

Residential and Day Programs

Owner: Tudi

Attendees: Jen Martin (Tremont), Becky (MacDowell), Jaime (TSS), Bethany (TSS), Hannah (TSS), Rob (TSS), Kevin (TSS), Judy Montgomery (Delaware Nature Center), Krsita Wright, Maggie (MacDowell)

Intro: Tudi's program is currently just day with occasional overnights. Would switching to residential programs be too hard on the facility and staff? What is the cost difference?

Why are you doing residential in this current time and economy?

Residential programs means that you are a destination and can have schools from farther away.

What about the financial burden of going to a residential center? Does it exclude urban or lower SES groups? Have a scholarship program!

Reasons for a residential program and other intro thoughts:

1. get immersed in the location rather than spending all of the time on the bus
2. day programs can be a teaser or for local groups that can't afford a res program
3. immersing the students allows us to address the goal of personal growth.
4. there are difference between 3 day and a 5 day program because it brings everything together and allows them to feel more at home and take ownership/develop a sense of place.
5. a 5 day program is better because it allows for intros and closure
6. yes, it is hard for the staff but which is more significant staff turnover or the educational experience
7. res or day should be decided by your mission. As EE professionals we want to do everything but it works better to focus on one type of program and do it well.
8. TSS preliminary research shows that the 5th graders remember the overnight experience.
9. even a one night res experience can be hard to sell in some places
10. with day programs you can have an on-going relationship with schools and classes which allows for a much longer experience for the students.
11. school programs allow you to be "field based" and fit in with the local setting and reduce costs because you don't need to manage a center or facility
12. difficult to have a residential program in a less populated location (like MT or WY)
13. a residential program can be "outside the community" as opposed to having your facility right in town. Ask the community what they want.

Within and without the community?

1. Are residential programs inherently outside the community?
2. Is this a problem?
3. In some cases the town doesn't have animosity they just don't know or the local schools don't bother because it is not enough of a novelty.
4. Resentment related to creation of the National Park.
5. Depends on the constituency (local churches with a history vs schools)

Benefits and costs for the staff.

1. At a day program you can have older staff with families and homes etc.
2. Reduce staff pressures by having different evening and day staff.
3. It can be a long day!
4. Staff live on site.
5. Establishing a grad program to have staff!
6. Lifestyle is an issue when you live and work at a residential center and then if there is limited turn over, there are few ways to move up.
7. Work hard and play hard (need off season as well)

What are the benefits for staff? Or the ways to retain residential staff?

1. Limit the number of hours worked
2. Allow teachers to make their own schedules (choose classes)

Do we just teach more slowly in a res program rather than really being “on” in a day program.?

1. No, some programs are highly structured and have curricula and this is the same for day and residential programs.
2. At TSS the instructional staff has more opportunity to develop a curriculum around to ideas selected by the teaches

Idea: ask schools to bring their own journal by downloading them from the website and then they are more invested in them.

What subtle messages are coming through the residential experience?

1. Huge opportunities to teach sustainable practices, expose them to new behaviors.
2. Setting the standard high and working with the chaperones to accept certain practices.
3. Students can bond with the staff and see them as role models.

Travel costs are high for day programs if the staff go to the school

One of the benefits of a year-long collaboration with schools is that the teachers can learn by observation. These programs are also very integrated in the school and the different subjects. More buy in from the teachers with a year-long program than at an RELC program and this is required for participation for the program.

New Question: Residential vs Day vs Multi-Day programs

What ever kind of programs you offer, how do you make sure it's not just a one-time thing (by working with the teachers or recruiting local volunteers)?