

Madison County Annual 4-H Summer Day Camp 1999

The Situation

Our enrollment for our traditional 4-H Clubs was dropping every year in spite of an excellent program. Recruiting volunteer leaders was difficult. Our project completion was down and fair participation was low. We felt we needed a completely different approach to teaching our 4-H project work.

Our Response

We organized a 4-H Summer Day Camp. It has been held in July the last three years and has become a very popular format for this educational program. 4-H members sign up for classes that are taught everyday for five days by 4-H leaders and area specialists. Junior leaders assisted with each class. This program schedule was designed to meet the needs of busy leaders, parents and 4-H Club Members. 4-H members could take several classes during the day. Many families had two or more children taking three projects each. Parents explained that it was a financial burden for them to meet the costs of the projects. We decided to apply for Critical Issues Funding to help meet these costs and expand our program. The program objectives were:

1. To plan and conduct a five-day Summer Day Camp.

2. To provide financial support for all youth from the ages of 9-18 in our community including the disabled, minority, and the low income.
3. 4-H Club members will acquire knowledge and life skills through the 4-H project work.
4. To encourage completion of projects.

We advertised our 3rd Annual 4-H Summer Day Camp 1999, "Be A Hero," through the Rexburg City Recreation Program and the local newspaper, the Rexburg Standard Journal. We also sent letters to all 4-H leaders and members. Participants were invited to learn skills and have some summer fun. We arranged for facilities that were handicap accessible. Seventeen 2-hour classes were offered each day. They included: Horses and Horsemanship, Let's Begin Cooking, Model Rocketry (two classes), Crafts From Our Heritage – Tole Painting I, Ceramics I, Fun With Children, Crafts From Our Heritage\Tole Painting II, Food Preservation (Jams and Jellies), Woodworking, Ready Set Sew Some More, Crafts From Our Heritage\Scrapbooks (two classes), Outdoor Cooking, Cakes and Pies, Wildlife and Ceramics II.

Achievements

Our enrollment increased over 60 projects from the day camp held last year. One hundred and fifty-five projects were completed compared to 91 for 1998. Of these participants, 100% gave a demonstration and completed their record books. One hundred and twenty-seven of these projects were displayed at the Madison County Fair. The 4-H leaders and junior leaders did an outstanding job of teaching these workshops. They were careful to follow the 4-H project requirements. We feel that the Critical Issues Funding we received this year contributed to our high enrollment by reducing the costs of the projects. One mother exclaimed, "This is the bargain of the summer!" With the funding we were able to offer the projects at about one-half the actual cost. Parents that had asked for financial help enrolled their children. We also had several minority club members participate. We feel we met our objectives by increasing participation and expanding community interest in our program. Every year we are reaching a higher percentage of Madison County youth with a quality educational program.

The Future

The dates have been set for our 4th Annual 4-H Summer Day Camp 2000. We are involving new leaders, parents and members in our Madison County 4-H program. They need an orientation training to strengthen their involvement. This has been scheduled for April 2000. Advertising for our day camp will go out in January 2000.

For More Information

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