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## CAMP READ-A-LOT

Jefferson Elementary School

Wichita, Kansas

The goal of Camp Read-A-Lot is to increase student reading achievement through family and community involvement. This practice incorporates Type 3-Volunteering, Type 4-Learning at Home, and Type 6-Collaborating With the Community of the six types of involvement.

Camp Read-A-Lot is designed as an activity at the school that encourages families to read together at home. Families that attend Camp Read-A-Lot visit five centers during the evening. The “campsite,” held in the school library, is decorated with a tent, lanterns, sleeping bags, and artificial logs, all borrowed from a local Boy Scout Troop. Students and their parents bring blankets, sleeping bags, and sit-upons so they can read together on the floor.

In the “recreation” center, families play an assortment of games with different reading levels. Students show their parents the reading programs they use on computers in the “information” center. For most parents, this is the first time they learn how students use computers to help with reading.

In the “bookstore,” children choose a free book and an activity kit related to the book. Guest readers from the local professional soccer team, the Wichita Wings, talk to the students about the importance of reading and read aloud some of the books. The students enjoy getting autographs from the local heroes.

Finally, in the “mess hall,” families snack on s’mores, hot chocolate, and trail mix served by the Brownie Girl Scout Troop which meets at the school.

In its first year (1996-97), Camp Read-A-Lot was held during the day with all classes listening to guest readers. Now, it is held in the evening so that working parents can attend. In its fourth year (1999-2000), centers were added to Camp Read-A-Lot. When families register, they receive name tags indicating the order in which they should visit the centers. Every 20 minutes an announcement is made, indicating participants should move to the next center.

Bookmarks are passed out, along with badges saying “I survived Camp Read-A-Lot.” Spanish translations of the free books also are available and are read aloud to Spanish-speaking families by a soccer player from a Spanish-speaking country. These families were invited to Camp Read-A-Lot by an interpreter.

The budget for this project included books, activity kits, and refreshments. Title I funds helped obtain the books and activity kits at a cost of approximately \$300. The soccer team came free of charge as a community involvement event.

Jefferson Elementary School shows that by creatively combining school, family, and community resources, children and their families can focus on student reading achievement and have fun at the same time.

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