

GREY BRUCE CHILDREN'S WATER FESTIVAL



PLANNING GUIDE FOR GROUP LEADERS

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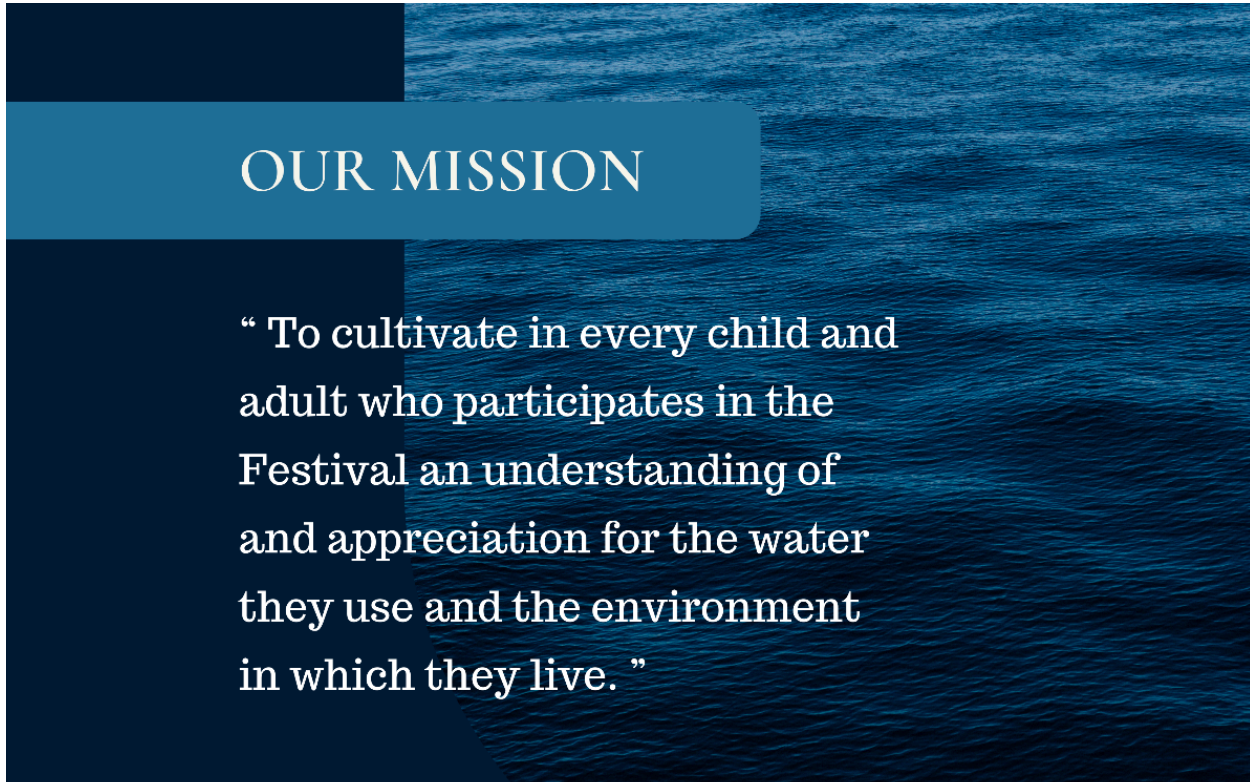
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OUR MISSION

“ To cultivate in every child and adult who participates in the Festival an understanding of and appreciation for the water they use and the environment in which they live. ”

Introduction

Water is the basis of all life on Earth. Without it nothing lives, nothing grows. Civilization was built on the availability of water –to grow food, to drink, to feed livestock, and on which to travel and trade. Water has turned the mill wheels, provided the basis of steam, produced electric power, and has become an element for virtually every industrial process.

In Ontario, we enjoy an abundant supply of water. The province is home to many freshwater lakes and rivers – including the Great Lakes, which are the largest group of freshwater lakes on Earth. We now understand that our water is under pressure and requires significant efforts to preserve and protect it now and for future generations.

Local School Boards, together with the organizing groups and sponsors, share a vision of the future that features informed and responsible citizens who appreciate the environment and proactively deal with environmental issues. The Grey Bruce Children's Water Festival helps nurture this awareness and understanding in the hope that the vision becomes a reality.

This planning guide prepares teachers for their students' participation in the festival and helps them to further develop the festival's themes in the classroom.

All activities:

- Reflect the beliefs that guide education in our region – accountability, quality, equity, partnerships, and a safe environment
- Are connected to the curriculum in ways that help students achieve the desired outcomes
- Are designed to be hands-on and experiential to enhance and personalize the learning experience.

Why is there a Water Festival in Grey Bruce?

Water plays an essential role in the economic, social, and industrial development of Ontario. As individuals we depend on water for our very lives. Communities have developed around water sources to support the growth of commerce, industry, and transportation.

On a provincial level our abundant water supply is a cornerstone of the success of our diversified economy and has played a key role in our ability to create and maintain a standard of living ranked among the best in the world. Our region is surrounded by Lake Huron and Georgian Bay, home to large river systems like the Saugeen and Beaver Rivers and contains several significant wetlands like the Greenock Swamp and the Bognor Marsh.

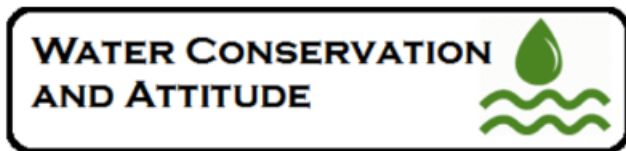
The Grey Bruce Children's Water Festival brings together the expertise of educators, water specialists and members of industry and government to provide students with the opportunity to discover the importance of water and the diversity of its uses in historical and modern times. Our particular focus is on the unique environmental features of the Grey-Bruce area. Hands-on activities, discussions, and demonstrations will challenge students to consider the importance of water to themselves as individuals and society at large. Interaction with industry professionals, water experts and enthusiastic educators highlight the experience.

The Grey Bruce Children's Water Festival inspires students to become water stewards in their classrooms and communities. By combining hands-on activities with messages relevant to their daily lives, students will "soak up" knowledge about the properties, uses, connections, and importance of water. Armed with this knowledge, students become aware of the value of conserving and protecting water.

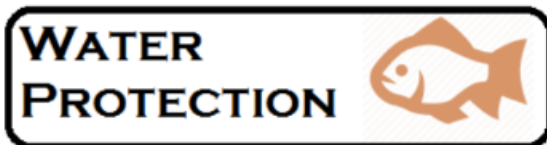
We look forward to seeing you and your students at the Grey Bruce Children's Water Festival!

Festival Purpose

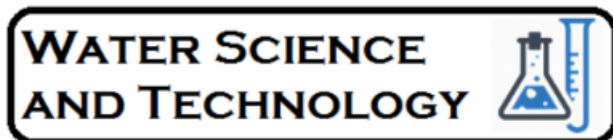
The key message of the Children's Water Festival is 'All living things need clean water to survive'. Activities are grouped into three themes with three key messages that are repeated throughout the festival to reinforce these learning objectives to the students.



1. We can both protect and pollute water.
2. There is a limited supply of fresh water on earth.
3. Using water wisely saves money and energy and is good for the environment.



1. It is easy to pollute water and much harder to clean it.
2. All living things depend on natural habitats. Protecting them protects water.
3. Clear water doesn't always mean clean water.



1. Water occurs naturally as a solid, liquid, and gas.
2. Water is found everywhere, in the air, on the ground, and underground.
3. We use science and innovation to clean and move water.

Festival Dates & Location

The 2026 festival is being held over 3 days: Wednesday May 20th, Thursday, May 21st and Friday, May 22nd. The festival is being held on the grounds of the Chesley Community Centre at 129 4th Avenue SE, Chesley ON. Busses will pull up the Community Centre main entrance upon arrival for registration and drop offs.

A Typical Day at the Festival

A great day at the festival requires lots of advanced planning. Typically, with more than 400 students and 100+ volunteers on-site each day, and nearly 50 activities spread out throughout the grounds, flexibility and patience is necessary.

9:30 a.m.	Students arrive, register and place backpacks and lunches at assigned tables in the arena, then head outside to the activities.
9:45 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.	Students visit indoor and outdoor activities throughout the site, spending approximately 10-15 minutes at each activity.
NEW 11:15 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.	NO LUNCH SHUTDOWN. The activities will close & re-open in sections, as per below. Students can eat anywhere on the grounds or at your designated table in Arena, just please be sure to tidy up wherever you eat.
11:15 - 11:45	CLOSED: Tent A, A-maze-ing Water Treatment, Pioneer Water Race, Use it or Lose it, Water Main Break.
11:45 - 12:15	CLOSED: Tent B, Limbo, Simply Divine, Off I Go, What's Up Doc?, The Curling Rink Area.
12:15 - 12:45	CLOSED: Tent C, Oil Slick, Bucket Brigade, Dripial Pursuit, Marsh Monsters.
2:00 p.m.	Activities close. Students head back to the arena, collect their bags and board their bus.

On Your Arrival

Students are to remain on the bus until greeted by a Festival Host who will provide initial information and instructions for entering. Please provide the Festival Host with an accurate count of students and adult leaders.

Your Student Groups

As a group leader, you are responsible for always accompanying the students in your group; this includes washroom breaks. With more than 400 students and 100 volunteers on-site each day, and with nearly 50 activities spread out throughout the grounds, the day can get a little hectic.

Please be aware of any medical conditions or allergies within your group. There is a first aid station on site. You can familiarize yourself with its location by viewing the [Festival Site Map](#) beforehand.

Festival Volunteers

Most of our volunteers are high school students, running the activities with support from their teachers and adult volunteers from our member organizations. They are learning about their activity as they present the information to your students throughout the day. Please support them where you can.

Adult volunteers are identifiable by their green coloured festival penny and are stationed throughout the site to oversee activities and provide assistance. If you need help or have a question, please direct it towards them.

Safety Protocol

If a student goes missing, please advise an adult volunteer immediately.

In the event of an emergency, such as sudden severe weather, you will hear three long siren blows. All students are to return to the arena to await further instructions.

It is important to ensure students do not leave the festival grounds. **The adjacent park and playground are out-of-bounds and not part of the festival.**

Activities

Activities are spread out throughout the site. It is best to begin at different spots to reduce congestion.

With more than 40 activities, it is not possible to visit them all in one day. A reasonable goal is 15 - 20 activities for the entire day.

Many activities share common themes and this ensures that all students will have a fun and educational day no matter which activities they visit. We recommend you look for open activities and try to return to busy ones once they are free to ensure the students can enjoy as many activities as possible.

Additional Information

We will have a 'Quench Buggy' refillable water station available for use on site. Students and group leaders are encouraged to bring their refillable water bottles.

Smoking and vaping are not permitted anywhere on site.

Lost and found items will be photographed and posted to our social media pages at the end of the festival if a member of your group has lost something.

Feel free to bring a camera! Post your photos to Facebook, Instagram or Twitter and tag us!

We will be distributing an evaluation to collect feedback at the end of your visit. We ask that you complete this at your convenience to help us make future festivals even better!

If you have any questions, please ask your teacher or contact our coordinator at gbcwaterfestival@gmail.com.

Information about our festival can be found at our website: www.waterfestival.ca.