

Intellectual

Seven Dimensions of Well-Being Spotlight



NATIONAL
RECREATION AND PARK
ASSOCIATION

The Vision

Communities provide access to high-quality learning opportunities and education for all. Community members can enrich the mind through an openness to new ideas, experiences, questions and thoughts, and through learning new skills and seeking to understand different perspectives and lived experiences.

How Parks and Recreation Promotes Intellectual Well-Being

Parks and recreation agencies play a key role in enhancing intellectual well-being across all generations. Park and recreation agencies are among the primary providers of community-based programs for youth, families and older adults. The essential programming they offer introduces individuals to new experiences, creating opportunities for learning, skill building and enriching the mind.

Examples of Advancing Intellectual Well-Being

- Provide academic, educational and vocational support to young people, especially during out-of-school times (OSTs).
- Provide educational, social and community-centered programming for older adults, including events, field trips, tours, workshops and courses.
- Offer intergenerational programs to support social connectedness, relationship building, mentorship, and teaching and learning new skills.
- Address obstacles to accessing educational programs, including transportation, accessibility, cost and location.
- Provide OST programs that offer academic support, experiential learning, evidence-based and developmentally appropriate curricula (e.g., STEAM, social and emotional learning, environmental education).
- Partner with local educators, businesses, libraries, speakers and partners to host pop-up events or topical conversations at parks and community centers.
- Ensure interpretation services and other accommodations are made to ensure all community members can fully participate.
- Provide free family-focused early childhood programs.

In Practice

In Elk Grove, California, the Cosumnes Community Services District (CSD) is among those using STEAM to engage young minds and instill a lifelong love of learning.

The coordinators at Kid Central, Cosumnes CSD's OST program for elementary school-aged children, plan curriculum around monthly themes. The overarching curriculum is based around kindness and provides a space of acceptance and belonging. "We've always been intentional that all kids are seen and represented. We make this a priority when developing and implementing curriculum," says Program Supervisor Chantal Udasco.

For February, the team used the theme "Inventors and Innovators" in coordination with recognition of Black History Month. The activities highlighted people and women in history who helped make the world a better place. February's focus is especially impactful to participants from less-represented communities, as women and people from different backgrounds have previously been left out of science and technology-oriented disciplines.

"All of the STEAM concepts were woven together to give a full understanding and experience for the kids that day," says Program Coordinator Katy Ward. "We noticed that they were so fully immersed in the lesson that they didn't even realize we had taught them something," she adds with a laugh.

As an agency dedicated to providing culturally responsive services, program coordinators at Cosumnes CSD provide an opportunity for young participants to engage with adults who believe in them, challenge them and support them beyond a traditional classroom setting.



Youth at Kid Central, Cosumnes CSD's out-of-school time program for elementary school-aged children, learn about the inventor of the stoplight. Photo courtesy Cosumnes CSD.

Learn More: bit.ly/Cosumnes-In-Practice

Learn more about the seven dimensions of well-being by visiting nrpa.org/CommunityWellnessHubs