



GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION OF EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES IN ZOOS AND AQUARIUMS

OVERALL GUIDELINES

The role of animals in any particular educational activity in zoos and aquariums is acceptable only if the program promises to contribute to the understanding of fundamental biological and ecological principles; the development of knowledge that can reasonably be expected to benefit the animals, their environments, and humans; or that contributes to the understanding of environmental principles and issues with the goal of changing human behavior. These are outcomes of the process we define here as Education.

To ensure that the evaluation of both activities and outcomes takes place on a formal basis, a defined process for describing activities and assessing results has been adopted by CAZA for all CAZA accredited zoos and aquariums.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED FRAMEWORK AND PROCESS

These guidelines present a national protocol for education program description, oversight and reporting. Each member institution will establish an Expert Educational Advisory Committee (the Education Committee) that will, using this national protocol and locally defined criteria, evaluate their programs' goals, merit and effectiveness.

These guidelines will ensure each institution will address and evaluate their programs in key areas, including:

- specific program goals
- pedagogical merit
- conservation merit
- defined target audiences
- formal evaluation

Zoos and aquariums with marine mammals must have a formal Animal Care Committee operating under the Canadian Council for Animal Care (CCAC); other institutions may have more general Animal Care Committees or ensure animal care practices through general management of the institution. These Committees must work collaboratively with the Education Committee to ensure that all programs that use animals undergo both educational and ethical review.

All zoos and aquariums will build towards having a formal Animal Care Committee for all animals within a timeframe to be specified by the CAZA Board.

Enforcement of these guidelines will be incorporated into the formal accreditation process that occurs for all CAZA member Zoos and Aquariums every five years.

The Canadian Council for Animal Care was represented on the national committee that developed these guidelines.

EACH INSTITUTION WILL DEVELOP AN EDUCATIONAL COMMITTEE THAT WILL:

- Have a clearly-described mandate and terms of reference
- Have clearly described overall goals
- Include at least two permanent outside representatives – one from formal education and one representing community interests and concerns, who have had no affiliation with the institution.
- Have a clearly described organizational structure and process with:
 - Chair
 - Members – a management rep, at least one paid educational staff member, a volunteer if appropriate.
 - Schedule – a minimum of two meetings per year, and more if justified by program scope
 - Minutes – retained for five years (for CAZA accreditation purposes)
 - Accountability –
 - Will report to the zoo and aquarium administration and board where appropriate
 - Will liaise with the Animal Care Committee, if applicable, or with professional staff
 - Will liaise with the media, politicians, public etc., as appropriate
 - Will adhere to the CAZA accreditation process and report as appropriate to CAZA.

CAZA recognizes that there is a wide range of types and numbers of programs offered among member institutions. Education Committees will, for the purpose of consistency across institutions, group educational programs into one of four categories:

- Formal educational programs
- Informal educational activities
- Outreach programs
- Public programs

It is recommended that educational committees will review for appropriateness:

- The number of staff dedicated to education programming, their training and qualifications
- At least one paid staff member is dedicated to education on at least a part-time basis
- The classrooms and other teaching areas
- The level of education department contact with local schools, colleges, and other academia,
- The availability of funds allocated for educational programs
- Whether best practices are employed to full advantage.

and review the goals, pedagogical approach, conservation merit and formal evaluation of:

- the educational messages and the means of communication to the casual visitor
- all relevant publications, brochures and other printed material on an ongoing basis
- exhibit signage and graphics
- the volunteer, docent and outreach programs
- all outreach programming and that use of animals off-site meets CAZA guidelines
- all shows and public demonstrations

FOR EACH SEPARATE PROGRAM, THE FOLLOWING MUST BE CLEARLY DESCRIBED

- Overall goal for the program including:
 - Cognitive learning outcomes
 - Affective learning or behavioral change outcomes
- Definition of the specific target audience.
- Description and evaluation of the educational approach (pedagogy)
- Describe and evaluate the pedagogy against goals you are trying to achieve, and the species and/or the specific situation.

- The intent is to use the most appropriate approach (pedagogy) for the specific goals you are trying to achieve and the situation in which the program is taking place.
- Are best practices being used?
 - Best Practices are those demonstrated by use in educational programs to have had a positive and successful impact on learners.
- Program Evaluation Methodology
 - A description of how you will evaluate your program for effectiveness and whether the results achieve the goals you described. Evaluation techniques will vary with the category (formal, informal, outreach, public), and will range in complexity and sophistication depending on the circumstances. The range will include, at one extreme, simple questionnaires administered to teachers; to, at the other extreme, fully structured, quantified professional evaluation methodology for extensive, formal programs.
- Assessment of Relevance to:
 - National CAZA goals
 - CAZA exists, in part, to ensure that animals in the care of zoos and aquariums receive the best possible care and that there is continuous improvement. The assessment must describe how the program addresses or conveys messages about the care of the animals used in each program.
 - Conservation
 - Educational programs should clearly be designed to connect the animal or situation the program is based on with topical, current conservation issues or concerns. These could be issues such as climate change and its impact on the natural environment and on wildlife species, the need for water conservation, the status of Canada's Arctic animals – and others that will emerge in coming years.
 - Institutional goals
 - There should be a relationship to the institution's local circumstances, the nature of its collection, and the needs and interests of the local community.
 - Audiences and their needs

- The educational plan should identify the target audience(s) for the program, and the particular characteristics of the audience(s) that shape the nature and scope of the program.
 - Methodology to reach the audience
 - There should be a clear description of the pedagogical approach chosen to maximize impact on the audience.
 - Role of the animals in the educational program
 - This section should address the appropriate use of the animals involved, and an evaluation of how the animals can best be used to achieve the stated goals.
 - There should be careful consideration of the role of the animals in order to ensure maximum impact, and to ensure that the animals are not unduly stressed in their role.
 - Minimizing impact on animals
 - Careful consideration must be given to an approach and methodology that ensures that the impact of this program on the animal or ecosystem is reduced to the minimum.
 - Adequate resources
 - There should be an examination of the need to allocate resources to the development and delivery of the educational program. Sufficient resources must be provided for effective delivery.

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