Body Walk
Family Festival in the Coeur d’Alene City Park

The Situation
For the past five years a number of agencies have coordinated a one-day event to encourage parents to spend a day with their children in an educational setting. The original intent was to provide parenting classes. That has never been a big hit.

Our Response
The agencies decided to join forces with Kiwanis who offers a family day in the park. The idea was to make educational exhibits more experiential. The Idaho Partners in Health group decided to try the Body Walk which is 8 stations which explains what happens to food in the body. The children walk in the mouth and learn about teeth, then they crawl into the esophagus and discover how food passes into the stomach. In the stomach the children learn how foods are absorbed into the blood and cells. They are passed along to the muscles to see how food is used as energy. From there they go to the heart and find out how many times a minute it beats. They visit the small intestines and learn how it sorts out the nutrients and waste. They went to the bones to find out what foods provide the building blocks for bones. Finally after learning how the lungs work and why they shouldn’t smoke they are exited out the nose.

Achievements
350 children between the ages of 18 months and 10 years old participated. In most cases children were accompanied by at least one parent. It was a wonderful way to educate the whole family. Many of the parents went inside the “body” so they could watch their children. At each station the children were given hand-outs and something exciting, like a sticker or an apple. They were given a bag to collect all the information so it would be available to review later.

The Future
Another event is being planned for March 1997 during Nutrition Week. This activity will be promoted through the schools. It will be possible to make it more age appropriate because we will know the age of the children.

For More Information
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