

Traxz Award modules

The Traxz Award activities are designed to give the girls an opportunity to become interested in the preservation of the natural environment around them. Whether you live near the beach, the lake, rivers or the rain forest, this module can be used as a basis to teach them about the environment in areas, which are special to all New Zealanders, as well as raise their interest in conservation and sustainability issues.



Aim:

The modules they will look at through this curriculum will focus on nurturing their knowledge and interest in New Zealand native species of flora and fauna, and then foster an attitude of preservation and conservation towards it. They will learn to identify well known, species of birds and plants, then take a closer look at our endangered species in a more localised environment or habitat. Here they will focus on an endangered species relevant to the locality of where they live, i.e. the NZ Dotterel, dune plants at the beach in the Bay of Plenty, the preservation Northland Kiwi Population, Kakapo projects in the South Island or Yellow eyed penguins in Otago.

Objectives:

- To learn about the native flora and fauna in the local area
- To learn Outdoor safety.

Equipment:

- As required by the speaker ie Data Projector etc

Preparation:

Find a speaker/s from either Conservation Department or Mountain Safety or maybe both.

Conservation Department will know of all the special local flora and fauna in your particular local area.

The Mountain Safety Assn has a wealth of people with Bush knowledge and would be able to focus on Safety as well as the flora and fauna in our mountain ranges.

Ask the speakers if there is any preparation they need.

Coach's Tip:

Ensure your speakers realise the age they are speaking to and the need for look and see and activities need to be relevant to the age group.

Devotions:

Psalm 104 V 10 - 25

God provided for all his flora and fauna.

Talk about what the scripture says and how this can be applied in today's world.

An activity would be to give each person a seed or small seedling of a protected flora species and ask them to take care of it. Once the plant has grown to a suitable size, they can either plant it in their own garden or ask the Conservation Department where they could plant it.

Main Activity:

- Have speaker/s that will talk to the girls and do practical activities with them at the Unit's meeting place. If the speaker is not able to provide practical activities, then you need to organise some (see practical activity section below).
- During this time girls will cover the aspects of Safety Outdoors.

Outdoor safety

(Source: "Kids Survival Handbook" by Claire Llewellyn)

In the Bush

- Always go into the bush with adults.
- Leave information on your trip with reliable people including when you are returning.
- Go in groups of three or four people. Never walk alone.
- Wear good tough shoes or boots and socks to prevent blisters.
- Take a small First Aid Kit.
- Take plenty of water and high energy food.
- Carry a map and learn to use a compass.

If you get lost:

- Stay in one place and wait for rescuers to find you. You may need to find water and shelter. Don't stray out of the area searchers know you are most likely to be in.
- To build a shelter use branches and ferns, over hanging rocks or caves. Flax makes useful twine or string to tie things together.
- Put bright coloured, shiny clothes or pack liners on top to attract searchers in the air.
- If you have a whistle, use it to attract searchers in earshot.
- Stuff your clothes with dry grass or leaves to keep yourself warm if you have inadequate clothing.
- Take water from the slow current in a river for drinking if you cannot boil it.
- If the conditions are safe, build a fire to attract attention and keep warm.

Lightning is a bolt of electricity. During a storm giant sparks surge to the ground. Ice crystals whizzing around in the towering storm clouds cause them.

- Nowhere is completely safe from lightning.
- Shelter inside a car with the windows shut. If the car is struck the electricity will pass through the tyres.
- Inside buildings, close windows and doors then keep clear of them.
- Except in emergencies don't use the telephone.
- Avoid open areas; hill tops high cliffs and poles. Never shelter under tall or isolated trees because lightning strikes the highest object.
- Keep away from metal objects and wire fences. Get rid of metal objects on you like keys or umbrellas.
- If your hair starts to stand on end, lightning is about to strike. Drop to your knees and bend over keeping your head low. Do not lie flat.
- You can tell how close the lightning is by counting the number of seconds between the flash and the thunderclap. Divide the number of seconds by three to work out how many kilometres away the storm is.
- If the storm is within 8 km, try to find safe shelter immediately.

Practical activities:

Some suggestions:

- Play a game of hide and seek. If it is dark, all the better. Do this in groups, one group goes off to hide and they take a whistle with them. The other group/s follows the sound to find where they are hiding. It would be a good idea to have a leader track the group who are hiding, so that you know where they are at all times.
- Get girls to bring a torch, or have enough to supply one to each girl and when it is dark, have a game of "spotlight". (See games section at end of Programme Book).

Notices and Home Time:

- Need notices advising that next week the girls will be going out for the meeting. Ensure parents know whether they have to drop their girls at the usual Unit meeting place, or drop them where you are commencing your outdoor programme.
- Close in Prayer

Aim:

This module uses field trips and fun activities to teach the girls about the vegetation and bird life in special area. They will learn about activities and introduced predators that harm the bird life or vegetation in these important areas and what they can do to preserve the areas they visit.

The purpose of this session is:

- To take girls on a field trip to an area of interest suitable to fulfil the specific requirements of the Traxz Award.
- To help them appreciate that our natural environment is not something we as New Zealanders can take for granted.
- To give the girls an appreciation of God's wonderful Creation

Objectives:

- To learn the Back Country Code
- To participate in a field trip to a specific location and participate in a scavenger hunt which will help them identify specific plants and birds relating to the environment of the location you are visiting
- They will hear and participate in a devotion, which will provoke them to appreciate God's Creation more.

**Equipment needed:**

- Whistle.
- First Aid Kit.
- Bible.
- Balls and other sports gear to be used at the location.
- Roll cards and the nametags
- Scavenger Hunt route & "shopping" list.
- Big bag of Minties for the best team award.
- Risk Management Sheet completed (See the resource section in the rear. This must be completed for all outings)

Preparation:

- Visit the scavenger hunt route before the intended visit, so you can pre-plan the hunt. Look out for things that will be of interest to the girls. Include things like what is written on signs, items of interest, rubbish or other eyesores that are out of place in the specific location that you visit. Sit down with your leaders and brainstorm for other ideas of what to include.
- Make a list of items you want the girls either to observe or collect. This can be included in the route guide or you could give a separate list of what to observe/collect inside a given location i.e. park, block of streets, beach area etc.

**Coach's Tip**

If you really want to do the hunt well, invent a secret code using the WINGDINGS font on your computer and give it to the teams to crack so they will be able to determine their route guide. Check out the following Wingdings code so you understand what we are saying here:

Match up the letters with the symbols in your Route Guide so you can tell where to go.

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P
 ☉ ☽ ♀ ♁ ♃ ♄ ♅ ♆ ♇ ♈ ♉ ♊ ♋ ♌ ♍ ♎ ♏ ♐ ♑ ♒ ♓

Q R S T U V W X Y Z
 ☐ ☐ ♦ ♦ ♦ ❖ ♦ ☒ ☒ ☒

◆☐☒ ◆☽☽)◆ ♀☐♁♃ ♄☐☐ ♃☒☉☐●♃
 Try this code for example

- Organise transport by issuing notices the week before or preferably, get parents to drop off and collect their own girls from the location if it is within 5-15 minutes of where your weekly meeting place is. Remember that the trip is **never** cancelled or postponed, take raincoats if the weather is wet.
- Safety issue: Once the roll is called, count up the number of girls and check that you have all accounted for. At other points during and at the conclusion of the evening check the numbers to make sure all are still present.
- Do a risk management strategy

SetUp: 10minutes

- On this occasion it may be difficult to carry out the normal SetUp. Gather the girls around using the whistle; get them to sit if possible. Once they are settled give the opening prayer and verbal notices. At this time set out specific clear boundaries and consequences so there is order and you are not losing members.
- Give points/prizes for quick responses obedience and good behaviour.
- Get the team leaders to record the roll on the Cards, issue the nametags and take care of any other "business". After these formalities, begin the devotion.

Devotion: 10-15minutes

Read from Psalm 8 v 3-9, Alternate Reading Genesis 1 v 9-24. Use a modern version of the Bible.

Summarise the Scriptures in the context of where you are i.e. the beach, forest, lake etc and then encourage the girls to look at the environment around them. Ask them to take a close look at the trees the branches and leaves and see how they are all different, the sand and how vast the beach is in spite of being made of such tiny particles. Look at the sky, the Moon and Sun, and then imagine, if His creation is so majestic, how wonderful the Creator must be. Read again (Psalm 8 v 3-8) and continue with a reminder that we are the most important of all his Creation and He loves us more than the rest of His creation and that we have a responsibility to take care of the earth and all the wild life etc.

Conclude with a prayer of thanksgiving for His wonderful creation and ask him to guide us in caring for His Earth.

Introduction: 5 minutes

Explain the basics of the Scavenger Hunt and how it works, the rules and safety issues like keeping together, stranger danger and other hazards peculiar to the field trip site. Hand out the route guide and other instructions.

Coach's Tip

Never cancel or postpone trips (unless there is a cyclone!) Just take appropriate clothing, if everyone gets cold and wet, go home early for a hot shower or Milo.

Main Teaching/Activity Session; Fun Activity: 40minutes**1. Back Country Code**

Firstly, teach the girls the points of the Back Country Code

- Take only photos.
- Leave only footprints.
- Travel without a trace.
- Carry out what you carry in.

by handing out sheets to each child or use a large 400mmx600mm flash card with the code written on it and covering them verbally. Ask them to remember the code because they will be tested on it, and then encourage them to follow the code as they participate in the Scavenger Hunt.

2. Scavenger hunt.

Explain the rules and requirements for the Scavenger Hunt clearly. Make sure the Leaders and Team Leaders know what is required on their lists, the time they should be back at "Base" and other important safety issues like keeping together as a team.

- Get the leaders to have a head count of all girls in their team and ensure that there's a minimum of two adults accompanying each team for safety reasons.
- Hand out the "Shopping list" /Route guides to the Team Leaders, give them their finish time (the time they need to return to base) and release them to their task.

Throughout the session:

Award points for the teams, who listen, work together well and for those who complete the Hunt in the allotted time and meet all requirements. Give recognition for those who have great leadership and or servant attitudes.

As each team completes the course, **allow them to play a ball game or participate in an activity**, which will keep them close by and occupied until all the other teams have completed the course.

When all teams have returned, collate the results; announce the winners and award points/prizes to individuals and teams.

Notices and home time:

- Assemble the whole unit together using the whistle. Settle them so you can make announcements.
- Encourage them to bring their friends.
- Close in prayer and hand out notices after the prayer.
- Notice needs to include information regarding the trip next week.
- After this, release them to their parents and they are free to go home.

Aim:

This session includes another field trip and fun activities to add to the previous weeks learning and Aims.

The purpose of this session is:

- To take the girls on a second field trip to a different area of interest relevant to fulfil other specific requirements of the Traxz Award, not covered by the first trip.
- To help them appreciate that our natural environment is not something we as New Zealanders can take for granted.
- To give the girls an appreciation that the Spirit of God is still at work in the world, creating and recreating life through His love and power at work in the lives of His people.

Objectives:

- To participate in a second field trip to a new specific location.
- The group will hear from a guest speaker (Booked well in advance) either from DOC, Kiwi Conservation Club or the Regional Council talking on conservation issues related directly to the specific location of the field trip.
- The girls will be tested on their knowledge of the Back Country Code.
- They will hear and participate in a devotion, which will provoke them to appreciate how God is still active in the earth and how the elements display God's awesome power.

Equipment needed:

- Whistle.
- First Aid Kit.
- Bible and some mustard seeds.
- Balls and other sports gear to be used at the location.
- Roll cards and name tags
- Prizes/rewards if necessary.
- Risk Management sheet completed (See the resource section in the rear. This must be completed for all outings)

**Coach's Tip**

Reward good obedience/obedience, prompt responses and those first to be quiet. Try to catch them doing right and ignore mildly negative obedience

Preparation:

- At the beginning of the Term, call your local Regional Council, DOC office, Kiwi Conservation Club, Fish and Game, or similar organisation to invite one of their Rangers or Officers who is an expert in the Environmental issues related to the specific location of your field trip, i.e. the Dune Care Officer at the Regional Council if you are visiting the beach, or the Park Ranger or DOC Officer related to Kiwi rescue at a forest park etc.
- Organise transport by issuing notices the week before or preferably get parents to drop off and collect their own girls from the location if it is within 5-15 minutes of where your weekly meeting place is.

- Safety issue: Once the roll is called, count up and check that you have all accounted for. At other points during and at the conclusion of the evening check the numbers to make sure all are still present.

SetUp: 10minutes

- As for last week, it may be difficult to carry out the normal SetUp so gather the group around using the whistle, get them to sit if possible and then once they are settled give the Opening Prayer and verbal notices. At this time set out specific clear boundaries and consequences so there is order and you are not losing them.
- Get the team leaders to record the roll on the Roll Cards and to issue the nametags & any other "business". After these formalities, begin the devotion.

Devotion: 10-15minutes

Theme: Planting seed in good soil will produce an abundant harvest.

Text: The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed

I have some seeds here this afternoon. I wonder if anyone knows what they are. (Allow time for response)

These are mustard seeds. As you can see I can hold a large number in just a small space in my hand. Many seeds are tiny. Some flower seeds are so small you can hardly see them when you plant them in the ground. But then they sprout and grow into big plants with large, bright blooms.

Jesus talked about mustard seed. He said that if planted properly, the seed would grow into a large plant and eventually into a tree bigger than the other plants around it. Finally large birds would be able to nest in it.

Can you imagine one little seed growing into a plant that big?

Jesus also said that if seeds were not planted in the right way, but were planted on rocky ground, they would not grow. If we want our flower seeds to grow and bloom or our mustard seeds to produce large plants, we cannot carelessly toss them out on just any ground. They must be planted in good rich soil.

When Jesus was talking about planting seeds in good soil, he was teaching us how to "plant" our lives in God's Kingdom. He wants us to listen and understand God's Word, to accept God's presence in our lives, and to follow Christ's teachings. Even though our faith is small at first, we will grow as Christians and become as large as a tree in the kingdom of God.

Prayer: Dear God, thank you for the seeds that grow in to plants and flowers. Help us keep our lives centered in you so that we may grow strong and tall as Christian men and women.

Introduction: 5 minutes

Begin the introduction by testing the group on their memory of the Back Country Code - they can chant it together using the flash card

Teach the girls about the NZ Environmental Care Code checklist:

1. Protect plants & animals

Treat NZ's forests and birds with care and respect. They are unique and often rare.



2. Remove Rubbish

Litter is unattractive, harmful to wildlife and can increase vermin and disease. Plan your visits to reduce rubbish, and carry out what you carry in.

3. Bury Toilet Waste

In areas without toilet facilities, bury your toilet waste in a shallow hole away from waterways, tracks, campsites and huts.

4. Keep Streams & Lakes Clean

When cleaning and washing, take the water and wash well away from the water source. Because soaps and detergents are harmful to water life, drain used water into the soil to allow it to be filtered. If you suspect the water may be contaminated, boil it for 3 minutes, filter it or chemically treat it.

5. Take Care With Fires

Portable fuel stoves are less harmful to the environment and more efficient than fires. If you do use a fire, keep it small, use only dead wood and make sure it is out by dousing it with water and checking the ashes before leaving

6. Camp Carefully

When camping, leave no trace of your visit

7. Keep to the Track

By keeping to the track, where one exists, you lessen the chance of damaging fragile plants



8. Consider Others

People visit the backcountry and rural areas for many different reasons. Be considerate of other visitors who also have the right to enjoy the natural environment.

9. Respect our Cultural Heritage

Many places in New Zealand have a spiritual and historical significance. Treat these places with consideration and respect.

10. Enjoy Your Visit

Enjoy your outdoor experience. Take a last look before leaving an area; will the next visitor know that you have been there? Protect the environment for your own sake, for the sake of those who come after you and for the environment itself
Introduce the visitor. Explain who he/she is and his/her role in the organisation and ask them to demonstrate appropriate behaviour. Suggest to the girls that they will be tested on all that they are taught, so it will be helpful for them to listen carefully.

Main Teaching/Activity Session: 40minutes

Material for this teaching session needs to cover the practical requirements for the Trax Award. The objectives of the award can be spelled out to the visiting speaker ahead of time so that the main points can be covered effectively. If your location for the night is the beach, arrange the visitor to speak about dune care or wildlife conservation. For bush locations, the speaker should cover forest and bird life

conservation; for rivers and lakes ask them to talk about the relevant issues surrounding those habitats.

The best activities are those that the girls can be involved in directly - where they can DO things, like planting trees or collecting plastics washed up on the beach or pulling out introduced plants from a scenic reserve.

This section of the programme can be handed over to the visitor. He/she may have his/her own programme or talk, which may differ from the specific requirements of the Trax Award. This is not an issue. As long as the main principals of the award are met, the session can qualify all girls who attend to earn the award. Be prepared with a game or other activity in case he/she finishes with time to spare, use up spare time at the end with ball or other games.

Ask one of the girls at the beginning of the night if, at the end of the evening, she would thank the visitor for coming to talk to the group. You can add to this but be careful not to overshadow what the child has already said. (You want the child to feel as though her thanks are enough)

Coaches Tip:

Ensure that there is a practical component included in the evening's programme and maybe have some games organised that are relevant to the topic.

Activities:

Include any other activities that may be relevant to the area you are visiting eg

- If is safe to do so, set and light a fire so the girls can toast marshmallows.
- Provide rubber gloves for all girls, and together set about cleaning up the area you are in. Take several supermarket bags that the girls can use to put the rubbish in.
- If at the beach, you could include a sand castle competition for the girls.
- Discuss with the girls what they can do to help preserve our NZ environment.
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Notices and home time:

- Assemble the whole unit together as one group using the whistle. Settle them so you can make announcements.
- Make sure you tell them about the next week's programme so they get excited about coming next week and hopefully they will bring their friends.
- Award points for teams, give out prizes/awards
- Close in prayer and hand out notices after the prayer. After this, release them to their parents and they are free to go home.

