



BLACK2NATURE



BLACK2NATURE CASE STUDY

Black2Nature was set up by Dr Mya-Rose Craig and campaigns for equal access to nature for all, concentrating on VME communities currently excluded from the countryside.

Through an application for laptops, they're expanding the support available to their users and their community within some of the most deprived wards in Bristol.

HOW BLACK2NATURE SERVE THEIR COMMUNITY

The main focus of Black2Nature is its nature camps, which offer overnight stays for primary school children and 2+ night stay for secondary school children. More recently support has been extended to help match laptops to families needing technology for education, including those with children that are struggling with GCSEs.

APPLICATION SNAPSHOT

"We work with inner-city minority ethnic children, teenagers and families from the most deprived wards in Bristol. We connect the community with nature to benefit their mental and physical health. We also talk to them about school, exams, careers, the environment and issues at home. These laptops will be used by children, teenagers, young people and parents in the home for their educational needs."

CHALLENGES

- Black2Nature services a very high number of low-income families and single-parent households.
- Engaging with the community can be a lengthy process.
- While education is a priority in households, accessibility to online materials and courses is limited due to a lack of technology available in the home.
- High numbers of families have communicated to the Black2Nature team that they need to spend a lot of time using library facilities to support education requirements.

"It's a lot of hard work to get one child to come along to one of our events. We spend a lot of time talking to the families and answering questions before the children area allowed to attend."

Ayesha Ahmed-Mendoza, Black2Nature



ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY

Black2Nature has made two applications to Wiltshire Digital Drive to date. Initially, Ayesha set out to engage with the community by contacting the families who previously attended one of their events. While the initial response wasn't big, this sparked a second application which resulted in additional families coming forward through referrals from their current users.

"The first email I sent out offering a batch of laptops, didn't receive that much of a response. With the second email, we had such a big response with people coming forward for themselves or to let us know of another family that was in need."

Ayesha Ahmed-Mendoza, Black2Nature

”



IMPACT ON EDUCATION

The majority of people receiving support, via the provision of laptops, have been school-age children and young people. There has been a big increase in the need to have the technology to conduct research for essays or to attend homeschooling (during lockdown). And while elements of education move to become more digitally focused, it can be said that there are still a very high number of families in the country who aren't able to keep up with the movement due to a lack of access to suitable technology.

Encouragement from teachers within the wards of Bristol, where Black2Nature predominantly work, seems to be low - despite the importance that is expressed to children from their families.

By becoming a conduit between Wiltshire Digital Drive and the 'end user' the impact on improved educational results could be huge.

Ayesha notes that "there is potential for children who are currently achieving around a grade C in their work to go onto achieve top grades simply because they have access to technology which will allow them to thoroughly research and complete their essays. Removing barriers relating to the amount of time available to use devices (within households where devices must be shared) means that those students won't be limited on the amount of time they have to complete school homework or higher education assignments."

CONTRIBUTING TO A BRIGHTER FUTURE

It's hoped that via the support from Wiltshire Digital Drive and the community engagement by Black2Nature, young people will not only feel encouraged to do well in education but to go onto higher education as well.

By supporting young people via the provision of technology, Ayesha sees a potential impact of those young people becoming more and more interested in the environment. Learning about elements of the world that need to be improved and how they can directly impact change.

"We're extremely grateful to Wiltshire Digital Drive for giving us the chance to supply refurbished laptops to the struggling families we work with. Many of our families are from the most deprived wards in Bristol, and rely on library services or share one laptop between a family of 5-7 people. This makes life extremely difficult, especially when so much education and work relies on technology."

Ayesha Ahmed-Mendoza, Black2Nature

”