a website for youth on youth and health issues

Writing: Write or collect poetry, stories, testimonials, produce a newsletter/magazine

Guiding-Specific Ideas

- *physical activity*
 - *Links can go into units and do a sports night, fitness or dance...something fun of course, to promote physical activity within Guiding*
 - *those who are involved in their district/area could host a sports day or fitness day for Guides and non-Guides*
 - *something for leaders as well would be great (walking, water exercise, yoga etc.) as part of their usual meetings could be offered (i.e., Link Members could come in to do "breaks" during those long meetings!)*

- *healthy eating*
 - *making up camp menus for Guiders that incorporate the 4 food groups*
 - *teaching girls recipes for healthy eating (many meeting halls have cooking facilities)*

- *healthy lifestyles day/evening*
 - *Link Members could run sessions and lead groups at a school/church basement/camp. At each session participants learn about something that pertains to healthy lifestyles. Topics include active living (pertains to all branches of program), hygiene, Canada's Food Guide and healthy eating choices (snack), say no to drugs/smoking, etc.*

Tie-ins to Guiding program

(for the WAGGGS' Initiative on Preventing Adolescent Pregnancy):

Pathfinders

- Be Prepared in the Community #1 states "Make a list of and discuss the purpose of the agencies in your community that offer help on the following: teenage pregnancy ..."
- Community Emblem Citizenship # 12 "Learn about the agencies that offer protection to people in your community. Visit one of them or invite a worker from one to visit your Unit. Learn how the agency might benefit you"
- Community Citizenship #13 "Discuss issues of significance to women ..."
- Community Knowledge and Service #10 "Take part in a fund-raising event for an organization that helps others. Learn about the work of the organization."
- Home Emblem Relationships and Values #1 "Discuss standards of behaviour felt to be appropriate for people of your age ..."
- Home Rel/Values #8 "Discuss where you can find help concerning problems about schoolwork, money, girlfriends, boyfriends, family rules or religious beliefs"
- Home Rel/Values #12 "Discuss peer pressures regarding issues such as..." (could be expanded from issues listed)
- Home Rel/Values #13 "Participate in a skit to demonstrate appropriate behaviour on a date or co-ed event"
- Home Rel/Values #19 "Do a service project appropriate to this Pathway"
- World Emblem Global Understanding #6 "Find out about the 'Rights of the Child' as adopted by the UN ..." (e.g., discussion about this issue as it pertains to other countries re: younger age at marriage, etc.)

Senior Branches:

- Core program Personal Growth #22 "Investigate women's issues"
- Core program Service #23 "Using one of the following case studies or one of your own, develop an action plan of how you can help..." - one of the case studies is "A friend of yours has just had a baby and is living on her own. She doesn't have a job and wants to stay in school".

- *Ranger program* - Future, Guiding Service, Service, Women's Concerns Interest Areas as examples

Promotion

-The official announcement was posted in the National Link e-group/ mailing list, which covers maybe about one-quarter of Link Members in Canada. It was also in the Fall 2002 Link Connections national newsletter.

-The Working Group is asking that the Provincial Link Advisers inform all their Link Members about this challenge and encourage their participation, in order to ensure all Link Members have heard about it one way or another.

-It would be appreciated if Link Advisers (Provincial and Area) or other Link contacts could send articles to their local Guiding newsletter, with some information about local Link projects. This will raise awareness of Link within Guiding, and also let Guiders know about local Link Members who want to help out. A sample article is below.

-Please be sure to send information to the National Link Adviser about Link service projects when they are completed so that participants can be recognized (Jennifer Walker, guidemd@niftyguidinglinks.ca), and feel free to again send articles to local Guiding newsletters about what you've done. It would help for future planning if you send a copy of any articles published to the National Link Adviser as well.

THANKS IN ADVANCE FOR PARTICIPATING – YOUR EFFORTS WILL HELP RAISE AWARENESS OF LINK!

Sample Article for local/Provincial Guiding newsletters:

Taking Care of You and Me – National Link Service Challenge 2003

-by (name of person submitting article) and Jennifer Walker, National Link Adviser

All Link Members across Canada have been challenged to participate in a service project in spring 2003 with the theme "Taking Care of You and Me", that is, something health-related. Projects could include helping a Guiding unit with health challenges, helping an existing health-related charity, or coordinating girls' participation in a community service project, among the many possibilities.

Link are women aged 18 to 30 in Girl Guides of Canada who are encouraged to support Guiding however they can, and are made aware of opportunities for further involvement in Guiding. Gone is the old stereotype that all Link Members are too busy to do anything – many Link Members are also active as Guiders, and others want to help when they can even if it's not every week. This Service Challenge is an excellent opportunity for Guiders and Commissioners to help Link Members support Guiding in a flexible way, by finding out about local Link Members and how they can help with Guiding in your community.

Please contact (Area/Provincial Link Adviser/local Link contact) at _____ for further information about how local Link Members can help out in Guiding.
(optional- if you know details) The Link Members of (location) are planning to do (description of service project) in order to participate in this Service Challenge.

Thanks in advance for supporting Link Members with their service projects.