

Parents Edu



THE PARENTS' ROLE IN
THE OUT-OF-SCHOOL
EDUCATION



PaREntSEdU

The Parents' Role in the out-of-school Education of their children



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Outdoor activities

7. OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

a) Scouting

Scouting is one of the most popular after-school activities all over the world: it includes outdoor activities, such as hiking, camping, exploring, survival techniques, aquatics, backpacking and other outer sports, but it is also an informal method of education, since most of the activities seeks also for the development of intellectual, social and spiritual potentials of participants, with the aim of forming them as citizens and active members of their communities and based on the “learning by doing” principle .

The scouting movement is, generally, non-political, open to all people without distinction of origin, race or creed. Some of them are mixed while many others are only for men or women. It is important to know that most of the scouting organisations set the minimum age of 6 years old for getting involved in the activities.

Scouting organisations are spread all over Europe, with a great presence in many countries and a strong network at national, European and international levels. This is the reason why we recommend that parents individually or Parents Associations contact the scouting organisations rather than trying to organise by themselves scouting activities. Besides, most of the activities and materials that children use are usually for free, despite some of the activities, like camping and other that require a displacement, have a little cost (depending on the organisation).

Scouting organisations usually meet every week in specific local centres, where they organise the outdoor activities and emphasizing “good citizenship” values, loving nature and decision-making by young people in an age-appropriate manner. Groups are made up of similar aged children.

Scouting may be a great option for parents for after-school activities, because:

- It comprises physical activity, but activities go further with arts and crafts, citizenship development, community service, etc., trying to find a good balance among them,

- It emphasizes respect for nature, loyalty, obedience (to family, superiors), friendliness, cheerfulness, partnership, sportsmanship, self-sufficiency, among many other values,
- The activities and the methods are oriented to develop leadership skills and social participation,
- It is a good way of establishing social relationships and meet people from diverse origins,
- The high range of activities are focus on promote healthy lifestyle,
- Some of the activities (specifically camping) are planed during summer time,
- In recent times many Scouting organisations are introducing a new curriculum of informal education that comprises science, technology, engineering, and math, critical skills that may be relevant for the future.

It is very important that parents and/or Parents Associations make a first contact with scouting organisations in order to get to know each other and ensure that parents' values coincide with the scouting organisations, as well as to know if the child feels comfortable.

Regardless of the positive purposes and values scouting may transmit, it has to be noted that some type of families may not feel identified with organisations that have an important religious component and a remarkable number have problems to accept diversity.

Analysis of legal forms of out-of-school education in partner countries

Poland

“Harcerstwo” – Polish social and educational / pedagogical movement, which is part of the scout movement. Based on service, self-improvement (working on yourself) and brotherhood. The rules of the Scout's behaviour are determined by the Scouting and Scout Law. The principles of the behaviour of the student are determined by the Promise of the “Zuch” and the Law of the “Zuch”. The scout movement is formalized in a number of scouting organizations working in the country and abroad (among Polish migrants), based on the above principles and the unique scouting method.

Currently, the name “harcerstwo” is usually used as the term for the Polish version of scouting, often also (e.g. in films, literature) scouts from other countries are called “harcerze”, but there are large differences in scouting in individual countries, and sometimes the distinction between scouting and scouting is justified.

Portugal

The Movement scouting is present in Portugal both confessional and no confessional organized as federations and recognized by the Portuguese Institute of Sport and Youth.

Spain

In association with Scouting Clubs.

Macedonia

The Scout association of Macedonia is a non-governmental organization which functions on the entire territory of Republic of Macedonia with 14 active scout groups. With our scout method and informal education we tend to impose on the young as an organization in which the young will find their place and to hoist their character, actively including themselves in the society making decisions which make the world a better place to live in.

France

6 youth associations supported by the Minister of the Youth and Sports and state-approved: *“les Eclaireuses et Eclaireurs de France, les Eclaireuses et Eclaireurs Israélites de France, les Eclaireurs de la nature, les Eclaireuses et Eclaireurs Unionistes de France, les Scouts et Guides de France et les Scouts Musulmans de France”*.

In France, more than 125 000 scouts and guide among whom 30 000 voluntary between 17 and 25 years old which represents 814 groups.

Turkey

Schools can organise scouting activities and camps are organised with special permits.

Romania

Romanian Scouts; in full "National Organization of Romanian Scouts" is the primary national Scouting organization of Romania. Founded in 1913, it became a member of the World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM) in 1993.

Romania was a founding member of the WOSM, having formally had Scouts between 1913 and 1937.

After the Revolution of 1989, former Scouts and others acted for the revival of Scouting in Romania. Cercetaşii României was again established in 1991, and in 1993 gained recognition by the World Bureau of the WOSM. It is co-educational and is present in more than 50 localities and has about 4000 members.

b) Hiking, climbing, group games, etc.

Hiking, climbing and, in general, outdoor activities, are much recommended for children: they need to spend time outside, learn about nature and exploring the environment. This type of activities allows children to learn about animals and their habitats as well as about plants and eco-systems that are nearby their living place. To reinforce this learning it is very interesting to carry out group games about many

aspects, such as nature games, make art with natural materials, fire safety, fire building, tracking, wild edible plant identification and shelter building, among many others.

This kind of activities is recommended for children above 5, in groups no bigger than 12, with at least two adults, preferably parents. To this end, most of the hiking, climbing and outdoor activities are usually carried out on weekends. Thus, a high level of commitment by parents and engagement with Parents Associations and school is very important to make these activities real and affordable. In any case, clubs for this kind of activities are a very good option, too; they are very common in Europe, but it may be hard to find them in urban settings.

Hiking, climbing and outdoors activities have clear benefits in children:

- Extend children's knowledge about nature and the importance of taking care of it,
- Will be more confident about them, since the activities are conceived to develop their abilities and knowledge,
- Positive health effects: endurance and breath fresh air,
- Will increase their sociability and empathize with animals and nature, as well as their awareness about protecting the environment,
- If parents participate, these activities will strength their relationship.

Hiking, climbing and outdoor activities require, firstly, planning. This could include doing some research on the places you are going to visit in order to choose which fits better for the characteristics of the group in terms of time, weather conditions, difficulty, length, the best paths, etc. It is also important to think about the materials needed if you are going to apply group games, clothing, food and water, first aid kits, location tools, batteries and mobile phones, among others. Parents' meetings before the date of the activity are a good idea in order to clear up doubts and concerns.

It is important to engage with the school community (parents, students, staff), in order to disseminate the activities and find support for the activities. Contact with other groups or organisations, such as hiking clubs or authorities (staff from the parks, forest guards, etc.) can also play an important role in the success of these activities. Information is therefore essential: sharing the plan with parents and sending a permission form, explaining children what are you going to do, etc.

Children will learn from everything they see on the outdoor activity; for that reason it is important that parents set good examples (don't throw rubbish and pick it up if you find it, talk with everyone and try everyone is comfortable, etc.). In this regards, group games are a good way for children to learn about nature and preserve it: invite participants to observe the environment to find some objects in nature and writing down in a piece of paper, prepare bags for picking up rubbish and make a contest to see who can collect the most garbage in 5 to 10 minutes, are good example of group games while hiking or climbing.

Group games are also very important at the moment the children will get tired. This will happen: hiking can be hard work and downright enjoyable if they feel like they're on a forced march. The best way to cope with these events is to stop and play these games.

Analysis of legal forms of out-of-school education in partner countries

Poland

It is possible to find those activities in Poland. There may be provided by private companies (requires payment) or by some foundation working with children.

Portugal.

There a huge number of clubs of all matters and providing after schools activities. Is very important in the field of leisure times.

Macedonia

Different associations are provisions these kinds of outdoor activities for youth but usually is limited or pupils can't take part on it!

France

Mountain sport activities; for those who live near the mountains, it is easy to find and practice activities such as climbing, hiking, skiing, etc.

Romania

These activities can be done on themselves, with friends or organized groups by public and / or private schools / institutions / organizations.



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