

Exploring Your Community Worksheet: Community Centres



a program of the Jane Goodall Institute

Note: For the purposes of clarity and simplicity, Groups at community centres, libraries, faith centres, museums, nature centres and scout halls will be referred to as groups at *community centres* in this question sheet.

The following questions are designed to build the awareness of your members and help them identify issues and challenges to people, animals and the environment within the community. Work with your younger members to find the answers and record the results for them. Have your older members complete the questions independently or in small groups and share the answers at the end. Adapt the survey to meet the specific needs of your group.

Animals

Go outside to answer the following questions:

1. List any wildlife that you can see or hear in the area.

Insects	Amphibians	Reptiles	Mammals	Birds

2. Describe the areas in which you see the wildlife (i.e. wooded area, gardens, lawn, etc.).

3. Look for signs of animals/wildlife (i.e. tracks, scat, hair or feathers, scratch marks on trees, nests, dens, etc.). Record what you find. Based on these findings, what other animals may be in the area that you can't see right now (use a field guide if you need assistance). Make a list of these animals.

4. What type of habitats can you see (i.e. trees, hibernacula, ponds, meadows, etc.)?

5. If you don't see any wildlife or signs of wildlife, consider why (i.e. the grounds are covered in asphalt or turf).

6. Is there anything you can see, hear or smell in the area that could harm wildlife (i.e. roads, pesticides, pets, air pollution, fences, traps, etc.)?

7. List any endangered species that you know about in the area.

People

Think about your community centre as you answer the following questions:

1. Name the different groups or clubs who use your community centre (i.e. after school groups, sports clubs, faith group attendees, youth groups, seniors groups, etc.).

2. If there are different groups using the community centre, do they interact with one another? Why or why not?

3. Is there a range of nationalities represented at your community centre? Why or why not?

4. Is everyone treated the same way? Why or why not?

5. Is the facility used all day? Year-round?

6. Is your community centre wheelchair/walker/stroller accessible?

7. Are the grounds wheelchair/walker/stroller accessible?

8. Is your community centre accessible to visually-impaired people? Are guide dogs allowed in the building?

9. Are there any people at your community centre whose lives appear difficult? What are some of the reasons for these difficulties?

10. Are there individuals or committees at your community centre that deal with the needs of people (i.e. accessibility issues, conflict resolution, crisis intervention and support, grief support, counseling, etc.)? Describe.

11. What things do you do to help people at your community centre?

Environment

Go outside to answer the following questions:

1. Describe the area immediately surrounding your community centre. Is there lawn, a naturalized space, a fence?

2. What is your area like (i.e. warm/cold, windy/sheltered, quiet/noisy, nice smells, etc.)? Why?

3. Are there gardens? If so, are they planted with native or introduced species?

4. Is the vegetation on the property irrigated? If so, how often and for how long per session?

5. If there is a lawn, do maintenance personnel use electric, gas, human-powered push lawn mowers or none at all?

6. Do the maintenance personnel spray pesticides on the vegetation around your community centre? If so, what happens to those chemicals when it rains?

7. Are pesticides used on the lawn and/or vegetation at your community centre? If so, what happens to these chemicals when it rains?

8. Find the storm drains near your community centre. What types of materials are around them (i.e., leaves, garbage, etc.)? Do people dump things into them? If so, what?

9. Where does the water from the storm drains go? What happens to all the garbage and material that gets dumped down them? Who or what does this impact?

10. Does your community centre collect and use rainwater?

11. Is there litter on or around the property? If so, make a list of the types.

12. What was this land used for before your community centre was built here? You may need to talk to someone at the centre or in the community to find the answer.

Back inside, find the answers to the following questions:

13. Where does the tap water at your community centre come from? Where does the water go after it goes down the drain?

14. What type of drinking water is available at your community centre (tap, bottled)? Why?

15. If tissues and paper towels are used at your community centre, are they recycled? Is there a way to reduce the number of tissues or paper towels used in your centre?

16. What cleaning products are used at your community centre? What health and environmental benefits are listed on the labels? What types of chemicals do you see on the ingredient lists of cleaning products in your place? What are the warnings on these products (if any)?

17. Are the lights in the community centre energy efficient?

18. Where does the garbage go after it leaves your community centre? Where does it go after that? After that?

19. Is there a recycling bin in your community centre? List the items that can be recycled in your area.

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20. What happens to the recycling after it leaves your community centre?

21. Who is responsible for sorting and collecting the recycling at your community centre?

22. Is there a compost bin at your community centre?

23. What happens to the compost?

24. Is there food served or prepared at your community centre? If so, where does it come from?

Talk to the people in your community to find the answers to the following questions:

25. How many people walk, bike, use public transportation or ride in a car to and from the community centre?

Walk	Bike	Public Transportation	Car

