4-H FOR MIGRANT CHILDREN

A Summer School Program

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SITUATION

A review of 4-H membership and population characteristics for Sheboygan County in 1972 revealed that the Sheboygan County 4-H Program was not reaching minority youth. Although school census data showed 157 Spanish American youth between the ages of 10 and 19, only 6 had participated in 4-H during the previous year. It was obvious that a special effort was needed to reach the Spanish American youth.

From 1973 to 1975 programs were piloted with Spanish American children of families who had settled out of the migrant stream. These programs included one on "Ethnic Folk Music" to stimulate cultural pride, a leathercraft group and a "Green Thumb" garden club. In each case it was difficult to recruit volunteer leaders. These efforts were all directed to the urban area in and around Sheboygan.

At the same time the school census showed a fairly large Spanish American population in the Random Lake/Cedar Grove area of the county. Several ideas were explored regarding the possibility of starting a garden project, day camps and a nutrition program either in the migrant camps or at Camp Riversite (a nearby 4-H camp). However, several of these programs required funds for transportation and meals which were not available.

After contacting the migrant coordinator of the "Comunidad de Amigos" the Extension Staff Assistant discovered two important facts.

1. Many of the Sheboygan County Spanish American children appearing on the school census data are from migrant families. They arrive in the middle to late June and stay in school only until early October.

2. The Cedar Grove School System has an on going summer school program for migrant workers' children.

A follow up with the principal and summer school staff revealed that they would be very willing to let us incorporate "Hands On" experience from 4-H developmental areas. (Example: Animal Sciences, Natural Sciences and Home and Family.)
The Cedar Grove Summer Migrant Program is a six week federally funded program under Title I funds. The State Department of Public Instruction yearly submits the proposal for federal funds to operate all of the 15 Wisconsin centers. Each center in turn submits a budget request to the state. Evaluation of the centers is conducted in person by the U. S. Office of Education and the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.

The summer school is an activity type program which tries to get at academics through field trips and other activities. The program is aimed at educationally deprived children, specifically for children of migrant families. Any child whose parents are involved in the food processing industry and who have lived in a school district not more than five years is considered a migrant. The children are divided into three age groups; three to five, six to nine, and ten to fourteen years. Most of the children speak Spanish—their native tongue, but many also speak some English.

OBJECTIVES

After completion of the five week 4-H summer school experience migrant family children will:

1. Be familiar with five or six different projects or activities of the 4-H Program.

2. Have had a "Hands On" experience in making something, participating in an activity, or caring for a plant or animal.

3. Have participated in social activities common to children their age in the new community. (Example: riding a horse, building a camp fire, learning about their environment.)
METHODS

The program designed to meet these objectives was titled "Exploring 4-H". Coordination of "Exploring 4-H" was conducted in the past two years by our federally funded half-time Staff Assistant. Both 4-H Youth Agents served in an advisory capacity for the program.

The Cedar Grove Summer School teaching staff of six teachers and four aides, many bilingual, met with the Staff Assistant prior to the opening of school to identify the areas of 4-H appropriate to their programs for the first five of the six weekly sessions. The project areas identified were: House Plants, Nature Awareness and Camp Craft Skills, Animals of the Area and Their Habitat, Senses and Posture, Food and Nutrition, Dogs and the Kennel, Animals on the Farm, and Arts and Crafts. After the project areas were chosen, volunteer youth and adult leaders along with Extension personnel were identified to teach. The Staff Assistant together with the 4-H and Youth Agents identified volunteer youth and adult leaders from the on-going 4-H program with experience.

All of the learning experiences were doing "Hands On' activities. A few specific examples were:

- **10-14 year olds** - Prepared own dinner foods, blindfolded nature hike, nature sensitivity, posture measurements and exercises.
- **6-9 year olds** - Cutting and rooting plants, using your senses, creating nature creatures.
- **3-5 year olds** - Feeding ducks and pigs, vegetables for snacks, nature crafts.

The teaching hours expended in the 1977 effort with each age group were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Youth Involved</th>
<th>Teaching Hours</th>
<th>Times Met As A 4-H Group*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3-5 year olds</td>
<td>(31 youth)</td>
<td>8-3/4 Hours</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-9 year olds</td>
<td>(17 youth)</td>
<td>13-1/2 Hours</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-14 year olds</td>
<td>(18 youth)</td>
<td>14-3/4 Hours</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>40 Hours</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Meeting times ranged from 15 minutes to 4 hours.
The extension staff expended 104 hours in program coordination.

- Coordination of program efforts on site: 53 hours
- Coordination of program efforts in planning: 51 hours

The 4-H teaching was built into as a regular part of the curriculum by the summer program teaching staff. The children's daily school activities in turn built upon the 4-H experiences of the week. An example would be — the 6-9 year olds studied dairy products and made ice cream the same day as their 4-H foods meeting. That entire week was devoted to Health and the Basic Four. The tours by the group also related to the 4-H activities.

CONCLUSIONS

Several positive outcomes can be identified as a result of the 4-H involvement in the Cedar Grove Summer Migrant Program. The conclusions were drawn from the following sources: Extension staff observations, school teaching staff comments, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction evaluation, satisfaction and comments of 4-H volunteers, and children's expressions through drawings and letters.

1. Children who in the majority of cases have never had any association with a youth organization, were now able to "belong" to a group for a short period of time.

2. Several of the children had never spoken English, or never been in any school or group situation. The English language was learned through association with animals and projects.

3. The summer staff, being bilingual, enabled English speaking volunteers to communicate effectively. No translation was needed in areas such as food preparation and animal "Hands On" experiences.

4. A major task in a migrant family's life is to learn to adjust to change. The 4-H program's basic purpose was to introduce the youngsters to the culture of Sheboygan County through 4-H projects. The children had never eaten some of the foods they made, never had seen fur animals of Wisconsin or never before experienced nature in the Wisconsin summer setting.

5. Positive growth was witnessed in the self confidence of the you
5. Positive growth was witnessed in the self confidence of the youth through each 4-H experience. Because the 4-H functions were all "doing" things the children had many chances for small successes.

6. Children up to nine years old who had never been outside of their transient home, developed some ability to relate to a group. This growth was evident as the five weeks progressed. Children who would not speak English or interact in the first week of 4-H were freely participating by the fifth.

7. Skills were developed that will be useful to the children wherever they reside. (i.e., firebuilding, starting the growth of new plants, following a recipe, etc.)

8. Sheboygan County volunteer youth and adult 4-H leaders developed a sense of commitment toward involving the migrant population in the ongoing community and 4-H program.

9. 4-H youth leaders involved in a teaching experience were able to utilize the skills (both human and project oriented) they had developed as a 4-H member.

**IMPLICATIONS**

There are several implications for 4-H programs throughout the country.

1. A review of the time spent indicates a need for additional manpower to coordinate this type of program.

2. This program offers another avenue of reaching youth without the necessity of a large scale recruitment and organizational campaign.

3. Children have the opportunity to participate in the same life experiences as permanent residents of an area without feeling their own cultural background is being threatened.

4. The summer school staff and the representatives from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction shared their enthusiasm for this type of multiple agency programming.

5. Funding difficulties in reaching new clientele can be greatly eased by increasing involvement in multi-agency programming.