The Kids Klub Impacts Youth & Community ’99

The Situation

Current research has documented numerous negative effects of children being home alone after school. Children left to themselves or under the care of siblings are more likely to engage in risky behavior, such as drug and alcohol use, are more often the victims of accidents and abuse, are more likely to suffer from lower academic achievement, and are more likely to suffer from increased social and emotional problems. Additionally, many children spend the average 1,100 hours a year they are home alone after school watching television. Watching more than three hours of television a day is the third most important roadblock to a child’s success.

As a rural community, Grangeville had very limited resources and social support services to help families. There were no after-school programs for school-age youth. Over 60 percent of children have both or their only parent in the labor force and 13 percent of Grangeville area children live in poverty.

Our Response

A University of Idaho 4-H grant provided seed money to establish the Grangeville after-school enrichment program, The Kids Klub. This program provides a safe, positive atmosphere for the enhancement of Grangeville’s kindergarten through sixth grade youth who would otherwise be home alone. The Kids Klub is designed to assist families by providing after-school care, tutoring, and parent education. The Kids Klub program focuses on children’s academic achievement, experiential learning, social skills development, and community service.

This program is guided by a team of community and school professionals who form The Kids Klub Operations Board. The program is administered by the University of Idaho, Idaho County Extension Educator. A program coordinator and supporting teachers are hired to work with the children.

Achievements

Thirty-five children were enrolled in The Kids Klub after-school program the first year, 44 the second year, and 53 last year. Thirty-two percent of those children enrolled during this third year had at least one poverty risk factor, such as their family qualified for a Public Assistance Program or the child qualified for free or reduced price lunches.

In addition to the after-school program, summer enrichment programs have reached more than 295 children during the past 3 years.

Forty-one middle-school age youth have also participated in either the Kids, Inc. Young Entrepreneurial program, or as a student teacher volunteer in the after-school program.

Last year, 40 percent of parents whose children were enrolled in the after-school program, reported
that they had seen improvement in their child’s grades in school and 50 percent indicated improvement in their child’s homework completion rate.

All parents reported that The Kids Klub program had been successful at helping children have fewer behavior problems in school and 90 percent believe the program is beneficial for helping their child to respect the rights of others and treat common property with care.

School teachers have also reported positive results with the program. In 1998, 79 percent of all teachers indicated that The Kids Klub program helped children do better in school.

Parent and teacher responses include:

?? “This is the best idea for after school I have seen. Instead of being ‘home alone’ during this time, my daughter has had an opportunity to expand her interpersonal skills. This has made her much more confident, and she feels better about herself.”

?? “The Kids’ Klub filled a long awaited need in our community for after school enrichment. The U of I in sponsoring this program should be commended. My children have flourished in the program both socially and academically.”

?? “I have a child in my room whose parents were considering retention, but sent him ahead anyway. He was in the low reading group and very shy. Now he is in the middle reading group, and even though he is still a little quiet, he seems to have more confidence in himself.”

The Kids Klub members participate in numerous service learning opportunities including food drives for the county food bank, fund-raising for cancer victims, trash clean-up days and scheduled trips to nursing homes. All parents reported that The Kids Klub was successful in helping children participate in community service activities. As one parent commented, “I am pleased to have Kids Klub in our community, it has helped children in a positive way.”

42 percent of parents and 68 percent of teachers believe that their community is a better place to live since The Kids Klub was established.
Cooperators & Co-Sponsors
More than 21 organizations served as collaborators and supporters of The Kids Klub program during the past year. These cooperators include The Department of Health & Welfare, Joint School District #241, Camas Prairie Adult Literacy Program, Local Prairie Partnership Council, and Syringa General Hospital. Coalition members agree that since establishment of The Kids Klub organizations and agencies partner more to address children’s needs in our community.

User fees generate operational funds and contribute to the long-term sustainability of this program. Since the establishment of The Kids Klub, eight additional grants totaling $39,754 have been received from private and public grantors. 153 individuals and businesses contributed $20,646 in materials and cash donations and 174 individuals volunteered a total of 1,977 hours at The Kids Klub program.

Program Location
The Kids Klub is currently located at 304 North State Street in Grangeville, Idaho.

The Future
The University of Idaho will work with the newly formed not-for-profit entity, The Kids Klub, Inc. to take over management of the program when the original seed-money grant is completed.

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