



GREENSCAPE

YOUTH WORKERS NAVIGATING NATURE

INNOVATIVE WAYS TO
ENGAGE YOUTH IN YOUR
ACTIVITIES

2024  SKAUDVILĖ

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ABOUT THE PROJECT

The urgency of climate change and its profound impact on future generations demand immediate and sustained action. This project, titled "GreenScape: Youth Workers Navigating Nature," seeks to bridge the critical gap between youth development and environmental sustainability. By integrating environmental education and activism into youth work, we aim to empower young people to become informed, proactive stewards of the planet.

In collaboration with a network of organizations—including experienced Erasmus+ partners—we are designing a comprehensive program that merges non-formal education, volunteerism, and environmental stewardship. A core focus will be on exploring nature-based activities and their application in youth work. Additionally, the project will emphasize future cooperation, fostering partnerships, and developing innovative ideas for upcoming initiatives.

Our objectives are:

- Raise environmental awareness: educate youth workers and young people about pressing environmental issues and the principles of sustainability.
- Promote actionable engagement: involve young people in hands-on environmental activities such as clean-ups, waste management initiatives, and workshops on sustainable living.
- Build a collaborative network: establish a strong network of organizations and individuals committed to youth development and environmental sustainability.
- Develop practical resources: create a toolkit of resources and best practices for youth workers to integrate environmental education into their programs effectively.

PARTNERS





BEST PRACTICES

EMBRACING YOUR SURROUNDINGS AND LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE

One of the simplest yet most effective ways to innovate in youth work is by utilizing the resources and infrastructure already available in your community. It's cost-effective, fosters local engagement, and introduces participants to activities they may not have encountered before.

Example: Disc golf in Skaudvilė

During the Erasmus+ project "Greenscape: youth workers navigating nature", we demonstrated the power of this principle by integrating a unique activity—Disc Golf training. Thanks to Skaudvilė's dedicated disc golf course and the expertise of local enthusiast Kęstutis Baršys, participants had the opportunity to learn and play this engaging game.

This activity not only provided a fun way to unwind after project preparations but also introduced youth workers to a new, accessible activity they can adapt in their communities. Skaudvilė's youth joined in, making the session an excellent example of fostering intergenerational and cross-cultural connections.

After the game, participants explored the Skaudvilė Open Youth Space, a cozy, well-maintained area for young people. They discovered games, activities, and the importance of creating inviting spaces that nurture creativity and connection.



TIPS AND TRICKS:

- Research local gems. Identify unique venues or activities in your area that can be integrated into your programs.
- Collaborate with locals. Engage local experts or enthusiasts to enrich the experience and strengthen community ties.
- Promote accessibility. Choose activities that are easy to organize and inclusive for all participants.
- Combine fun with learning. Use engaging activities like disc golf to teach broader lessons on teamwork, strategy, or sustainability.

Incorporating local infrastructure like Skaudvilė's disc golf course or youth spaces into youth work demonstrates how creative use of surroundings can leave a lasting impression on participants while fostering local pride and connection.





ORGANIZING LOCAL ENGAGEMENT EVENTS

Local engagement events are an excellent way to strengthen community ties, involve diverse groups, and leave a positive environmental and social impact. These events create opportunities for shared learning, collaboration, and fun while addressing local challenges.

On June 20, during the project "GreenScape: Youth Workers Navigating Nature," we organized an International Summer Picnic in Skaudvilė in partnership with Tauragės district Skaudvilė Gymnasium, Skaudvilė Education and Child Welfare Center, and TAS - Tauragės Apskritis Stalės.

The day began with participants and locals embarking on three separate routes to clean up litter while engaging in unique activities organized by international guests. Along the way, participants:

- played interactive games from different cultural traditions,
- planted flowers to beautify the community,
- learned water filtration techniques, and
- took part in other creative and educational activities.

The event showcased the power of community collaboration and emphasized the importance of hands-on, interactive experiences for fostering environmental awareness.

TIPS AND TRICKS:

- involve local organizations. Collaborate with schools, community centers, and local initiatives to increase impact and participation.
- integrate diverse activities. Offer a mix of educational, practical, and fun tasks to cater to different interests and skill levels.
- emphasize cultural exchange. Invite international participants to share games, knowledge, or traditions for a richer experience.
- document and share. Capture moments and share them on social media to inspire others and showcase the impact of the event.



SOCIAL CAPITAL: COLLABORATE WITH CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS AND ENTHUSIASTS

Local cultural education is a powerful way to connect participants with the heritage and traditions of a community. Cultural institutions and groups often bring passion and expertise, making them ideal partners for creating meaningful and engaging experiences.

Example: Cultural immersion in Skaudvilė

- tasting traditional Skaudvilė dumplings, known as *kleckai*, through the hands-on “*Im i met*” educational session,
- enjoying live performances by Joris and Matas from the folklore ensemble “*Inkstiliuks*” who showcased the unique sounds of the *bandonija*,

These activities provided participants with a taste of local traditions while fostering collaboration with the community and cultural institutions.

TIPS AND TRICKS:

- reach out to local cultural groups. Most are eager to share their knowledge and traditions and are open to partnerships.
- include interactive elements. Hands-on workshops like food preparation or music sessions create lasting impressions.
- blend cultural and social activities. Adding games or sports alongside cultural education can make the experience more dynamic and inclusive.
- show appreciation. Acknowledge the contributions of cultural partners and volunteers to strengthen relationships.

Collaborating with cultural institutions not only enriches the activities but also highlights the value of preserving and celebrating local heritage. Events like these inspire participants to carry forward the lessons and traditions they’ve experienced.



UNITING MULTIPLE INITIATIVES INTO A SINGLE EVENT

Bringing together various activities and stakeholders into one event maximizes impact, fosters collaboration, and creates an inclusive, dynamic experience. By offering something for everyone, you ensure broad engagement and lasting connections.

Example: International summer picnic in Skaudvilė.

As part of the project, we organized an International Summer Picnic that brought together local youth, teachers, and youth workers from across the region. The event's highlight was a spirited volleyball tournament featuring 11 teams competing for the title of the best.

Alongside the tournament, participants arranged a variety of engaging activities, including:

- creating sounds from electronic signals,
- playing giant Jenga,
- face painting,
- crafting survival bracelets,
- exploring art therapy, and more.

These diverse activities ensured that everyone—regardless of age or interest—had a way to participate and connect.

TIPS AND TRICKS:

- plan diverse activities. Cater to different interests by incorporating sports, arts, and hands-on workshops.
- involve all stakeholders. Invite local youth, educators, and community members to create a vibrant, inclusive atmosphere.
- encourage participant-led activities. Empower participants to design and lead sessions, fostering creativity and ownership.
- conclude with a unifying event. A central activity like a tournament or performance can bring everyone together and create lasting memories.

By uniting multiple initiatives into one cohesive event, the International Summer Picnic exemplified how collaboration and diversity can elevate youth work. Participants left inspired, connected, and eager to bring similar initiatives to their own communities.

POLITICALL MAGAZINE

PolitiCALL is a best practice to engage young people developed by the Romanian Humanist Association. It all started in 2009 when a group of people decided to launch an online journalistic project in order to contribute to the understanding of international actualities. The key positions for running the magazine are occupied by people with experience in the field, and all articles are written by volunteers. Besides the online magazine, we also have social media posts where the most important news is posted.

Target group: Young people passionate about the topic of your NGO

Aim: To engage young people by involving them in the creation of a magazine. This initiative not only keeps them actively involved but also helps them develop critical thinking skills through the process of researching, filtering, and creating content.

Objectives:

- Engage and empower youth
- Develop critical thinking skills
- Build community and support

Materials: Canva or other editing programs, technological devices

How to do this:

Establish the main topic of the magazine (e.g. international politics journalism). Create a website & the social media pages you want to disseminate the information. Decide how many articles and posts you want to have. Decide how many volunteers you need. Train volunteers on how to find information and filter it. Make the posts

“EDUCATION THROUGH INFORMATION”



Home / A fost azi în lume / 2024 / A fost 21 iunie în lume – Guvernul militar din Niger a revocat licența de operare a producătorului francez de combustibil nuclear Orano. Oficialii armeni au anunțat recunoașterea Palestinei drept stat, iar Curtea Supremă a SUA a hotărât că persoanele supuse unor ordine de restricție pentru suspiciuni de violență domestică nu au dreptul de a deține arme



Sursa foto: Getty Images/BBC News

A FOST 21 IUNIE ÎN LUME – GUVERNUL MILITAR DIN NIGER A REVOCAT LICENȚA DE OPERARE A PRODUCĂTORULUI FRANCEZ DE COMBUSTIBIL NUCLEAR ORANO, OFICIALII ARMENI AU ANUNȚAT RECUNOAȘTEREA PALESTINEI DREPT STAT, IAR CURTEA SUPREMĂ A SUA A HOTĂRĂT CĂ PERSOANELE SUPUSE UNOR ORDINE DE RESTRICȚIE PENTRU SUSPICIUNI DE VIOLENȚĂ DOMESTICĂ NU AU DREPTUL DE A DEȚINE ARME

INOVATIVE

METHODS



ECO-HACKATHON

Target group: Youth aged 15–30 years; 20–50 participants, divided into small teams (4–6 members each).

Aim: To foster innovative thinking and problem-solving skills by engaging youth in addressing environmental challenges.

Objectives:

- Develop creative, actionable solutions to real-world environmental problems.
- Enhance teamwork, critical thinking, and presentation skills.
- Inspire youth to take leadership roles in sustainability initiatives.

Materials:

- Venue with tables and chairs for group work.
- Whiteboards or flipcharts, markers, and sticky notes.
- Access to computers or tablets with internet connectivity.
- Presentation tools (projector, screen, microphone).
- Snacks and drinks to keep participants energized.
- Prizes or certificates for winning teams.

Step-by-step instructions

- Identify a specific theme or problem (e.g., reducing plastic waste, promoting renewable energy).
- Invite local environmental experts or entrepreneurs to act as mentors or judges.
- Create a schedule (e.g., introduction, brainstorming, prototype development, presentations).
- Begin with an icebreaker activity to energize participants.
- Explain the challenge and rules. Provide examples of successful eco-innovations.
- Teams brainstorm ideas and narrow them down to one viable concept.
- Mentors rotate among groups to provide guidance.
- Teams design their solutions, which may include prototypes, campaigns, or business models.
- Allocate time for refinement and testing.
- Teams present their solutions to the judges in a 5–10 minute pitch.
- Judges evaluate based on creativity, feasibility, and impact.
- Announce winners and distribute prizes or certificates.

Tips and tricks

- Provide a diverse set of materials (e.g., recycled items for prototypes).
- Encourage participants to think globally but act locally.
- Use social media to showcase the event and participants' solutions.



GREEN CHALLENGES

Target group: Youth aged 12–25 years; any size, individual participants or small teams (2–5 members).

Aim: To promote sustainable habits through engaging, gamified activities.

Objectives:

- Encourage youth to adopt eco-friendly practices in their daily lives.
- Raise awareness about the environmental impact of individual actions.
- Foster a spirit of healthy competition and teamwork.

Materials:

- A list of challenges (e.g., reduce plastic use, bike to school, plant a tree).
- Digital or printed challenge tracker.
- Incentives or certificates for participants.

Step-by-step instructions

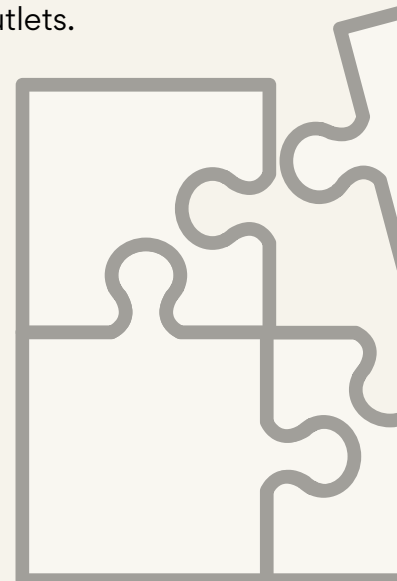
- Develop a set of achievable and measurable challenges.
- Create a registration form for participants or teams.
- Host a kickoff event to explain the rules and inspire participants.
- Share resources (e.g., tips for reducing waste or conserving energy).
- Participants track their progress using the challenge tracker.
- Encourage sharing updates on social media using a specific hashtag.
- Check in weekly to gather updates and provide encouragement.
- Offer bonus points for creative solutions or extra efforts.
- Host a closing event to celebrate participants and announce winners.
- Highlight exceptional efforts through social media or local media outlets.

Tips and tricks

- Collaborate with local businesses for sponsorships or rewards.
- Design challenges that are inclusive and accessible to all participants.
- Use storytelling to highlight success stories and inspire others.

Examples of challenges

- Avoid single-use plastics for one week and use sustainable alternatives.
- Implement at least three energy-saving actions in your household.
- Identify and address a local environmental issue through direct action.



COMMUNITY SEED PLANTING



Target group: Youth aged 10–25 years; 15–30 participants per session.

Aim: To engage youth in reforestation efforts by planting seeds, encouraging a deeper connection to nature.

Objectives:

- Educate participants about the importance of biodiversity and ecosystem restoration.
- Foster environmental responsibility through hands-on action.

Materials:

- Native seeds appropriate for the local environment.
- Small pots or biodegradable seedling containers.
- Soil or compost.
- Watering cans or spray bottles.
- Labels or markers for each participant to personalize their seeds.

Step-by-step instructions

- Fill pots or containers with soil, leaving space at the top.
- Place 2–3 seeds in the center of each pot, pressing them gently into the soil.
- Cover the seeds lightly with a thin layer of soil.
- Water the soil gently to moisten it.
- Label the pots with participant names or plant species.
- Place pots in a sunny location and ensure they are watered regularly.

Tips and tricks

- Use a variety of native tree seeds to increase biodiversity.
- Encourage participants to take their pots home and monitor growth.
- Create a shared logbook for participants to track seedling progress.

NATURE MANDALA

Target group: Youth aged 8–20 years; 10–25 participants per session.

Aim: To foster creativity and mindfulness through nature-inspired art.

Objectives:

- Encourage participants to connect with nature and appreciate its diversity.
- Promote sustainability by using natural, biodegradable materials.
- Develop teamwork and artistic expression.

Materials:

- Natural items collected responsibly (leaves, flowers, stones, sticks).
- A large open space for creating mandalas.
- Cameras or smartphones for capturing completed mandalas.

Step-by-step instructions

- Guide participants in collecting natural materials without harming plants or wildlife.
- Select a flat, open space for creating the mandala.
- Explain the concept of mandalas and their cultural significance.
- Demonstrate a simple mandala design.
- Divide participants into small groups or let individuals create their designs.
- Allow time for arranging materials into intricate, symmetrical patterns.
- Have participants present their mandalas and share the inspiration behind them.
- Discuss the importance of sustainability and using eco-friendly materials.
- Take photos of the mandalas to share on social media or for future inspiration.
- Encourage participants to think about creating art using natural materials in their daily lives.

Tips and tricks

- Use the activity to teach about local flora and fauna.
- Set a time limit to keep participants engaged.
- Provide an opportunity for participants to journal or sketch their designs afterward.

ECO-THEATER

Target group: Youth aged 12–25 years; 10–20 participants per group.

Aim: To creatively raise awareness about environmental issues through theatrical expression and storytelling.

Objectives:

- Encourage participants to explore and express their views on green topics.
- Build teamwork and public speaking skills.
- Inspire audiences to think critically about sustainability.

Materials:

- Scripts or scenarios (or resources to create them).
- Recycled materials for costumes and props.
- A stage or open space for performances.

Step-by-step instructions

- Divide participants into small groups and assign or brainstorm environmental topics (e.g., deforestation, pollution, or renewable energy).
- Guide groups in writing short skits or improvising based on their topics.
- Create props and costumes using recyclable or natural materials.
- Practice performances with feedback on delivery and engagement.
- Host a final performance for peers, family, or the community.

Tips and tricks

- Encourage humor and creativity to make the message engaging.
- Collaborate with schools or local theaters to provide a venue.

SUSTAINABLE FASHION WORKSHOP

Target group: Youth aged 13–30 years; 10–25 participants per session.

Aim: To educate participants about the environmental impact of fast fashion and inspire them to adopt sustainable practices.

Objectives:

- Promote awareness about textile waste and its alternatives.
- Foster creativity through upcycling and DIY techniques.
- Equip participants with practical skills for sustainable fashion.

Materials:

- Old clothes and textiles.
- Sewing machines, needles, and thread.
- Scissors, fabric glue, and embellishments (buttons, patches).

Step-by-step instructions

- Begin with a brief introduction about fast fashion's impact on the environment.
- Provide examples of upcycled fashion projects for inspiration.
- Distribute materials and guide participants in redesigning old clothes.
- Organize a mini-fashion show to showcase the creations.

Tips and tricks

- Partner with second-hand stores for donated materials.
- Include simple no-sew projects for those new to upcycling.



CLIMATE ACTION DEBATE



Target group: Youth aged 15–30 years; 10–20 participants per debate session.

Aim: To encourage critical thinking and public speaking skills by engaging participants in structured debates about climate change and sustainability.

Objectives:

- Foster understanding of environmental issues from multiple perspectives.
- Build argumentation and presentation skills.
- Encourage respectful dialogue on complex topics.

Materials:

- Debate topics and guidelines.
- Stopwatch or timer.
- Optional: judges' scorecards for feedback.

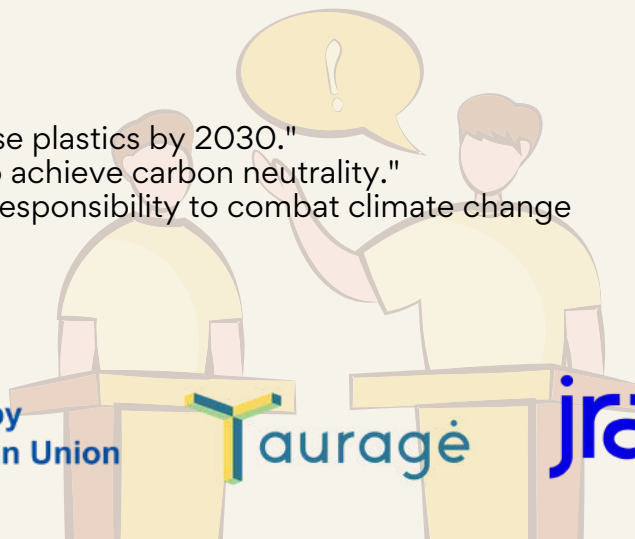
Step-by-step instructions

- Select topics (e.g., "Should governments impose higher taxes on non-renewable energy companies?").
- Divide participants into affirmative and opposing teams.
- Provide preparation time to research and formulate arguments.
- Conduct the debate in rounds, allowing time for opening statements, rebuttals, and closing arguments.
- Facilitate a reflection session to discuss key takeaways.

Tips and tricks

- Use real-world examples and statistics to ground the debate.
- Encourage shy participants to contribute by assigning supporting roles (e.g., fact-checker).

Examples of statements

- "Governments should ban all single-use plastics by 2030."
 - "Nuclear energy is the best solution to achieve carbon neutrality."
 - "Developed countries have a greater responsibility to combat climate change than developing countries."
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ENVIRONMENTAL PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST

Target group: Youth aged 12–25 years; unlimited participants.

Aim: To encourage participants to observe and document environmental beauty and challenges through photography.

Objectives:

- Inspire a deeper appreciation of nature and sustainability issues.
- Provide a platform for creative expression.
- Raise awareness about local environmental concerns.

Materials:

- Cameras or smartphones.
- Contest guidelines with themes (e.g., “Nature’s Beauty” or “Pollution in My Community”).
- Online or physical space to display entries.

Step-by-step instructions

- Announce the contest, providing clear guidelines on themes, deadlines, and submission formats.
- Encourage participants to explore their communities and capture meaningful photos.
- Collect submissions and display them online or in a physical gallery.
- Invite the community to vote or involve a panel of judges to select winners.
- Recognize winners with eco-friendly prizes or certificates.

Tips and tricks

- Use the contest as part of a larger environmental awareness campaign.
- Offer workshops on photography basics for beginners.

ZERO-WASTE LIFESTYLE GAME

Target group: Youth aged 10–20 years; 10–30 participants per session.

Aim: To educate participants on reducing waste in everyday life through a fun, interactive simulation.

Objectives:

- Highlight the environmental impact of daily habits.
- Teach practical zero-waste strategies.
- Encourage participants to make sustainable choices.

Materials:

- Game cards with scenarios (e.g., “What to do with leftover food?”).
- Points or tokens to reward sustainable choices.
- Recyclable or reusable items for demonstration.

Step-by-step instructions

- Divide participants into small teams.
- Present real-life scenarios where they must make choices (e.g., “You forgot your reusable cup—what do you do?”).
- Teams discuss and select an action, earning or losing points based on the environmental impact.
- Repeat for several rounds, covering topics like recycling, food waste, or eco-friendly shopping.
- Tally scores and announce the most sustainable team.

Tips and tricks

- Use relatable scenarios to keep the game engaging.
- Provide small prizes like reusable items for winners.



SCOUTING BASICS

Target group: Youth aged 12–18 years; 15–25 participants per session.

Aim: To provide youth with fundamental scouting and survival skills, fostering confidence and a deeper connection with nature.

Objectives:

- Teach participants how to navigate and adapt in natural environments.
- Provide hands-on experience in essential survival techniques.
- Encourage creativity and resourcefulness by using natural materials.

Materials:

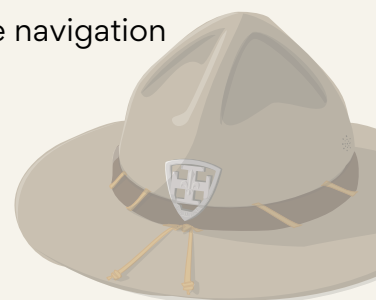
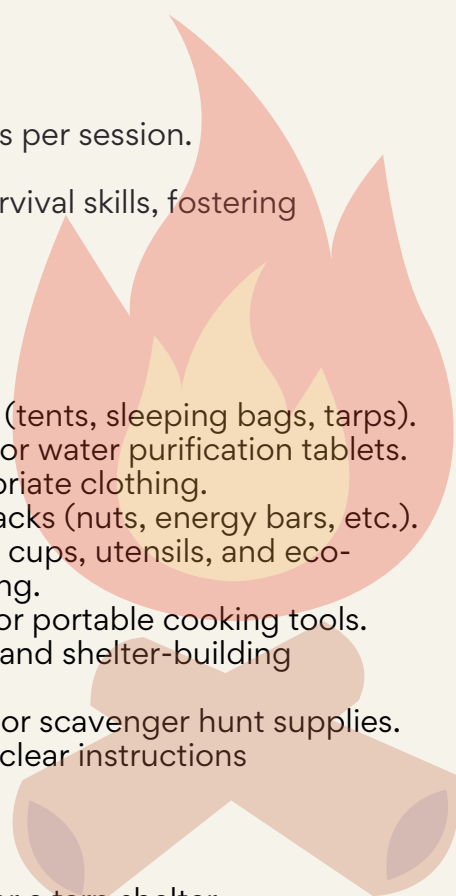
- Camping basics (tents, sleeping bags, tarps).
- Drinkable water or water purification tablets.
- Weather-appropriate clothing.
- High-protein snacks (nuts, energy bars, etc.).
- Reusable plates, cups, utensils, and eco-friendly packaging.
- Camping stove or portable cooking tools.
- Ropes for knots and shelter-building exercises.
- Outdoor games or scavenger hunt supplies.
- First aid kit with clear instructions

Step-by-step instructions

- Begin with a demonstration on how to set up a tent or a tarp shelter.
- Assign small teams to pitch their tents under guidance.
- Teach participants how to read a map and use a compass.
- Conduct a navigation exercise where participants locate marked points in the area.
- Demonstrate how to identify drinkable water sources or use water purification tools.
- Teach basic fire-starting techniques using matches, fire starters, or natural materials.
- Show how to tie essential knots and use ropes for shelter-building or emergency situations.
- Guide participants in crafting tools or items from natural materials (e.g., making utensils from wood, creating a small raft with branches).
- Emphasize sustainable practices and leaving no trace behind.
- Teach participants how to safely use a camping stove.
- Assign small groups to prepare simple meals using the camping gear and reusable utensils.
- Conduct a quick session on treating common outdoor injuries (e.g., cuts, sprains, dehydration).
- Wrap up with team-building games or a scavenger hunt to reinforce navigation and collaboration skills.

Tips and tricks

- Use relatable scenarios to keep the game engaging.
- Provide small prizes like reusable items for winners.



COOKING WORKSHOP

Target group: Youth aged 12–25 years; 10–20 participants per session.

Aim: To teach youth basic cooking skills while fostering independence, promoting healthy eating habits, and cultivating an appreciation for cultural diversity and sustainability.

Objectives:

- Develop participants' confidence and independence through meal preparation.
- Promote healthy eating and nutritional awareness.
- Encourage teamwork and collaboration in a kitchen environment.
- Increase cultural appreciation by exploring global cuisines and food traditions.
- Highlight sustainable food practices using fresh, locally sourced ingredients.

Materials:

- Ingredients for the chosen recipe (fresh, organic, and locally sourced if possible).
- Cooking utensils (knives, cutting boards, bowls, pans, etc.).
- Cleaning materials (soap, sponges, towels).
- Recipe cards or printed instructions.
- Optional: cultural items or visuals (e.g., flags, traditional music) related to the cuisine.

Step-by-step instructions

- Choose a simple, healthy recipe representative of a specific culture or region.
- Gather ingredients and set up a clean and organized workspace.
- Brief participants on kitchen safety and the cultural background of the dish.
- Wash and prepare ingredients, demonstrating safe techniques.
- Measure ingredients according to the recipe.
- Guide participants through the cooking process step-by-step.
- Plate the finished dish attractively.
- Taste and discuss flavors, textures, and cultural insights.
- Clean up the workspace and wash utensils.

Tips and tricks

- Adapt recipes for dietary restrictions (e.g., vegetarian or gluten-free options).
- Share anecdotes or historical facts about the dish's cultural significance.
- Use the opportunity to highlight the nutritional benefits of each ingredient.
- Visit a local farmers' market or garden beforehand to source fresh ingredients together.
- Teach waste-reducing techniques, such as composting peels or repurposing leftovers.
- Nature Connection: Use organic, fresh, and locally sourced ingredients to emphasize sustainability and eco-consciousness.
- Cultural Connection: Choose recipes from different regions to explore global diversity. Discuss the role of certain dishes in their cultures (e.g., festival foods, comfort meals, or ceremonial dishes).



GREENSCAPE

YOUTH WORKERS NAVIGATING NATURE

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