

Fact Sheet

CONSERVATION AUTHORITY Outdoor Environmental Education Programs

Participation

Every year more than 410,000 students – that's one fifth of school boards, participate in Conservation Authority (CA) outdoor education programs.

Outdoor education programs are offered by more than three quarters of the Conservation Authorities in the province. Seven Conservation Authorities have formal contract agreements with school boards, and twelve also lease their land and facilities to schools and/or school boards for the purpose of running education programs.

Ontario Curriculum

Almost all Conservation Authority outdoor education programs offered are designed to meet curriculum expectations of the Ontario Ministry of Education.

The majority of Conservation Authorities target their education programs to primary and elementary level students, while half of the CAs offer programs to high school students as well.

The goal of CA outdoor education programs is to complement and enhance classroom lessons, by providing students with the opportunity to participate in hands-on activities. These programs teach children about local and global environmental issues, explore the linkages between human activity and the natural environment, and instill a greater appreciation and understanding of nature.

Examples of Education Programs Offered by CAs:

- Habitats & Communities
- Water Systems
- Aboriginal Peoples & Early Explorers
- Interactions within Ecosystems
- Diversity of Living Things
- Orienteering
- Wilderness Survival
- History of Maple Syrup Industry in Canada



In addition to teaching about the natural environment, Conservation Authority education programs help children learn new skills in language, art and mathematics.

Cost-effective

The average fee per student participating in Conservation Authority outdoor education programs is \$8.25 for a full day and \$4.65 for a half day session. The average fee per class is \$229.00 for a full day and \$125.00 for the half day session.

Funding

The main sources of funding for CA outdoor education programs include: program fees, such as fees charged per student, class, or directly to the participating school board; donations or funds from the CA Foundation and other foundations; the CA budget; and other sources of revenue, such as facility rental fees, merchandise, and camps.

Water Festivals

Water Festivals teach children about water habitat ecology, ground water movement, and the importance of water conservation and protection in their home and around their community.

More than one third of CAs offer Spring Water Awareness Programs and many others either host or co-host Children's Water Festivals, teaching youth all they want to know about H₂O.

By educating our young people about the value of water, the planet's most precious resource, we are taking an important step toward ensuring good water use habits by generations to come.



Donations from individuals and foundations provide a vital source of funding for Conservation Authority outdoor education programs.

Conservation Ontario represents Ontario's 36 Conservation Authorities. Conservation Authorities are local, community-based environmental organizations that manage natural on a watershed basis across Ontario.

Contact Information

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Find your local Conservation Authority by visiting our website!

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