

ECO PROJECT WITH MENTAL HEALTH BENEFITS -----TEMPLATE

Objective---Plan and implement Eco project with mental health benefits

Target Beneficiaries---Possible beneficiaries of project could be kids, students, and seniors including residents of senior care facilities

Possible Collaborators----Could include youth and student groups, managers and activity directors of senior residences/care facilities, and local mental health professionals (MHPs)

Possible Eco Projects----Projects such as gardens, children's gardens, pollination stations are good examples

IMPLEMENTATION

1. Choose an Eco project in which kids and seniors can either jointly participate or enjoy. Project such as a children's garden is a good example---both kids and seniors can work in the garden planting flowers and vegetables, with kids, seniors and Club members helping. A project such as this can also become an annual ongoing project in future years.
2. Talk with student group directors, activity directors, MHPs to find groups available and willing to work with Club members.
3. Work with MHPs to explore ways to use such a project to explain to kids the mental health benefits of working together, of working outside, of a group of people teaching each other about plants and helping each other with planting and eventually harvesting veggies that can be used to prepare a meal in the fall. A project such as this also provides the mental health benefit of reducing isolation among seniors, and of teaching kids the value of helping others.
4. Consider choosing a convenient location that is near a senior residence or care facility to allow seniors to view the garden or to easily access it. For example, Ely Community Resource (ECR) has a Children's garden across the avenue from both an assisted living facility and a senior apartment residence, and invites residents of both to help with the garden.
5. Associate the garden with Rotary----for example, even though the children's garden in Ely is an ECR project, the Ely Rotary Club donated a bench and table with the Rotary name and logo for the garden.