

Youth teambuilding development

Through Teambuilding, Adventure, Growth

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Leave behind standardized testing, textbooks and pencils—it's time to have fun while learning. Rubber chickens, sling-shots, duct tape and noise are some of the learning resources used in North American River Runners TAG program. TAG stands for Teambuilding, Adventure and Growth.

TAG facilitators use hands-on, active programming to challenge participants to boldly dive outside normal boundaries and have new and unique experiences outside the classroom — way outside!

North American River Runners (NARR) is a premier whitewater rafting resort located in the New River Gorge area of Southern West Virginia. The forests, mountains, and America's best whitewater rivers provide a setting where activities can challenge individuals and — at the same time — inspire cooperation. NARR's TAG program hosts over 2,000 students of all ages every year.

There is learning power in facilitated outdoor group experiences, explains president and founder Frank Lukacs. We value the opportunity to provide these experiences to today's students.

In the 10 years that TAG has been working with students, the program has grown by leaps and bounds as more groups discover the value of Experiential Education.

For example, a team will be given a physical task such as successfully moving everyone



across a rope obstacle called the Spiders Web. A process takes place. Did everyone want to be the leader? Did they all start moving without considering the options? Did they develop a method for listening to ideas from all the team members? Did they accomplish their objective? These are just some of the questions TAG facilitators use to guide the group's learning process.

We wanted to tie in Bible teaching with activities out in nature, begins Kari Gathany, Girls Club director for Youth For Christ in Elkhart, Indiana. The group's program began with a rope course and rappelling the first day, rafting the second day, and ended with paintball games on the last day.

All of our goals were achieved, Ms. Gathany continues. We learned a lot about ourselves.

TAG facilitators encouraged us to come together as a team and work together. Everyone had a great time and we are all ready to go back to NARR again.

Each organization using the TAG program has a different set of goals and each program is custom designed to meet those needs. Many outdoor activities are used to help each organization achieve its goals including:

Whitewater Teambuilding —

Putting a group of youths into a raft is a naturally innovative teambuilding experience. Under the observant eye of a trained guide, a team of four to eight participants will have the task of maneuvering their raft through an area of the New River appropriate for their age group. Whitewater rafting provides high energy activity that places youths in a work-together situation. Participants face the forces of nature to enhance their appreciation of our physical environment, develop communication skills and value the advantages of working as a team.

The week-long trip includes a teams course, whitewater rafting and riverside camping, a high ropes course, a giant swing, a climbing wall, rappelling, hiking, story telling, a participatory music program provided by mountain musicians, volleyball, basketball and orienteering games.

more info

For more information about TAG, NARR's youth teambuilding program, call 1-800-950-2585 or visit www.NARR.com.