

# Let's See the World Through Young Eyes

by Ross Francis

Marion and David Taylor from Moncton, NB, sent us this poem. It's a good one to share in your colonies.

## Big Mud Puddles and Sunny Yellow Dandelions

(Author Unknown)

When I look at a patch of dandelions, I see a bunch of weeds that are going to take over my yard. But my kids see flowers for Mom, and blowing white fluff you can wish on.

When I look at an old drunk and he smiles at me, I see a smelly, dirty person who probably wants money, and I look away. But my kids see someone smiling at them, and they smile back.

When I hear music I love, I know I can't carry a tune, and don't have much rhythm, so I sit self-consciously and listen. But my kids feel the beat and move to it. They sing out the words. If they don't know them, they make up their own.

When I feel wind on my face, I brace myself against it. I feel it messing up my hair and pulling me back when I walk. But my kids close their eyes, spread their arms and fly with it, until they fall to the ground laughing.

When I pray, I say "Thee" and "Thou" and "Grant me this" and "Give me that." But my kids say, "Hi God! Thanks for my toys and my friends. Please keep the bad dreams away tonight. I don't want to go to Heaven yet because I would miss my Mommy and Daddy."

When I see a mud puddle I step around it. I see muddy shoes and dirty carpets. But my kids sit in it. They see dams to build, rivers to cross, and worms to play with.

I wonder if we are given kids to teach, or to learn from? No wonder God loves little children so much.

Enjoy the little things in life, for one day you may look back and realize they were the big things.

I wish you big mud puddles and sunny yellow dandelions.

Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away.

## Time to Smell the Roses?

This poem is pretty powerful stuff. Sometimes as adults we get so caught up in our adult worlds that we forget to "take time to stop and smell the roses." Perhaps, we become a little over-protective of our children, and in doing so may deny them and ourselves some of life's little pleasures, as indicated in the poem.

Some programs that adults consider fun and cool, may in fact be just the opposite for the kids.

That's why it is so important to talk with the children in your group, and to listen to what they have to say. Then you'll find out what it is they enjoy doing; when you know that, you can make sure your programs reflect their interests. As adults, we sometimes tend to design and create programs that we consider fun and cool, but that may in fact be just the opposite for the kids. Often, our measure of "fun" and "cool" is quite different from how children would define them. Also, sometimes we tend to plan too many activities into a program, and not leave any spare time for children to just play a bit with their friends. Striking a healthy balance is the key. It's not always easy, so once again talking with youth members and listening to what they have to say will help you determine what to include or exclude in your program.

## The "Out" in Scouting

Don't forget to build in time for outdoor activities as well. That's critical. Children need space, fresh air

and an opportunity to explore. They long for it. Build into your program hikes, pond exploring, picnics, sliding, tours and visits to farms, parks and museums.

Find out from your members what their favourite outings are by asking them. You may even learn about some new places to go. Don't forget to invite parents and other family members; they enjoy outings as well.

Here's how to check to see if your program is on track. Use these three measurement tools:

- ❑ *The children.* Smiles on their faces will confirm that you're on track.
- ❑ *The parents.* Comments from the parents regarding how much their child enjoyed an outing, craft or activity will confirm that you're on track.
- ❑ *The program standards.* Scouts Canada has developed program standards for each section; these are excellent tools for planning and evaluating your program.

Have fun, go check out some mud puddles, and pick some dandelions!^

## GET WITH THE PROGRAM

Are you looking for regular program help? How about some games, activities, songs and much more?

Subscribe to our "Program Tips" for ideas you can use at your next meeting. It's easy to subscribe to, and free. Beaver leaders should send an e-mail message to [maiser@scouts.ca](mailto:maiser@scouts.ca) with the following in the first line of the message box: subscribe bprg-l.

We will send you ideas regularly to use in your section.

If you want a favourite tip of yours featured, send it to us now at: [rfrancis@scouts.ca](mailto:rfrancis@scouts.ca).