



Cheer and Be Social Camp



The Floyd County Navigator Team has been fortunate in partnering with “Hotshots”, a local cheer gym, to run a competition cheer team for children with special needs for the past six years. The program runs from August to January, with practice every Friday and 3 exhibitions and 2 competitions each cheer season. Several years ago we kicked off the cheer season with a cheer camp that would not only work on the team’s routine, but also on social skills. The week long camp meets for 6 hours and is jam packed with hard work learning a new routine, fun crafts, special guests, yummy lunch and snacks, music time and a focus on practicing social skills throughout the day. This year we had 21 campers and 12 volunteers!

How do we pay for this camp? The cheer gym let us use their facility for free and even recruited college age cheerleaders to be volunteers. The lunches and crafts were generously donated. The P2P mini-grant was used to buy t-shirts and replenish supplies for our cotton candy and popcorn machine. The core group on our team organized the schedule, spread the word, solicited the donations and ferried them to the gym. We recruited a teacher to be the Director of the camp. We brought in a special guest instructor each day for an hour, (Eco Center Guide, PE teacher, Kindermusik instructor and our Cheer mentors from a local high school cheer team.) Each guest instructor was asked to demonstrate a social skill that kids could use daily (taking turns, waiting your turn, helping a friend, etc.)

My advice to other teams looking to create something like what we have done would be to build relationships in your community. We simply told people what we were doing, how it impacted the kids, what we needed and how they could help. We sent thank you cards to all donors and volunteers and used social media to highlight each day’s events so our community could put faces with the cause they were supporting. We have been able to continue this each year thanks to many volunteers, donations and a mini-grant from Parent to Parent of Georgia.

Sandra Humphreys, Floyd Navigator Team Leader