



**Big Brothers Big Sisters**  
of Guelph



**ENVIRON-MENTORING**  
PROGRAM

2019 Final Report

Prepared for:



**Ontario Wildlife Foundation**

2019 was an excellent year for the *Environ-Mentoring Program*! We continued to build our existing relationship with the Grand River Conservation Authority and found a new partner in the Outdoor School. Across all sessions this year, **191 attendees** participated in environmental stewardship programming, thanks to the contribution of the **Ontario Wildlife Foundation**. Our Environ-Mentoring Coordinator describes the impact of the program in this quote:

*"The Environ-Mentoring program is really important to the children in our programs. Firstly, it provides them with new opportunities and experiences. The educational component of this program is delivered in a fun way. For some of the children, even the most common experiences like roasting marshmallows are new to them. In addition, many of the children in our programs do not spend a lot of time in nature for a variety of reasons, and participating in a program like this gets them outside, and spending time in nature on a regular basis, in all seasons!"*

*-Faythe van Esch, Environ-Mentoring Coordinator*



### Program Evaluation

Effectiveness of the program was measured on the following:

1. The number of youth attending as compared to the number that enroll (to gauge initial interest)
2. The number of children that wish to attend multiple sessions (to gauge long term interest)
3. The volunteers' assessment of the program's value for the attending children (to gauge program relevancy and improvements for the future)

In terms of program effectiveness, our collected data has shown positive trends:

1. Out of 195 participants enrolled in the Environ-Mentoring program, 191 attended the sessions, indicating a 97.9% positive attendance. This leads us to conclude that the interest from the local youth is high enough to engage them in the programming.

2. 90.9% of the responding youth indicated that they would like to return for additional sessions in the future, indicating a high amount of long-term interest in the program, and that participating youth would continue to attend multiple sessions.

3. The responses from the volunteer mentors continue to be positive, while also providing insight into small improvements that the program can make. This shows us that the participants are invested in the Environ-Mentoring Program and wish to see it continue for the foreseeable future.

### Fund Usage Outline

The funds provided by Ontario Wildlife Foundation went towards all areas of the program budget, as outlined in our request and shown below. As with previous years, the bulk of OWF's funding supported primary project needs such as staffing and education program costs.

We are overjoyed at the success that the Environ-Mentoring Program has become since its launch in 2014, and we are so grateful to OWF for making this happen! We work closely with education staff to offer new, interesting sessions, while our Bigs and Littles also love attending old favourites like canoeing and caving. The program continues to grow and thrive, and our matches keep looking for other opportunities to explore their surroundings and learn about wildlife outside of the GRCA sessions! We are delighted to be developing our at-risk youth into conservation stewards who care about the local and global environment, and we are thankful to have OWF's support to do so!



Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Darryl Blake".

Darryl Blake, Development Writer  
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Guelph