



take a hike
YOUTH AT RISK FOUNDATION®

A1.2 ABOUT TAKE A HIKE

THE FOUNDATION

The Take a Hike Youth at Risk Foundation (The “Foundation”) was established in 2000 to support the Take a Hike program. In partnership with the school boards, the Foundation provides the resources and funding for programs operations, therapists and outdoor activities. The Foundation has raised over \$2.5 million in support of at-risk youth.

OUR PURPOSE: To enable at-risk youth to positively change their lives.

OUR VISION: To be the North American leader at enabling communities to empower at-risk youth to achieve their full potential, realize their dreams and give back to their communities.

OUR DIFFERENTIATORS: Combining Adventure Based Learning (“ABL”), therapy, academics & community involvement.

THE PROGRAM

Take a Hike is a full-time alternative education program that engages at-risk youth through a unique combination of adventure-based learning, academics, therapy, and community involvement.

Take a Hike guides and empowers these youth to blaze a trail, a positive path with positive outcomes. With Take a Hike's guidance, every youth will have an opportunity to blaze their own trail--one that is right for them, that empowers them, that gives them survival skills for life.

WHO PARTICIPATES

Not every student fits into the mainstream school system. Students in the Take a Hike program often struggle with issues that have inhibited their success in the mainstream school system such as drug and alcohol addiction, physical and mental abuse, criminal activity, low self-esteem, depression, and/or trauma.

Most students are referred to the program by school counselors or social workers for an opportunity to make lasting change in their lives.



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INSIDE TAKE A HIKE

The ultimate goal of the Take a Hike alternative education program is that barriers to learning are minimized, personal issues are addressed, and students achieve a greater level of social and academic success. The program combines the following four aspects:

ADVENTURE-BASED LEARNING (“ABL”):

An ABL Specialist guides students through outdoor day trips and multi-day expeditions. ABL uses physical activities to help youth develop self-directed goals, trust, communication, teamwork and problem-solving skills in a safe, supportive environment.

THERAPY:

Two program therapists provide youth with individual, group, and family counselling in both outdoor and office settings. The therapists aim to change the negative impact the past has on the present, become a better choice maker, increase self-esteem and accept and take responsibility for their own actions.

ACADEMICS:

At the beginning of the year, the Take a Hike staff meet with each student to assess their academic level and work with them to plan a path that leads to graduation. The outdoor trips also serve to reinforce academic lessons.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT:

Every student in the Take a Hike program performs a minimum of 60 hours of community service a year. The purpose is to demonstrate to youth that, as members of a larger community, they have a responsibility to others and that their help is needed. Valuable work experience is also gained.

This unique, alternative education program has been very successful in helping at-risk youth work through their emotional issues and addictions, and to develop confidence, teamwork, and leadership skills, and graduate.

EXPANSION

Since being founded in 2000, the Foundation has been operating in partnership with the Vancouver School Board to run the Take a Hike Program out of John Oliver High School in Vancouver. As part of its current five-year strategic plan, Take a Hike aims to become a North American leader in helping communities empower at-risk youth to achieve their full potential,



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realize their dreams, and give back to their communities. The Foundation is now building relationships with other potential expansion communities: it has recently confirmed a partnership with School District No. 20 (Kootenay – Columbia) and discussions are underway with other communities about the potential of bringing the program to their School Districts as well.