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INTRODUCTION

Stepping Stones is an eight week summer program designed to teach outdoor skills to children, 9-16 years old, in a Michigan State Park. The emphasis for Stepping Stones is giving children, primarily located in Michigan's urban communities, an opportunity to visit a Michigan State Park and learn outdoor skills such as angling, archery, camping along with other nature related programs.

WHY STEPPING STONES?

With fewer children experiencing the outdoors, Stepping Stones offers fun introductory activities in Michigan State Parks located adjacent to Michigan's urban communities. For most of these children, it has been the first time visiting a Michigan State Park, shooting a bow or catching a fish. From this first introductory "Stone," the DNR hopes to add higher level "Stones" such as paddle sports, horseback riding and overnight camping. It is also a goal to create opportunities for these children in State Parks further "north" so kids can experience a wider variety of Michigan's tremendous natural resources.

TARGET AUDIENCES

Stepping Stones participants are affiliated with numerous youth organizations. These have included public libraries, churches, recreation centers, YMCAs, 4-H, Salvation Army and others.

WHAT OTHERS SAY?

Thousands of children and their supervisory staff have participated in a brief survey upon completion of their visit; survey results after six years are remarkably consistent:

- More than 90% of the youth participants would return to a Michigan State Park in the future
- Between 99-100% of the youth organization staff/chaperones felt that:
 - activities were age appropriate
 - DNR staff was helpful and friendly
 - they would highly recommend this program to others

PROGRAM COORDINATOR

For more information, or to register your group, please contact:

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