

10-1-2014

Service Learning at Mobile Recreation Program

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Mobile Recreation Program:

Mission Statement

"We deliver healthy activities and nutrition education to kids all over town! Our Mobile Recreation Vans are large cargo vehicles outfitted with balls, jump ropes, bases and other supplies for field games, fitness, nutrition, and fun art projects for kids" (Mobile Recreation).

Service Project Purpose

"The Mobile Recreation Unit was launched in February 2008 to address programming deficiencies identified by the Mayor's Council on Children and Youth.

Accessibility, both in terms of location and cost, was identified as a major obstacle facing families looking for safe, quality after-school programming for their children. The Mobile Recreation Unit is intended to help alleviate the accessibility issue and provide safe, supervised activities near to home" (Mobile Recreation).

Learning goals

- *Become socially active within the community*
- *Research and contextualize the motivations of an activist citizen*



Service Activities:

As volunteers for Moblie Rec we were responsible for a few tasks:

- *Promote a fun and safe environment to have fun and play games.*
- *Reinforce the idea of positivity, and healthy exercise*
- *Provide great examples as role models for our communities youth*

Benefits of Mobile Recreation:

- *Provide fun, healthy games and activities that reinforce good sportsmanship and a healthy lifestyle*
- *Provides a safe option for parents who work to leave their kids after school*
- *Facilitates access to an environment that promotes well being, and a healthy way of life*

Bernadette Nyirabanyanga



*"Right now in my life, I just want to love people and do as much as I can for others to help Boise be the best place to live."
-Berna*

Berna is a brilliant example of someone passionately and actively involved within her community and we've had the honor of volunteering and spending time with her. Berna helps run the Mobile Recreation Program with contagious enthusiasm that inspires the children to be active and make healthier food choices.

Berna believes that,

"Any program that has kids moving and educating nutrition makes any community a livable place."

It has become apparent over a semester of highlighting and interviewing some of the amazing women in Boise, that everyone who makes a difference in the community have had experiences throughout their lives that have influenced their involvement with the community. Berna was a refugee from Rwanda that moved to Idaho at the young age of 6. She explained to me the importance of building a relationship with her community at that impressionable time of her life,

"During my younger days, there was a community center and the YMCA. I felt safe, happy and a sense of community.

This is one of the reasons why I work for the Mobile Recreation Program. I also know that my little brother looks up to me, for what I do, and that's when I know its worth it."

This goes to show the importance of programs, such as Mobile Recreation, has on the children that they influence. Berna can truly relate to the children as she motivates them to be active, involved and make healthy nutritional choices.

Impact:

Problem:

- *As of 2013, more than 45 million Americans were considered to be in poverty (Vandsburger).*
- *"Mounting economic pressures, caused by unstable work and low income, created feelings of emotional distress and, as a result, tended to lower the parents' sense of efficacy regarding what they believed to be their influence over their children and their children's environment" (Anakwenze).*
- *Low income children disproportionately experience more difficulty in cognitive development and academic achievement, which can be attributed to the harder conditions of home life.*
- *"Stressful social environments affect the biology of the brain in ways that can become serious if left untreated" (Anakwenze).*

Solution:

- *"The poverty of the urban environment cultivates mental illness, while the resulting mental illness reinforces urban poverty. To interrupt this cycle, social workers and policymakers must implement a comprehensive mental health care system that emphasizes prevention, reaches young people, crosses traditional health care provision boundaries, and involves the entire community" (Komro).*
- *SBHC's facilitate access to preventative health services and educate young people about activities and behaviors that promote well being.*
- *When early adolescents engage in positive and healthy activities and entertainment, their pro-social skills and tendencies grow. Participation in positive activities reduces the chance of involvement in negative activities.*
- *These programs should aim to provide role models and resources to increase mental health resilience to combat the deleterious effects of low socioeconomic standing (Komro).*

