Unlazy River

Bedford Public Library

Children

Unlazy River

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$251-500

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Byline

Brandy Warriner, Creative Learning Guide, Bedford (Ind.) Public Library

The Unlazy River was the kick-off event for our summer programming and gave families the opportunity to choose a fun pool floatie to wear as they completed a chalk obstacle course outside the library. Attendees could also play lawn games and eat thematic snacks.

Advanced Planning

The Children and Teens Department planned this program. Our goals were to promote multi-generational and family experiences and create a program that promotes physical activity and exposure to nature. We came up with the basic outline of the program in the winter and then ordered the supplies in the spring.

Most of the preparation was done the day of the program or just a few days beforehand. One unexpected challenge was figuring out how to efficiently inflate so many pool floaties.

Marketing

We promoted the program through our social media accounts as well as the library's website calendar and a calendar handout that was provided to local schools and available in the library about a month before the program. The name of the program seemed to get people's interest, and we had lots of questions about it leading up to the program.

Budgeting

We budgeted for approximately 70 people to attend the program based on how many people came to our summer programs last year. We allotted most of the budget for pool floaties, lawn games and snacks.

Originally, we wanted to provide library-branded reusable water bottles but decided against that and bought mini plastic water bottles instead. We used some of the budget to get lawn decorations and ended up with leftover snacks and water.

Day-of-event Activity

A couple of days before the program, we inflated the pool floaties and some of the lawn games with a tire inflator loaned from a staff member. That took a couple of hours but was better than trying to manually inflate them.

On the day of the program, we had a staff member loan us a cooler and got some ice to keep the water cold. A couple of staff members spent an hour making the chalk obstacle course on the sidewalks outside the library in the morning before it got really hot. About an hour before the program we brought out all the lawn games and put out the lawn decorations. Right before the program started we brought out

the snacks, water cooler and pool floaties.

We had three staff helping during the program, with an extra staff member taking pictures after the program started. We could have used one more staff member to help, especially with running the pool floaties back to the beginning of the obstacle course once the kids completed the Unlazy River and moved on to the games and snacks.

Program Execution

We had a very good turnout with families coming throughout the program. We had nearly 70 people attend, and many did the Unlazy River multiple times because they enjoyed it so much. Kids loved picking out their pool floatie and walking around the library with it while they completed the chalk obstacle course. They also all spent a good amount of time trying out the various lawn games.

Many families expressed how much fun they had at the program and what a good idea they thought it was. We definitely achieved our goals with this program.

Advice

This program didn't require much planning or prep ahead of time, which made it an ideal beginning of the summer program. Perhaps if a library has more space they could do more physical obstacles instead of a chalk obstacle course.

Having a good plan for how the pool floaties will get back to the beginning of the Unlazy River is key if you can't make a loop.

Did you try this program at your library? Share your experience using this form.

Supporting Materials

Download this Program as a PDF

- Programming Librarian Facebook Group

Slideshow Images









Image



More Programs

Jul 30, 2020
Children (9 and under)+ | □□
Image



Silly Sidewalk Obstacle Course

Audiences:

Children (9 and under)

Sep 8, 2021
Children (9 and under)+ | $
Image



Fairy Golf

Audiences:

Children (9 and under)
Tweens (10-12)
Dec 10, 2021
Children (9 and under)+ | $$$
Image



Telescopes and Tamales

Audiences:

Children (9 and under)
Tweens (10-12)
Teens (13-16)