

Achieving Your Goals through Adventure Learning

The University of New Hampshire's The Browne Center offers experiential learning programs to groups of all sizes and ages, both at our facility and off-site. We also offer workshops to teachers or program staff, helping them to incorporate adventure into the curriculum, or to enhance the performance of their own work teams. Programs can include:

- ◆ Cooperative Games ◆ Group Initiatives ◆ Trust Exercises ◆ Orienteering
- ◆ Low and High Challenge Course Elements ◆ Rock Climbing
- ◆ Content or Theme Based Programs

Our facilitators work with you and your staff to provide an experience that complement your curriculum as well as your budget. The results may range from a 3-hour program to a multi-day experience with assessment and follow up or consultation at your site. We offer programs year-round though content options may be dependent on the weather.

What Can Experiential Learning Do For Us?

Experiential Learning is a physical process, because you are learning with your whole body, but the challenges are primarily emotional and social. Groups come to The Browne Center to focus on a variety of things, including:

- ◆ Communication Skills
- ◆ Self Esteem
- ◆ Positive Behavioral Norms
- ◆ The Value of Diversity
- ◆ Team Cohesion
- ◆ Leadership Skills
- ◆ Trust
- ◆ Problem Solving Skills

Whatever the focus, experiential methods compress learning time, produce concrete scenarios for people to respond to, are action oriented and Fun!

What Makes This Method Work?

The *experiential learning cycle*, involving action, reflection, and design for change, guides the process relating the activities to your stated goals for the day. Activities are presented in a fashion meaningful to your group, and the group process is discussed after each initiative is completed. The selection and sequencing of activities enhances or refocuses the direction of your group's learning. Group members are asked to identify which behaviors contribute to their success and which hinder their performance. Our facilitators help participants keep focus on the relevance of the action to the team's performance back at school, camp, home, etc.

Your role is integral to the program's success. Prior to the experience briefing your group about goals and expectations will enhance the potential for the program's success. After your stay with us your efforts will be critical to the lasting benefits of the program. Integrating the experience into your curriculum and keeping the lesson fresh will extend the benefits of your investment.

What Type of Learning Environment Do You Offer?

Two key philosophies in place during each of our programs are “*Challenge by Choice*” and “*Full Value Contract*,” terms coined by Project Adventure, Inc. but utilized throughout the experiential learning community. “*Challenge by Choice*” means that individuals choose their own level of participation (intellectual or physical) in any activity. No one is ever pushed beyond where they are willing to go; rather, they are supported in exploring their growing edges. We do emphasize the importance of staying involved in some capacity, since it is often too easy to remove oneself during unfamiliar or challenging situations. The “*Full Value Contract*” is the mechanism providing a safe and supportive atmosphere in which people can grow. It entails a commitment among participants to value their own ideas as well as those of others.

What Are Our Program Options?

Universal Challenge Course

A Universal Challenge Course, or ropes course, is a collection of elements built among the trees constructed mainly of cables and wood. Our courses are “universal” because several of the elements are physically accessible to everyone. The *Low Elements* create situations where group effort, teamwork, and effective communication are necessary. The *High Elements* focus more on individual accomplishment requiring team support as individuals equipped with safety gear surpass perceived limitations, and place trust in one another at heights of up to 40 feet.

Proper sequencing of activities ensures safety and is crucial to the group’s development. Because of this, we recommend that a half day at the challenge course be spent doing initiatives and using the low elements. High elements are most valuable when they suit your goals and usually require that your group be with us for at least one full day.

Rock Climbing

Our rock climbing activities take place at Pawtuckaway State Park in Nottingham, NH. Like the high elements on the challenge course, rock climbing offers an opportunity for participants to stretch themselves physically and emotionally. Participants make achievements beyond their expectations, and learn that their capabilities are greater than they thought. Plan on a full day for rock climbing because of the time required to hike the $\frac{3}{4}$ mile to and from the climbing site.

Orienteering

Larger groups are divided into teams of 6 participants and join The Browne Center facilitators in making their way through the woods using orienteering skills. Participants are taught map, compass, and pacing skills and work in a collaborative learning team, utilizing information sharing and active listening skills to achieve success.

Overnight Camping

Central to the philosophy of The Browne Center is the idea that spending time in the out of doors is beneficial to both individuals and groups. Group cohesion can be greatly enhanced by a wilderness experience. Part of the legacy of Professor Evelyn Browne has been the incorporation of respect for the land into our teachings. Her gifts also include the donation of beautiful estuarine property within the Great Bay National Reserve. We offer this land to groups free of charge to explore what the outdoors has to offer them. Call to inquire about overnight camping, or if your total group size is under 20, you may want to consider a stay in Nedoba or Corroborree, our yurts. A yurt is a round structure used by the aboriginal peoples of Mongolia. Yurts have traditionally been used for spiritual meetings, and our beautiful wooden yurt is certainly a special gathering place. Without electricity and running water it should be considered as a camping option.

What A Day At The Browne Center Looks Like...

Every group will have a unique experience specifically designed to meet the needs and expectations that they have shared with our staff. Below is a generic challenge course agenda to give you an idea of what a day might look like:

Morning

When your group arrives in the morning there is a short orientation session, including an introduction and a group warm-up activities. The introduction gives us a chance to familiarize you with the area, our time schedule, and our teaching philosophies. This is the participants' time to express their group and individual expectations for the day

After the warm-up,

large groups are divided into smaller groups of up to 12 people. With their facilitator, the group begins with problem solving and trust building *Initiatives* where members work to solve various challenges and learn about communication and teamwork in themselves and the group. Using new skills and knowledge gained during the *Initiatives*, the group is now ready for the challenges posed by the *Low Elements*, which are physical challenges involving cables, logs and platforms 2-4 feet off the ground. Time is provided following the experience to discuss the leanings drawn from activities.

During lunchtime,

groups typically take down time, relax outside and refresh themselves.

Afternoon

Depending upon the performance/goals of the group, the afternoon may be spent on the *Low Elements*, keeping the focus on team-building and group interaction. If the goal of the group is individual challenge, groups may move to the *High Elements*. The groups are outfitted with harnesses and helmets, and instructed on the proper use of safety equipment and a belay system. This system uses ropes and the group to protect an individual while off the ground, perhaps as high as 40 feet in the air. Quite an experience, for both the climber and the safety team on the ground.

The End

usually has a culminating experience where the whole group comes together to use their combined new knowledge and team experience. This is followed by a final wrap-up or debriefing session and provides opportunity to transfer the learnings to other settings.

Where Do I Go From Here

Call The Browne Center to discuss your goals for your program. Together we can identify the best program options, select dates, identify staff, and start the necessary paperwork. **(603) 868-1772**
www.brownecenter.com

What Some Of Our Clients Are Saying...

“My students felt very challenged and exhilarated by the day’s experiences on the outdoor challenge course. The facilitators were very perceptive in assessing the group’s lack of teamwork abilities at the beginning of the day. They had the skills to assist the students to challenge themselves to eventually work beautifully as a team. Great Work!” Coordinator, Education Talent Search

The UCC provided a unique opportunity for our Jr. High level students to experience “real life” situations and challenges for them to work through with their peers. Every student who attended was excited about the experience and his or her level of enthusiasm was wonderful! Thank you for a fantastic day.” School Counselor, St. Patrick School

“I hope to go next year and the year after that... I don’t think I’ve ever had that much fun learning.” -6th Grade Student

“I am impressed with how our facilitator planned the day’s activities to address our goals and objectives for the training. Her sensitivity and special talents allowed the young people to reach a level of trust that helped them express their individual concerns and feelings. During the day the participants demonstrated growth both emotionally and socially. These changes were acknowledged by our trainer as the young people identified their own strengths. They also felt comfortable enough with her to share private concerns and to express their ideas.” - DCYF

“Through the activities and the debriefing we discovered important strategies which will help the functioning of our group in the year to come. But more than that we each learned about each other’s strengths, gifts, and unique personalities. We now are a group which feels comfortable sharing with each other.” - High School Choir Member

“It made me realize that in almost everything you do in the future, it will involve other people and working together. So many skills like listening, brainstorming and talking make everything click together. It was a success!” - High School Student

“The staff at The Browne Center is phenomenal. The activities they use and the process of analyzing those activities are the most effective group building activities I have ever done.”- University Student