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Full Story

Elementary students learn to live off the land

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INUVIK, N.W.T. - Grade six students from Inuvik were at the Nihtat Gwich'in camp on the Mackenzie River Wednesday learning about living off the land.

Students spent the day tasting spruce gum, setting traps, and tobogganing. They raced down the banks of the Mackenzie river on plastic sleds after lessons on handling guns and setting snares and traps.

After a short lesson on snowshoeing, Phillip Iatridis and two friends strapped on some snowshoes and went for a walk through the willows.

"It was fun. We went to the other side of the river and found a lot of rabbit dens a lot of tracks too," he says. "Hard to get up to it though, because you have to get up a real tall hill."

This is the third year the Nihtat Gwich'in have opened their camp to elementary school students.

The camp co-ordinator Frank Edwards says he learned his land skills from his parents, brothers, and other hunters. Edwards says everyone, especially young people, should have the opportunity to learn about traditional delta lifestyles.

"A lot of the families can't afford to send kids to traditional camp like this," he says. "So we provide that opportunity for all the elementary classes to come spend a day out here and gain some experience on the land."

Elementary students from Inuvik will be coming to the camp all this month and Edwards encourages parents to accompany their children.

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