

Illinois Rural Recreation Development Project

Summer Daze Program 2002

Youth Survey Summary Report

February 13, 2003

By

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Introduction

In August, 2002 a survey was distributed to all youth ages 8 to 13 registered for the Summer Daze Youth Recreation Program. Youth ages 8-9 received a slightly simpler version of the survey than 10-13 year olds. The survey was delimited to youth ages 8 to 13 because it was determined that their reading comprehension skills were adequate for completing a survey. A total of 150 youth ages 8 to 9 years old completed the evaluation and 119 youth ages 10 – 13 completed the survey. Survey questions examined participant’s motivation for participating, satisfaction with several attributes of the program (e.g., youth leaders, activities, location), activities learned, friends and acquaintances made during the program, intentions to participate next year and selected demographics (i.e., gender, grade level).

The report below is a summary of the responses from both surveys. In most cases, results are reported by age group. We hope this information is useful to demonstrate the program’s outcomes to elected officials, residents and other stakeholders in your community.

Results

Reasons Youth Attended Summer Daze:

The vast majority (93.2%) of 8-9 year olds and 83.6% of 10-13 year olds reported they participated in Summer Daze because it is fun. About one quarter of participants said they attended because there was nothing else to do. Not surprisingly, 75% of 8-9 year olds stated that their friends were at the camp, whereas only 60.7% of 10-13 year olds noted that having friends there was a reason to participate. Over eighty percent of the younger youth stated they participated to learn new games and about 75% of the older kids reported learning new games was a reason they attended. Most of the participants, regardless of age, reported they participated to meet new kids and make new friends (91.8% for 8-9 year olds and 74.8% for 10-13 year olds).

Reason for Attending	8-9 Year Olds		10-13 Year Olds	
	True % (N)	False % (N)	True % (N)	False % (N)
Fun	93.2% (137)	6.8% (10)	83.6% (97)	16.4% (19)
Nothing else to do	25.9% (38)	74.1% (109)	24.7% (31)	72.6% (82)
Most of my friends are here	75.3% (110)	24.7% (36)	60.7% (71)	39.3% (46)
My parents make me come	34.0% (49)	66.0% (95)	41.2% (47)	58.8% (67)
To learn new games and activities I can play after I leave camp	88.4% (130)	11.6% (17)	74.8% (86)	25.2% (29)
Meet new kids and make new friends	91.8% (135)	8.2% (12)	76.9% (90)	23.1% (27)

Satisfaction with Summer Daze Program among 8-9 Year Old Participants

Overall, the 8-9 year olds seemed quite satisfied with the program. Specifically, 97% stated the youth leaders were nice and 94% reported they were helpful. The vast majority (93.2%) reported liking the location and 77% said Summer Daze made them want to participate in games outdoors more often. This result is significant because being indoors is an important predictor of youth inactivity and obesity. Thus, Summer Daze may serve as an important strategy for increasing physical activity and lowering the incidence of obesity and overweight among youth.

Program Attribute	Yes % (N)	No % (N)
Are the youth leaders nice?	97.3% (143)	2.7% (4)
Are the youth leaders helpful	93.9% (139)	6.1% (9)
Were the activities fun most of the time?	93.9% (139)	6.1% (9)
Did you like the park as a location for the program?	93.2% (136)	6.8% (10)
Did Summer Daze make you want to play games outdoors more than you used to do?	77.6% (114)	22.4% (33)

Satisfaction with Summer Daze Program among 10-13 Year Old Participants

Older youth also reported fairly high levels of satisfaction with the program. Over 90% of 10-13 year olds agreed or strongly agreed that the youth leaders are nice. However, about 38% of respondents reported that the youth leaders were not helpful. The vast majority of youth (85%) reported that the park was a great location for the program. Over eighty percent of older youth participants thought the activities were fun and interesting. Moreover, 75% of older youth stated they felt good about themselves while at the program. Consistent with the younger age group, over 70% of 10-13 year olds stated that Summer Daze made them want to play games outside more often. The skills and confidence developed within the context of Summer Daze may explain why the majority of older youth felt good while participating in Summer Daze. Summer Daze is intended to expose youth to a variety of activities, teach skills to improve competence and confidence, and foster enjoyable participation in active recreation. These results seem to indicate that Summer Daze is accomplishing these program goals among 10-13 year olds.

Program Attribute	Strongly Agree % (N)	Agree % (N)	Disagree % (N)	Strongly Disagree % (N)
Youth leaders are nice	42.6% (49)	49.6% (57)	4.3% (5)	3.5% (4)
Youth leaders are not helpful	18.1% (21)	19.8% (23)	27.6% (32)	34.5% (40)
Activities are fun and interesting most of the time	25.0% (29)	58.6% (68)	9.5% (11)	6.9% (8)
The park is a great location for the program	29.6% (34)	54.8% (63)	7.0% (8)	8.7% (10)
I feel good about myself when I am at the program	18.1% (21)	57.8% (67)	11.2% (13)	12.9% (15)
Summer Daze makes me want to play games outside more than I used to do	32.5% (38)	38.5% (45)	16.2% (19)	12.8% (15)

New friends, acquaintances, and activities learned

An important goal of the summer Daze program is to foster social connections among participants. Results indicated that the program served as a vehicle for making new contacts and forming new friendships. For example, on average participants made about five new friends through their participation in Summer Daze. They also reported making three new acquaintances through the program.

In addition, about one third of participants, regardless of age, reported learning nine or more new activities while participating in Summer Daze. About 19% of all youth reported learning between one and four new activities. Thirteen percent of the younger group and 16% of the older group learned five to six new activities. See the table below for more information.

New Friends and Acquaintances

During Summer Daze:	8-9 Year Olds Mean (Range)	10-13 Year Olds Mean (Range)
How many new friends did you make?	5.78 (0 to 22)	4.96 (1 to 21)
How many kids did you get to know better?	3.32 (1 to 4)	3.07 (1 to 4)

Number of activities learned during Summer Daze

Number of Activities:	8-9 Year Olds % (N)	10-13 Year Olds % (N)
0 Activities	2.1% (3)	11.0% (13)
1-2 Activities	19.2% (28)	16.1% (19)
3-4 Activities	19.2% (28)	16.9% (20)
5-6 Activities	13.7 (20)	16.1% (19)
7-8 Activities	8.2% (12)	10.2% (12)
9+ Activities	37.7% (55)	29.7% (35)

Will you participate in Summer Daze again next year?

Over half of respondents reported that they plan to participate in Summer Daze during 2003. A smaller percentage of 8-9 year olds (35.7%) and 10-13 year olds (29.6%) responded that maybe they'd participate again next year. Relatively few participants (10% or less) stated they would not participate next year.

Intend to Participate Next Year?	8-9 Year Olds % (N)	10-13 Year Olds % (N)
Yes	55.0% (77)	60.0% (69)
No	9.3% (13)	10.4% (12)
Maybe	35.7% (140)	29.6% (34)

Gender: The sample was fairly evenly split between males and females. Among the younger group, 54% were female and 46% male. For the older group, 51% were male and 49% female.

Gender	8-9 Year Olds % (N)	10-13 Year Olds % (N)
Male	45.8% (65)	51.3% (59)
Female	54.2% (77)	48.7% (56)

Grade you will be in next year

Most of the participants were going into the 4th grade (29.5%), followed by 3rd grade (20.4%), and 5th grade (20.4%). It should be noted that youth under the age of eight were not asked to complete the survey since many are just beginning to learn to read.

Grade Level	Percentage	Frequency
2 nd Grade	11.0%	28
3 rd Grade	20.4%	50
4 th Grade	29.5%	75
5 th Grade	20.4%	52
6 th Grade	13.3%	34
7 th Grade	3.9%	10
8 th Grade	1.1%	3

Summary of Open-Ended Comments:

Youth participants had the opportunity to comment on what they liked most and least about the program, and they provided recommendations for improving the program during 2003. Below is a summary of the open-ended responses from the survey. The numbers in parentheses after each item reflect the number of people who mentioned the item in their feedback. Furthermore, periodically, the program name was placed next to comments that only applied to a particular program.

What they liked about Summer Daze:

1. Games (51)
2. Swimming (25)
3. Youth leaders were nice (26)
4. Being with friends and making new friends (16)
5. Crafts (14)
6. Field Trips (9)
7. Snacks (6)
8. Special Guests (3)
9. Making food (4)
10. Water week (3)
11. Learned new games I can play at home

12. Basketball
13. Playground
14. There are no bullies here
15. Hiking
16. My mom lets me choose if I want to go

What they liked least about Summer Daze:

1. Running the mile (10) ---(only in Buda & Wyanet)
2. Life skills (8) ---(only in Buda & Wyanet)
3. It was too hot (12)
4. Had to get up early (9)
5. Crafts (9)
6. It was too long (5)
7. Singing (4)
8. Sometimes boring (3)
9. We need food and something to drink (4)
10. Discussion time (4) –(St. Joseph)
11. Leaders kept letting boys do what they wanted and didn't care what girls wanted.
12. Some boys teased me and were mean (3)
13. When counselors yell
14. Did not like the skit (Clinton)
15. Use more parks (Clinton)
16. Some of the leaders (3)
17. Games where you had to sit a lot

Suggestions for improving the program:

1. Add more and different types of games rather than the same ones (17)
2. More field trips (6)
3. Youth leaders should be more helpful (4)
4. Have a snack time (3)
5. Have some leaders play with the group (3)
6. Have it inside when it is really hot (4)
7. Make it shorter (2)
8. No singing, especially for older kids (3)
9. No discussion time
10. Have it last longer
11. More activities for older kids
12. Have water on hand (2)
13. Pre prepared and have more things to do
14. More dodgeball (3)
15. No more exercising (6) (Buda & Wyanet)
16. Kids that can't swim should be able to play games
17. Make kids behave better and youth leaders should be nicer and watch out for us (Farmer City)
18. Let us wear sandals (3)
19. Better crafts (2)

20. Don't do crafts (2)
21. Leaders should be more strict
22. Make sure big and little kids are separated
23. Less rules
24. Separate the boys and the girls

Conclusions and Recommendations based on the Youth Evaluation:

Based on the evaluation some conclusions about the program can be made:

1. Several participant goals were met. Specifically, a large proportion of participants made new friends, learned new games and activities and stated that their involvement increased their desire to play games outdoors.
2. The program was perceived as enjoyable by most of the participants.
3. Few participants came to the program because their parents made them attend.
4. Youth leaders were perceived as nice. However, youth leaders were not rated as highly on helpfulness.
5. Most participants liked the park location. However, analysis of open-ended comments suggests that when it is extremely hot, perhaps it would be best to move the program to a cooler indoor area.
6. Younger children seem to like craft activities better than older youth. Perhaps limit craft time for older kids or make sure to plan different crafts that are more appealing for older kids.

Recommendations:

1. Make sure to have a cooler of water on hand for leaders and participants.
2. Plan a wider variety of games that maximize participation. Expose kids to many more new games and activities, rather than repeating familiar favorites. Help the kids develop new favorites through the new activities they are exposed to by youth leaders.
3. Plan more crafts for younger kids. Make sure that the crafts selected are consistent with the skills and interests of the age groups. For example, making paper bag puppets is more appealing to younger kids than older kids.
4. Be sure to divide the participants into age groups that make sense: 5-7 years, 8-10 years, 11-13 years. Separating boys and girls is also a good idea for some activities. Assign a youth leader to a small group of participants (using the leader to participant ratios as a guideline).