YEWTHS ROC: Nashville Initiative
Youths Empowered With The Helper Spirit to Reach Out and Care

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ROC (Reach Out and Care) Wheels
Abstract

The YEWTHS ROC (Youths Empowered With The Helper Spirit to Reach Out and Care) program, created by the faith-based, non-profit organization ROC (Reach Out and Care) Wheels, aims to educate students of all ages about individuals with disabilities, global awareness, cultural diversity, and the profound need for mobility related equipment in under resourced countries. YEWTHS ROC: Nashville Initiative, was the expansion of the disability awareness and social entrepreneurial program to Ezell-Harding Christian School in Antioch, Tennessee. After analyzing pretest surveys and reviewing current literature, a curriculum plan was created for the program that included learning objectives of introducing the need, teaching the students about populations, cultures, and regions of Mexico, and educating students about individuals with disabilities. While conducting the lessons, students participated in fundraising efforts for sponsorship of five pediatric wheelchairs. Students were then given the hands-on opportunity to build the wheelchairs that they sponsored. In order to successfully complete the ‘Build Day’ in Nashville, Belmont OTD students were recruited and trained on how to assemble the ROC wheelchairs. Belmont students then served as mentors during the build at Ezell-Harding. Assembled wheelchairs were brought with the ROC Team to San Carlos, Mexico where they were distributed to individuals in surrounding regions including Guaymas, Vicam, Obregon, Navajoa, and Bentia Juarez. Following the team’s return, the students at Ezell-Harding Christian School participated in a celebration where they had an opportunity to view footage and pictures from the distribution trip. Through a video and personal testimonies, the students were given the opportunity to see how they were able to reach out and care, changing another person’s life for the better.

Mission Statement

YEWTHS ROC: Nashville Initiative seeks to educate and empower students at high school and collegiate levels to reach out and care for individuals with disabilities internationally, by means of pediatric wheelchair sponsorship. Through faith-based advocacy and personal development in technological advancements, in collaboration with ROC Wheels, I aim to advance current international service delivery efforts and inspire students to become social entrepreneurs for global change.
Previous research suggests that children and adolescents have different, and sometimes negative, attitudes towards people with disabilities (Smith Williams, 2001 & Longoria & Marini, 2006). Previous research has sought to understand what environmental, psychosocial, and emotional factors are associated with the formation of these perceptions by exploring the extent to which student’s attitudes are affected by gender differences, age, type of disability, familiarity with disability, level of education, and influence of contextual factors (Nowicki, 2006; Vignes et al., 2009; Longoria & Marini, 2006; Rosenbaum, Armstrong, & King, 1988). Researchers argue that a shift in educational material, promoting service learning to develop global awareness of international issues, cultural awareness, global responsibility and global education, is necessary to prepare young individuals to live and make decisions in an interdependent world (Ferreira, 2011). The students involved in this program were educated on their ability and responsibility to be the global stewards of the future and how they can start making a difference now.

According to the World Health Organization (2010), about 65 million individuals are in need of a wheelchair. Without equal and affordable access to needed assistive technologies, such as wheelchairs, Borg, Larsson, & Östergren (2011) argue that individuals with disabilities are denied participation in basic human rights. It is further argued that disability and poverty are correlated: without access to needed assistive technology, individuals with disabilities have reduced participation in education, work, and community life (Borg, Lindström, & Larsson, 2009). The Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities and several authors call for international involvement for progressive solutions.
Program Timeline

Phase 1: Preparation for Program
November and December 2014
- Roc Chair assembly training
- Operations training for YEWTHS ROC program

Phase 2: YEWTHS ROC at Ezell-Harding Christian School
January 2015
- Distribute and analyze pre-test surveys
- Develop lesson plans
- Training for volunteers
- Initiate fundraising efforts
- Introductory lesson
- Organize/prepare parts and tools from wheelchair kits

February 2015
- Cultural/disability awareness lesson
- Develop fundraising opportunities with students
- Training for volunteers, stages 2, 3, and final assembly
- Build Day
- International Seating Symposium

Phase 3: Distribution Trip, Sonora, Mexico
March 2015
- March 6-16, 2015: Distribution trip to San Carlos, Mexico

Phase 4: Program Conclusion
March 2015
- Distribute and analyze post-test surveys

April 2015
- April 8, 2015: Celebration Day
**Program Goals**

**Goal:** To identify and critically evaluate high school students’ perceptions of individuals with disabilities and faith-based service provision to under resourced countries.

**Outcomes:**
1) Create and distribute a survey within selected school.
2) Critically evaluate students’ perceptions by interpreting survey data, creating lesson plans based off of responses.

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**Goal:** Effectively locate, understand, and evaluate literature pertaining to non-profit, international service organizations and school-based awareness programs, correlating collected literature to strengthen advocacy for YEWTHS ROC.

**Outcomes:**
1) Assemble a binder of reviewed literature pertaining to students’ perceptions of individuals with disabilities, cultural awareness, disability awareness, and service provision to developing countries.
2) Utilize information to create a presentation for the 31st International Seating Symposium.

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**Serving Individuals in Countries with Less Resources**

**Development of Global Stewardship at Collegiate and High School Levels**

Claire Grecco and Tara Harper
31st International Seating Symposium
Opyland Hotel
February 27, 2015
Under the faculty advisement of Dr. Teresa Plummer PhD, OTR, ATP, CAPS, CEAS

(Belmont University, 2015)
Program Goals

Goal: Demonstrate ability to develop and implement a pilot of the YEWTHS ROC outreach within Ezell-Harding Christian School.

Outcomes:
1) Create a binder of detailed lesson plans for the curriculum guide of the YEWTHS ROC program.
2) Provide a lesson schedule within the curriculum guide.
3) Implement created lesson plans to students of Ezell-Harding.
4) Create a power point, explaining the living conditions in under resourced countries.
5) Provide a written summary of the pretest vs. post-test results to evaluate the effectiveness of pilot program.

Goal: Demonstrate ability to develop and implement educational sessions for volunteers in the assembly of selected wheelchair.

Outcomes:
1) Recruit, train, and organize volunteers for the in-school assembly of donated wheelchairs.
2) Create training sessions for volunteers; this will include live training sessions as well as a detailed binder with instructional guides to the assembly of the selected donated pediatric wheelchair.
Survey Results

Pre-test and post-test surveys were used for the development and evaluation of the YETWHS ROC: Nashville Initiative program. Results from the pre-test survey revealed that overall, students were unaware of the international needs of individuals with disabilities, had a negative outlook on individuals with disabilities, and had very little experience in handling tools and participating in or completing hands-on projects. Most students believed that they possessed the capability to make an impact on lives of individuals around the world, however very few had actually participated in such an opportunity. Post-test results revealed that a higher percentage of students believed that they were more alike than different when comparing themselves to individuals with disabilities. Also students reported that they had made a global difference by participating in the program. While aspects of post-test surveys were positive, results were inconclusive and could not prove or disprove the program's success.

References


