

After School Programs Impact Homedale Youth

The Situation

Recent research has shown that afterschool programs can make a big difference in how well children perform in school and in their overall development. Children left to themselves or with siblings afterschool 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 more likely to suffer from increased social and emotional problems.

The lack of afterschool programs can impact the employment, family income and educational attainment of rural families. In Owyhee County, 79% of women with children under 18 work outside the home, demonstrating a great need for supervised afterschool programs.

Our Response

Marsha Lockard, Owyhee County FCS Extension Educator and Patty Daughdrill, Owyhee County Extension Nutrition Program Assistant developed and provided 21 weeks of nutrition and wellness activities for the Homedale Afterschool program, which consisted of 56 students, grades kindergarten through fourth grade. The weekly lessons covered a variety of nutrition and health topics, including understanding the food guide pyramid, *Eating 5-A-*

Day the Color Way, Got Calcium, Get Moving, and Handwashing for Health. Students learned how to:

- Add more fruits and vegetables to their diets.
- Identify food groups in the food guide pyramid.
- Eat calcium rich foods.
- Make nutritious snacks.
- Properly wash their hands to prevent disease.
- Exercise for fun and health.

Supplies for the program were provided through grants from the Idaho Department of Education and the Idaho Food Bank.



Program Outcomes

Pre- and post-tests were given to the after school students various times during the year. One such lesson was on the value of handwashing for health. Students were given a pre-test consisting of eight graphics and ask if hands should be washed before or after the shown activity. Results of the pre-test showed that only one student correctly identity all of the appropriate graphics. An identical post-test was given to the 32 participating students with a 70% increase in correct answers. Twenty-one students correctly identified all of the graphics on the post-test. Ninety-four percent of the students improved their scores from the pre-test to the post-test as a result of the class.



Participants' Responses

When ask what they learned from the “*Handwashing for Health*” class students stated:

- “I thought I was doing a good job of washing my hands, but I wasn’t.”
- “I learned handwashing is really important, you should wash your hands all the time.”
- “This was really cool, we got to see our hand glow in the black light and then see if we got them clean after we washed them.”
- “I liked the black light and the stickers.”

The Future

The Homedale Afterschool program will continue in the fall of 2005 with the University of Idaho Extension, CYFAR (Children, Youth and Families at Risk) and ENP (Extension Nutrition Program) educators providing more classes in nutrition, health and technology. The program will be expanded to include an assortment of 4-H projects and materials for the 2005-2006 school year.

For More Information

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