



Engaging Youth in Conservation Commission Activities

Seven keys to successful youth connections:

1. Be open minded and flexible; projects can be simple or complex
2. Create excitement; engagement opportunities should provide something to look forward to.
3. Establish mutual benefits; The process and the final outcome have to benefit all involved parties in meaningful ways.
4. Gather supplies; Donated items, grants and more
5. Recruit volunteers; Have enough relevant talented volunteers to make your project a success.
6. Get the word out; use the press and social media
7. Reflect and celebrate; Make events fun for all ages host a picnic or gathering to celebrate a completed project.

Projects can be simple or complex depending on what group you are working with.

- Some projects other towns have done with students and youth groups in community:
- Make plant ID stakes and bird houses for conservation land
- Plant Trees for Arbor Day
- Clean up trails and trail maintenance
- Make maps of trails
- Remove invasive species
- Create educational brochures and kiosks
- Photo contests
- Collect samples and analyze water resources

Work to find willing and relevant adult volunteers to assist students

- Volunteers should:
 - feel comfortable working with youth
 - be willing to take direction from teachers/leaders and students/youth
 - be able to provide some direction to teachers/leaders and students/youth
 - if possible, have some experience with the topic
- Volunteers can be from a variety of locations:
 - garden clubs, UNH cooperative extension, conservation commissions, recreation departments, college students in applicable majors, land or water protection groups, etc.
- Allow youth time to step back and review their work
- Follow up discussions between group leaders and conservation members



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