



B0.1 PHILOSOPHY: WHAT MAKES THE TAKE A HIKE PROGRAM SUCCESSFUL

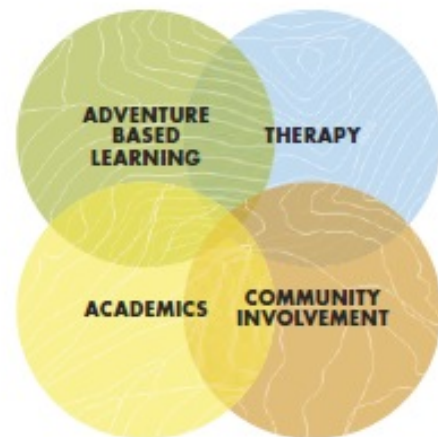
The Take a Hike Program is unique. It is a major intervention in a student's life that affects not just their academics, but also their lifestyle, physical and psychological health, self-concept and relationship with their family. The Program starts with each student's individual abilities and circumstances and addresses the factors holding each of them back.

The Program builds strong bonds between teachers and students, particularly on the expeditions. These bonds allow for a demanding behaviour modification program that leverages performance from the students and builds success. At the same time, the Program uses outdoor activity and experiential education to keep students engaged.

This intervention is built around an emphasis on developing the student through challenging outdoor trips and regular therapy. The key to success is that every component of the Program is integrated with the others. Academic teaching, outdoor trips, behavioral modification, social work and therapy all work in harmony to support and reinforce each other. As the climate of challenge in the outdoors creates turmoil for students, they process the roots of this turmoil with the therapist. As progress is made in therapy, changes in lifestyle and improvements in academics become possible.

The critical success factors of the program are:

- ➔ Adventure Based Learning
- ➔ Therapy (Satir Model)
- ➔ Academics (primarily as they relate to ABL), and
- ➔ Community Service



The four components of the TAH program are each critical to its success.

B1.1 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. This aspect also is the context of many field studies, experiences and tasks which reinforce the academics.

B1.2 THERAPY

Students meet with a program therapist on a regular basis to work through their issues. Therapists also work with students' families and conduct addiction counselling for those in need of it. All staff press students to mature and make positive changes through processing the things that happen to them on more than a superficial level. The behaviour program also drives personal development.

B1.3 ACADEMICS

At the beginning of the year, teachers meet individually with each student to assess their academic level and work with them to plan a path that leads to graduation. This is a goal that is parallel to the goal of providing a strong education for the students and so the program does not “push students through” inappropriately. They must have the skills, know the content and pass their tests and courses. Having the students complete the work is itself an important lesson. It teaches them there is no way around working hard to complete their goals.

B1.4 COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Every student in the TAH program performs a minimum of 45 hours of community service a year. This provides work experience, moral development (as students connect with philanthropic people and causes) and helps them to appreciate what they have by giving back.