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Getting Books into the Hands of Children in Transition

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MDS 495: Capstone Project

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Author Note

This is a project to complete my Bachelor of Arts degree in Multidisciplinary Studies with a Certificate in Public Health, MDS 495, Boise State University, Margaret Sass Instructor.

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Abstract

This project aims to get books into the hands of Children in Transition. Who are these children? They are children that have been given a bad hand. These children live in Motels or are homeless or sleeping in their cars. This project will provide these children with the opportunity to get books that are theirs to keep, read and value as their own. I am working with Spread the Word Nevada to get books into these children's hands.

Children in Transition (CIT) WCSD's CIT Program serves children experiencing homelessness by providing resources, support, and comprehensive services to students from birth through grade 12. (2021)

Keywords: Children in Transition, Books, Washoe County School District

Introduction to your Capstone Project

"Children in Transition (CIT) identifies our homeless student population. Homelessness is defined through the McKenny-Vento Act as "Individuals who lack a fixed, regular, or adequate nighttime residence." (2021).

Over 3,300 students are identified for CIT services each year. Although the percentage of students identified for CIT has steadily decreased, there remains a high need for CIT services in the Reno-Sparks area, particularly with the growing economic uncertainty resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, substantial challenges to identifying homeless students suggest that many students are under-identified for services, and the number of students who qualify for CIT is much higher. (Spread the Word Nevada, 2021)

This project involves Children in Transition. Who are these children? These are children living in Motels with either their parents, brothers, or sisters, all in a single room and or possibly sleeping on the streets or in their cars. These children do attend school daily but are homeless.

This project involves doing a Virtual Book Sale, with all the money raised from it, staying here in Northern Nevada. Raising money for this project is paramount, and I hope to get a lot of funds to purchase books for these children. This book sale will be ongoing, ending in February of 2022.

. With the help of Spread the Word Nevada, I hope to get them these books.

Innovative Approach

While trying to find information on bookmobiles which are becoming hard to find in cities in the west, they are more prevalent in the midwest and east coast. I came across this website doing the same thing but without the wheels. I would have never thought of making a virtual book sale and raising money so that they could purchase the books needed for these children.

I decided to do the Virtual Book Sale instead of a bookmobile as there is not one here in the Reno, Sparks Area. To help spread the word, I will be enlisting the help of Spread the Word Nevada. "Spread the Word Nevada is a children's literacy nonprofit (501c3) corporation dedicated to advancing early childhood literacy by placing books into the hands and homes of children within Nevada's at-risk low-income communities. Since 2001 Spread the Word Nevada has distributed more than 6 million gently used and new books to more than 672,885 low-income youth in Nevada, where they can get age-appropriate books." (19, May 2021)

After looking for information on bookmobiles, I found this website for Spread the Word Nevada and looked into it and found that I could do several different things with this group. This group helps get books into the hands of children who are homeless or living in motels. This group has several other programs that I have not heard of before. These programs are **Kids to Kids**; this program is the flagship Spread the Word Nevada program. This program allows them to get books for at-risk children to help them start an in-home library. **Breakfast and Books and Snack Time with Books**, these two programs focus on reading as a family affair. **Books and Buddies** pair the children up with a mentor to help them with their literacy skills. This is a one on one approach to help the kids. **Books on Break** is a summer program that partners with other groups such as the Boys and Girls Club.

Moving beyond the typical either/or solution was not easy after looking up information on book-mobiles and not finding all that much on them. I found out that there are more bookmobiles in the midwest and east coast, with the most being in Kentucky, mainly on the eastern side. So I figured there had to be something out there to get these kids' books. And found that organizations get books into children's hands by doing Virtual Book Sales. While doing this project, I also found several different groups that supplied free books to children. Reading Rockets is a group that helps get free books into the hands of children.

Let's name a few of these groups from Reading Rockets. "**Book Trust** is a national literacy program that offers Title 1 elementary schools students across the country the opportunity to choose books throughout the school year and keep them for their home libraries. **First Book** is a national nonprofit that has provided more than 135 million new books to children in need. **Kids Need to Read** was formed to help underfunded communities create a culture of reading." (August 18, 2019)

Emotional Intelligence

I feel that, yes, my project does indicate self-awareness and the awareness of others. This project is for the kids and getting the awareness out there, so others will know what is available. Choosing to do the Virtual Book Sale and making it available on social media makes it readily available to others to read about this organization. Being self-aware that there are children out there that are not as fortunate as others and do not have the accessibility to books as some other children might. Giving to this program that other programs going on inside it gives these children the opportunity to get books. While doing this project, I found several other Projects that provide books to children in need.

Getting people thinking about getting books into kids' hands at an early age is a good thing. Starting children to reading at an early age gives them a sense of accomplishment and makes them better readers. The value to others is up to them and how they react to getting the children books. Giving them the resources to look for free books is a great thing to use. So to answer this question, it is of value to others. Giving books to children and letting them pick them out provides them with a sense of getting something that is theirs to keep and something to read.

Creative Thinking

It would be hard to create your framework for this project as it involves so many people, and getting an organization involved to help with this is not easy. It took several e-mails to them too. And e-mailing back and forth to get this project up and running without their help with the web page and answering questions, they were of excellent service.

Was my approach unique? Well, to me, it was as I had never done a virtual book sale before. Doing something like a virtual book sale is fantastic as you only have access to those on your list of people in your social media groups. You rely on your friends and family to help you with your project.

Your Innovative Solution

What did I accomplish while doing my project? You never have enough time to get something like this up and going. Seven weeks is not enough time to get your thoughts together and implement your project. But when you get your project up and running and raise money for these homeless kids with the help of Spread the Word Nevada, this is a great thing to do. They build you the webpage, which is something that I probably would have had trouble with; this made it easier to get it up and running—and to make sure that books get into the hands of children.

I suppose I could have approached this problem/project differently. I definitely would have started sooner or picked a more accessible subject to research. Time is also a factor; having more time to get your project up and running is tricky while taking other classes. Time management is the primary thing.

I would not say that my solution is any better than anyone else. Learning is the main thing in this project. What you learn and how you follow through to the end is the primary learning objective.

Results

The benefits/Impact of this project is mainly for the corporation and the kids who will benefit from the books they will get from Spread the Word Nevada.

"The Impact that Spread the Word Nevada is that 6.2 million books have been distributed, 60,000 Books given to students each month, 696,256 Books given to students since 2001, and 65 Nevada elementary schools have been adopted, and it is still growing." (19. May 2021) So as you can see, this corporation has had a significant impact on children in need. I have chosen to have this project run until February 2022. Hopefully, I can raise \$2500 for this organization, and I hope to reach my goal.

The result that I am hoping to achieve is to reach my goal of raising money for books for children in transition. So far, we have raised \$360.00 for this organization which is a start. Spread the word Nevada can purchase 6 + classrooms of books for the less fortunate children with this amount of money.

Different Approaches

The only thing I think I could have done differently is to pick another subject for my project. Not sure what I would have done but doing something for those Children in Transition just seemed like a good thing to do and to help them when they have no one else out there, making sure that they are getting the suitable reading material and something that they get to hold onto and keep for their own. I am happy with the approach that I have taken and will always be pleased with the money that has been raised to help get the books to them.

Making a Virtual Book Sale is taking a chance that you might or might not make your projected goal. But it still is a chance one takes whether they will or not. But I am happy with what I have raised with the help of others. I have invited many people to join this cause and help

the children. But all one can do is say a little prayer and hope for the best. One never knows what the outcome of these types of projects is. So I will not be upset if I don't reach my goal as anything is better than nothing; the amount raised is more than they had before I started. So yes, I am happy with the results of this project so far as it is going to be ongoing till February 2022. And then, I will decide whether to end it or not depending on the amount of money raised for this group and the kids.

Ideally, I would have liked to reach my goal by now. Still, I also knew it right here during the holidays was going to be difficult and was hoping that doing something for the kids would tug at the heart of people, and they might find it somewhere in their hearts to donate and make kids not so bright day a little brighter

Conclusion

Writing a conclusion to my project is hard as it is an ongoing project that I chose to have run until February, as I am hoping to raise \$2,500 for Share the Word Nevada. I decided to do a service project, which is more complicated than you think. I started doing a research paper but found out that researching didn't have that much information available for my area.

What did I learn? That doing a project is not as easy as it looks or sounds. Time management is the main problem that I had doing this project.

Who will benefit? Share the Word Nevada, the organization that I am making the Virtual Book sale with the Children in Transition, as this is the reason for this project to get books into the hand of these children.

What skills did I learn or acquire? Time management would be the most significant thing. I am learning more about service organizations and how they help people that need them.

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