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Field Study at Our Little Haven Daycare and Preschool

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Our Little Haven Daycare and Preschool

Jalie Belloma
Sociology/Criminology



Inspiration:

Our Little Haven is a childcare center located in Marion, Iowa which serves primarily low-income families. I have worked at Our Little Haven for roughly 3.5 years. During this time, I have worked with numerous children ranging in age from infant to 12 years old, with most of my time being spent working in the school age room. Although much of my time working with the children at Our Little Haven has consisted of fun activities including field trips, a significant portion of my time has also been designated to helping the children with homework and reading each afternoon.

I was inspired to do this project after years of observing a lack of books throughout the daycare center. When children were asked to do homework or read after school, many of the available books were damaged and unusable.

Goal: 50 Books

I initially set a modest goal of 50 books for the school age room. This goal was determined by the number of children enrolled in the summer program at the time. I determined that this goal would allow each child in the school age classroom the opportunity to choose a new book to read during the afternoons.



Acknowledgements:

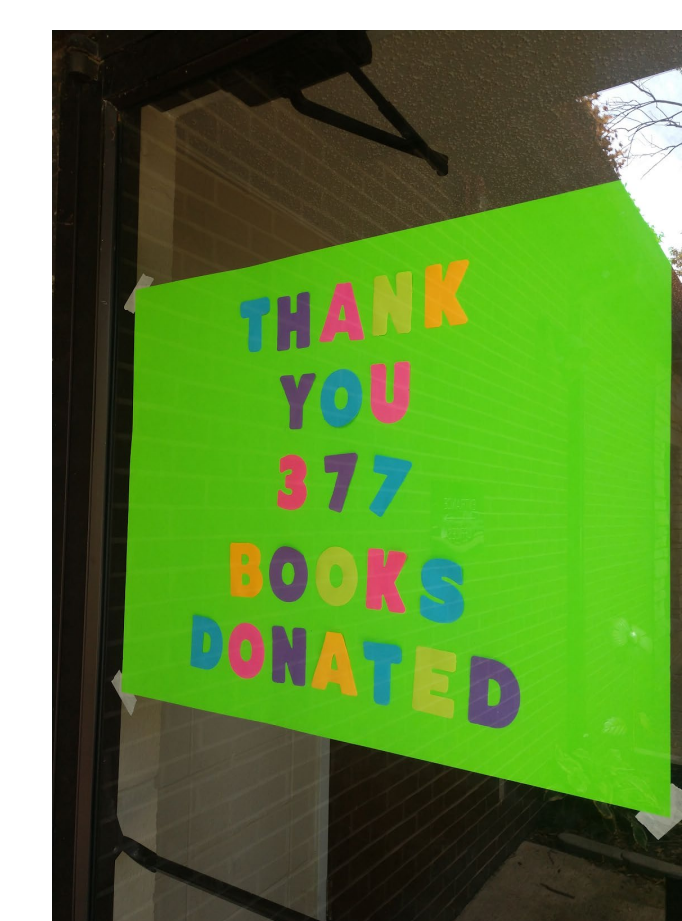
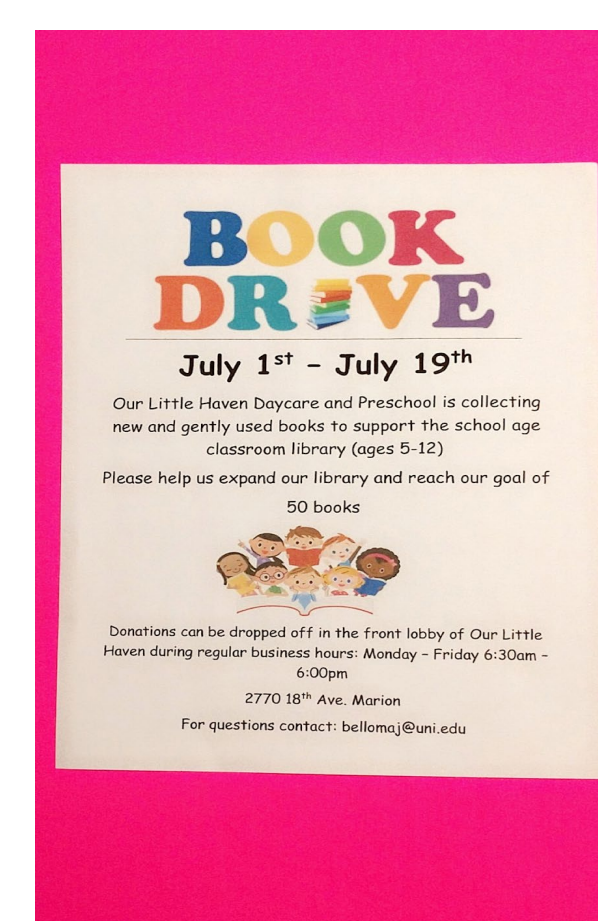
Prof. Kimberly Baker – Internship Coordinator
Amanda Ruprecht & Tori Mills – Program Directors

Research & Planning:

After completing an online search for various methods of planning and implementing a successful book drive, I completed numerous steps before holding the book drive. First, I determined a goal for the drive and made signs for others to clearly see what the goal was. Next, I set a date and duration for the book drive. I chose to hold the book drive between the weeks of July 1st and July 19th.

Next, I determined the most effective ways in which to promote the book drive. I used various strategies to promote the book drive, including making posters with the children to hang throughout the center, passing out flyers to parents as well as hanging them at various local businesses, and promoting the book drive on various social media sites such as Facebook and Snap Chat. In addition, I included specific details about the goal of the book drive and how to make donations in each of the methods of promotion.

Next, I made a donation box and set up a clearly visible donation site in the front lobby of the daycare. As donations were made, I maintained the donation box by emptying it each time it was filled. Finally, once the book drive was finished, I counted the number of donated books and announced the final results thanking those who made donations on social media and made a poster for the children and their parents to see at the center.



Outcome: 477 Books

The effort to gather donated books far exceeded my initial goals. When the book drive ended 377 books had been donated; however, 100 additional books were donated after the drive was finished, bringing the total number of donated books to 477. In addition to the books that were donated, other donations were made which consisted of 21 coloring books, flashcards, pencils, dry erase markers, Clorox wipes, crayons, markers, and a small tote to keep supplies in.

Initially the book drive was intended to provide books for the school age classroom to be used during homework time; however, enough books with various reading levels were donated that I was able to distribute books to the other four classrooms at the daycare. With these extra donations, I was able to fill not only each classrooms bookshelf with new books, but also supply the teachers with books to read during story time.

What I Learned:

Throughout this project I was able to gain a better understanding of how to effectively promote such an event, as well as the power of social media and community support. More than 200 of the donations were made by individuals from my hometown, who learned about the book drive through social media. At the start of this project I was unsure how many donations the center would receive; however, once the book drive was finished, I was overwhelmingly satisfied with the results.

Through this experience I have become much more confident in myself and my ability to perform such tasks. With this experience I have gained invaluable skills and will be better equipped to perform in future careers that may include coordinating charitable events for others.