

PATHWAY TO STEWARDSHIP:

A Framework for Children and Youth



Childhood has
changed a great
deal in the past
fifty years.



A Few Examples:




- The average child spends 7.5 hours each day in front of a screen
- Most children are driven to and from school
- Children have very little free time
- Few children have unstructured outdoor play time
- Children's play spaces are generally manicured and "risk-free"
- There is very little physical exercise in a typical day



What is the problem?

- Rise in physical health challenges – obesity and lack of exercise leading to increased heart disease and diabetes
- Shorter life expectancies than their parents
- Dramatic increase in attention-deficit and hyperactivity disorders
- Rise in mental health challenges (anxiety, depression, anti-social behaviour)
- Sense of disconnection to people and the natural world





Instead of asking what kind of world we are leaving for our kids, we should ask...



What kind
of kids are
we leaving
for our
world?

Our Challenge:

How can we foster a sense of stewardship in our children and youth?

Stewardship is:



- ***A sense of connection to, caring about, and responsibility for our human and natural communities***

The Process:

- With funding from the Greater Foundation of Peterborough a group of us led by Camp Kawartha, got together to:
 - Explore research in child development, educational theory, moral development, factors contributing to health;
 - Explore Indigenous literature on environmental education;
 - Interview community leaders from various sectors who share a strong interest in the environment; (75 Leaders interviewed).
 - Propose a simple series of key experiences for each stage of a child's development.





Dominant Research Thread:
Importance of unstructured outdoor play time

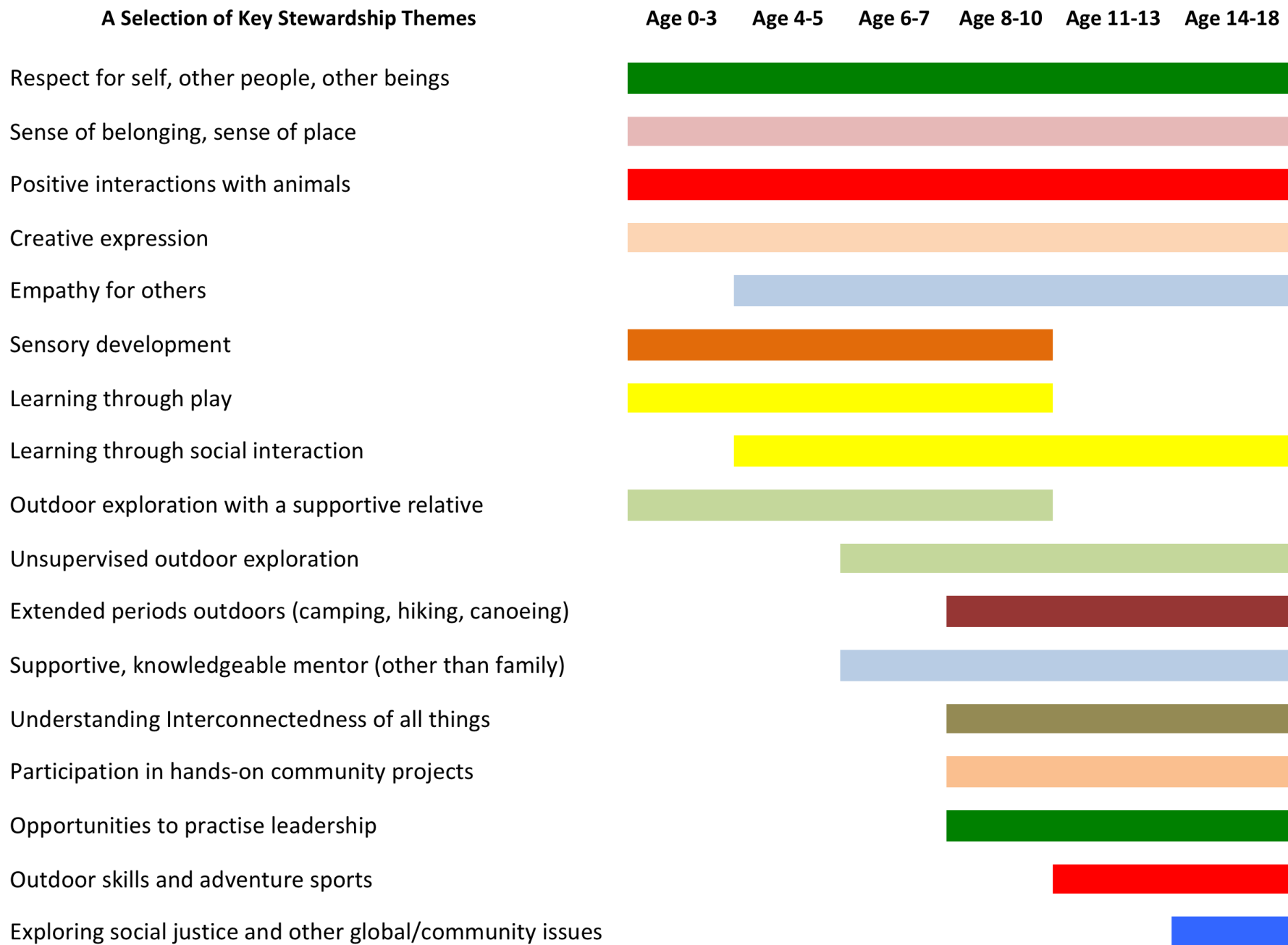
Another
recurring theme:
Role of a caring
mentor

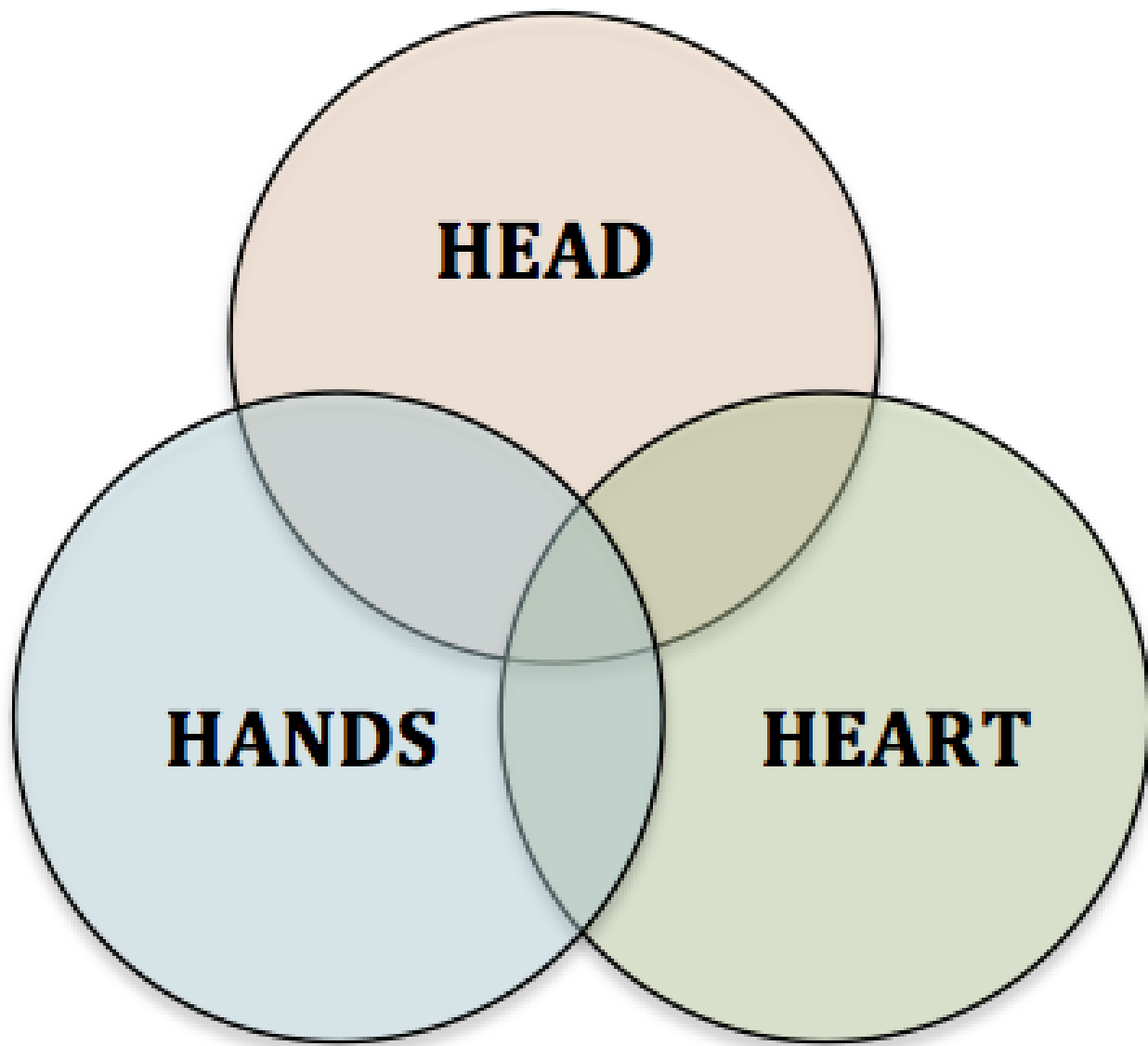


Play time in nature...

- Reduces stress;
- Improves physical and mental health;
- Stimulates creativity;
- Improves concentration and conflict resolution skills;
- Builds self-esteem;
- Promotes cooperation, collaboration and self-regulation;
- Develops problem-solving skills;
- Stimulates a life-long love of learning;
- Fosters a sense of place and belonging.







Building the Framework

- **Core Stewardship Principles for each age or stage**
- **Benchmarks (key activity or achievement)**
- **Possible Activities (sample of ways to achieve benchmarks)**
- **Existing Community Resources**
- **Curriculum Links**
- **References**



A Sample...



STEWARDSHIP BENCHMARKS FOR GRADE 1 AND 2 (age 6 and 7 years)			
CORE STEWARDSHIP PRINCIPLE	BASIC BENCHMARK	POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES	EXISTING COMMUNITY RESOURCES
Recognize that our community consists of other living things as well as people.	12. Who are the critters in your neighbourhood? Get to know 5 plants and 5 birds, 5 insects and 5 different animals that live in your area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do a neighbourhood scavenger hunt. Can you find 5 different plants and animals/insects/birds living in your area? Draw a map of your neighbourhood – where do you live – where do the critters live? What do you think your critters eat? – can you find examples of these? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Maple Syrup Festivals e.g. McLean's, Kennedy's Community Gardens Camp Kawartha Riverview Park and Zoo Local Winter Celebrations: Santa Claus Parades, Winter Carnivals Farmers Markets Camp Kawartha Environment Centre City of Peterborough Parks Otonabee Conservation Kawartha Land Trust Ontario Parks Children's Outdoor Charter Horticultural Societies Peterborough Public Library (books on gardening, seasons, urban wildlife)

Who is this for?

- **Parents/Grandparents**
- **Caregivers**
- **Teachers**
- **School Boards**
- **Governments**
- **Community Groups**
- **Anyone who interacts
with children and youth!**















Next Steps

- 1. Assemble Pathway to Stewardship Team**
- 2. Obtain feedback on the draft stewardship document and confirm resources.**
- 3. Seek endorsement from decision-makers**
- 4. With the help of an expert(s), obtain meaningful metrics to measure success**
- 5. Implement a small pilot project to test the metrics. Gather results.**
- 6. Build implementation plan**
- 7. Expand support structures**



How can Sustainable Peterborough help?

- Provide feedback on the current document and as the process unfolds.
- Consider endorsing the Pathway to Stewardship framework when completed...
- Stay in touch by being part of our mailing list:

peterboroughpathway@gmail.com

