

COMMUNITY PARTNER

**WOMEN
AGAINST
ABUSE**

"The mission of Women Against Abuse (WAA) is to provide quality, compassionate, and nonjudgmental services in a manner that fosters self-respect and independence in persons experiencing intimate partner violence (IPV) and to lead the struggle to end domestic violence through advocacy and community education."

BACKGROUND

- WAA consists of 3 shelters in Philadelphia providing temporary housing and services for victims of intimate partner violence and their families
- 2 of 3 WAA shelters offers a Young Survivors Summer Camp for resident children aged 5-17 years old (pre-K-12th grade)
- Day camp was held Monday-Friday 9:30-3:00 PM from July 1 – August 13 (Bridging the Gaps internship spanned part of this time: June 14 - July 30)

OBJECTIVES

- Offer weekly, health-oriented interactive presentations and activities to campers
 - Topics: skeletal system, internal anatomy, oral health, nutrition and cardiovascular health
- Help prepare children for the incoming school year with grade-appropriate reviews of math, reading and language arts
- Engage children during 'free play' with games, art, and exercise
- Provide a supportive, encouraging, enriching environment for kids to feel safe and learn
- Chaperone children during field trips to the Academy of Natural Sciences and the Morris Arboretum

METHODS

- Internet searches on health sites yielded teaching strategies
 - Pinterest, kidshealth.org, cap4kids, Prezi, and jeopardylabs.com were used to create lesson plans
- Lesson schedules were drafted on site before camp started
 - 1 lesson/day (4 lessons/week)
 - Individual lesson plans were tailored/modified after-hours throughout summer
- Craft materials for related projects were provided by the site
- Jeopardy games (to reinforce learning) were created using jeopardylabs.com
- Camp was held within classroom at respective sites and occasionally art rooms
 - Field trips to Drexel's Academy of Natural Sciences and Morris Arboretum
- Camp was held with variable attendance from 1-4 children at a time
 - 16 children total, ages 5-14
- During camp classroom activities, social distancing, mandatory mask wearing, and regular sanitation of hands was observed due to COVID-19

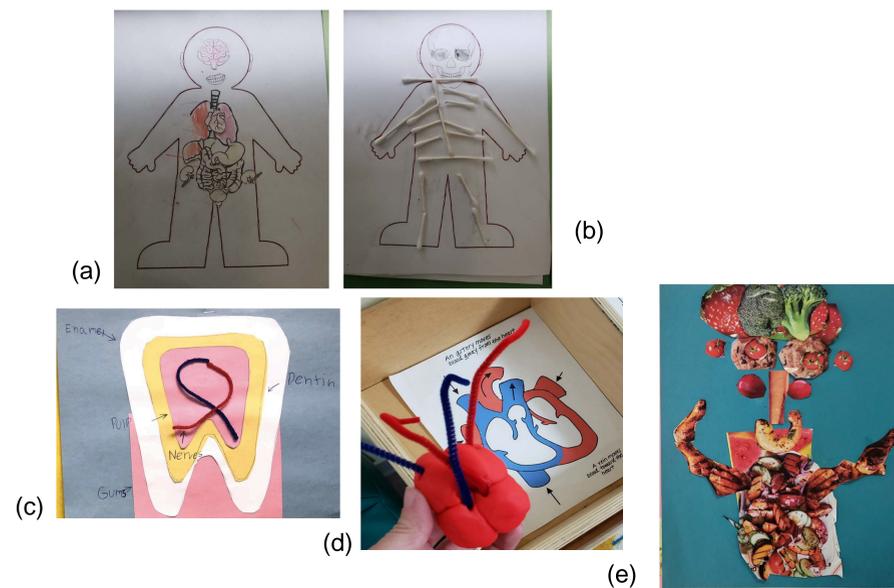
REFLECTION

"Just before I started the internship for BTG, I got details about a different summer experience that I had really wanted to go to as well. There was a scheduling conflict, which meant that I had to give up the other experience in order to be an intern for the BTG program. This decision did make me sad, but the experience I had today made it all worth it. Yesterday, I met two sisters (7 and 9). One was talkative, and the other was extremely shy. She didn't even look at me when I spoke to her. It was challenging to get her to warm up to me, but every time I saw her steel a grin, I felt like I had made some progress, and was motivated to keep trying. It was a huge heart-warming surprise, when I felt her small hands embrace me for a hug when we were departing the arboretum and saying goodbye after our fieldtrip. When I think back on that, I can't help it that I get teary eyed, and think about how this experience was definitely worthwhile. I have learned so much about the WAA site and about myself in the process."-Fadia

"We embarked on bridging the gaps in Philadelphia during the second unprecedented year of the COVID-19 pandemic. As we looked forward to finally reuniting with our community, we realized that 'reopening' was not the end, but a new journey. This summer was a transition for Women Against Abuse and its Young Survivors Summer Camp. Employees were finally returning to work and the children to the classroom, albeit behind surgical masks. The shelter only returned to 75% capacity for its residents and was more flexible with the families. This meant there were not as many children to attend the camp as well as those who did not attend consistently. Some challenges were usual and some new to WAA, but as challenging as it was at times, there was the consistent reward: the children. The children were dealing with their own challenges, but it was a relief to see that they were still kids. And I will remember each of them: The boy who handed me books to read to him and never complained of losing at board games. The boy who always had fantastical stories and the tagline, 'and guess what else?' The little boy who stuffed his pockets with a collection of tree cones at the arboretum. The quiet girls who laughed at slushie-stained teeth. We were able to connect with each, and whether they remember the details of blood flow or carbohydrates, I hope they remember having fun, being respected, and having value." - Ashlea

OUTCOMES

- BTG interns presented campers with lessons on skeletal system, internal anatomy, oral health, nutrition and cardiovascular health
- Interns additionally assisted children in grade level reading and math worksheets to help prepare them for the coming school year
- Interns chaperoned two fieldtrips: the Academy of Natural Sciences and the Morris Arboretum.
 - The children enjoyed the Morris Arboretum more because of its hands on interactive approach
- Health presentations were reinforced by having children:
 - Explain the project that they made to each other
 - Play Jeopardy games
 - Participate in "Simon-says" games (e.g. touch a body part/bone)
 - Craft projects that highlighted teaching focus
- Children were asked if they found the project engaging and fun and any feedback from the children was considered for planning future projects



(a) Children learned general internal anatomy by placing organs in the appropriate location and modeled the skeleton with Q-tips. (b) Children created 'noodle X-rays' of their hand and learned bones of hand. (c) anatomy of tooth modeled with construction paper and pipe cleaners (d) Play-doh models of the heart to demonstrate the four chambers and major blood flow through them. (e) Collage portraits made with cutout images of food to highlight the adage, 'you are what you eat.'

DISCUSSION

- Interns appreciated introducing health topics to children and the children reciprocated by engaging in health-related discussions
- BTG interns appreciated the opportunity to contribute to the mission of WAA and enjoyed interacting with its youngest residents
- Due to the nature of transitional housing facility and unprecedented challenges of COVID-19, attendance of the children at camp was very inconsistent
- Creating lesson plans and projects to engage different age ranges was difficult because of unanticipated arrivals (new students of different ages)
- Future BTG interns may consider focusing on one health topic per week (since camp runs for 4 weeks of 7-week internship):
 - Suggestions: Body systems/Hygiene, Cardiovascular system, Oral health & Nutrition
- Interns should set goals early on and discuss them with the community preceptor to see if those goals are achievable
- Lesson plans should be retained as a resource for the future BTG interns