

# THE TEEN RANGER PROJECT

What's it all about?



# So what is Teen Rangers all about?

It is an environmental youth work project, managed by Tracy Hayes, initially on behalf of Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust in association with LCC Country Parks Service

It has been funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund Young Roots

With support and guidance from Connexions, LCC Youth Service and The Wildlife Trusts' National Office

It's about providing positive experiences for young people

We encourage them to find out for themselves what they CAN do

Together we discover, explore and conserve natural places

We share our experiences

We relax and enjoy the company of friends and the peacefulness of nature

The Teen Ranger Project aims to provide a positive experience for young people, aged 13-19 in the natural environment.

But why did I decide to launch a project like this?

# Because I was ANGRY!

And luckily my employers allowed me the responsibility and freedom to attempt to deal with my anger in a positive way.

What made me angry? Comments like these -

# **We live in a time of lawlessness & disrespect**

**"When I was young, we were taught to be discreet and respectful of elders, but the present youth are exceedingly disrespectful and impatient of restraint".**

"We live in a decaying age.  
Young people no longer respect  
their parents.  
They are rude and impatient.  
They ...have no self control."

“What is happening to our young people?

They disrespect their elders, they disobey their parents.

They ignore the law. They riot in the streets inflamed with wild notions.

Their morals are decaying. What is to become of them?”



“The young people of today think of nothing but themselves...

As for the girls, they are forward, immodest and unladylike in speech, behaviour and dress.”

Some of the most annoying,  
everyday problems faced by  
teachers -

talking, chewing gum, making  
noise, running in the halls,  
improper clothing and littering.

# Is this a new phenomenon?

No – the quotes I've just used reflect 8000 years of anti-social behaviour by young people



# What HAS changed?

As a society we are less tolerant

We have much easier access to media to highlight and discuss issues

We all – especially young people – have less access to nature and to outdoor play.

# And it is in danger of getting worse

Pupils at a new £46 million “super school” will have no break and no playground because the headmaster does not agree with the concepts.

The head believes that learning would improve if pupils had to concentrate on lessons throughout the day. He said: “I want the teachers teaching and the children learning at the school. If children are enjoying lessons, then there will be no need to go and run off steam outside.”

# A bit nearer home!

## Parents face £100 fine if children play football in the street

For generations, children with energy to burn have enjoyed a kickabout in the street.

Now, however, their simple pleasure has been outlawed by the local council which said their games of street soccer 'posed a danger' to the public.

The heartbroken children have also been ordered to remove any toys from the street, including dolls and bikes, because they too are a "hazard".

# Nature deficit disorder

"For tens of thousands of years, for all of human history, human children went outside and played or worked in nature. In two or three decades, we are seeing the potential disappearance of that. It's wired in us, in our DNA, to be in nature, and the potential end of that has to have enormous implications, in terms of mental, physical, spiritual health."

Richard Louv, author of *Last Child in the Woods*

# A restorative environment

Too much directed attention leads to ‘directed-attention fatigue’ – marked by impulsive behaviour, irritation, agitation, and inability to concentrate

An environment that’s strong on fascination enables concentration to be automatic – it helps relieve fatigue

In the words of John Borroughs “I go to nature to be soothed and healed, and to have my senses put in tune once more”



**So...**

Does it matter if young people don't visit parks or nature reserves or help with conservation work?

Do WE care whether they care?

# YES!

It's a cliché – but none of us can live for ever

The young people of today are the decision makers of tomorrow

We have a duty to make our work sustainable – otherwise, why are WE bothering?

# Final quote

“The memory should be specially taxed in youth, since it is then that it is strongest and most tenacious.

But in choosing the things that should be committed to memory the utmost care and forethought must be exercised as lessons well learnt in youth are never forgotten.”

Arthur Schopenhauer

This has been a very quick summary of some of the theory behind the project – if you want more information, please contact me

Thank you for your patience – in true Teen Ranger style – it's tea and biscuit time!