

SUMMER SAFETY AND HEALTHY NUTRITION

Fun-filled interactive workshops for children

Do you know how to “eat the rainbow?” When should you “stop, drop, and roll?” What does it mean to “throw, not go?” Which beverage is healthier – Gatorade or Coca Cola? Student nurses answered these and other questions during a “Summer Safety and Healthy Nutrition Workshop”.

The audience was children ages 5-14 years, enrolled in an after school program held in a community computer lab. Through a series of demonstrations, games, and visual displays the children learned many valuable tips about bike and pool safety and choosing healthy foods and beverages. A special treat was the unannounced appearance of a “fully-loaded” fire truck and five firefighters. One of them was dressed in the camouflage hazard uniform complete with facemask and oxygen tank. The firefighters stressed the importance of each household having a fire evacuation plan that includes an agreed-upon meeting place and of having a fire drill once a year. Even so, this potentially lifesaving information paled in comparison to the excitement of the children as they climbed into the fire truck and actually handled the hoses, hatchets, and other equipment.

Some children get this information and experiences at their schools, but many do not. Regardless, the subject matter seems appropriate for re-teaching and/or re-emphasis by churches. Why not consider adding health and safety tips to your summer camp agenda or programming for your children’s ministry? The list of potential topics is quite lengthy and can be geared to the ages and experiences of the youth you serve. Students from the local community college, especially, are valuable resources. The workshop could be a special class project or an opportunity for community service credits. Certificates of Appreciation and thank-you letters from the children easily make this a “no-frills, no-cost” but fun-filled learning experience and an excellent outreach ministry for you congregation. Why not put your own spin on the idea and give it a try? Your young people will love doing something different!

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