

Project Transformation Summary of Results 2010 Summer Program

Summer Day Camp Program

1,001 children and youth participated in Project Transformation's eight-week long summer day camp program. Programming was provided Monday through Thursday from 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM at nine site locations in Oak Cliff, West Dallas, Pleasant Grove, Bachman Lake, East Dallas, Northwest Dallas, Mesquite and Denison, TX. Highlights of the daily program for **children** (grades 1-5) included:

- Reading one-on-one with a volunteer to improve fluency, vocabulary, and text comprehension as well as children's confidence and attitude towards reading. Each child on their first day completed a reading assessment, and throughout the summer, was adjusted to a new reading level as they improved. A reading coordinator was hired and trained for each site location, and ensured the success of the children throughout the program. This summer, *97% of children maintained or improved in their reading levels; while 70% of children reported increased confidence and interest in reading.*
- Daily Bible story
- Arts and crafts enrichment activities
- Vigorous daily physical activity
- A nutritious lunch was served daily to each child attending the program. This summer, 41,577 meals were served in partnership with the North Texas Food Bank, as well as take-home snack bags on weekends.
- Afternoon enrichment activities such as sports, music, games and special speakers from the community, which provided opportunities for fun, fellowship, and friendships to form and be nurtured.

Project Transformation's program for **youth** (grades 6-9) was designed specifically for their unique needs and included the following successful components.

- Training in team-building, leadership development, and conflict resolution
- Bible study focusing on application of scriptures to daily living
- "Focus time" concentrating on teen culture issues and struggles in their lives
- Opportunities for direct leadership experience by assisting interns with reading, games, and arts and crafts activities for the younger children
- Book clubs and literary discussion groups
- Career exploration through presentations by a variety of professionals in the community
- Awareness of community need and empowerment to address needs through service projects. Each youth program performs two service projects during the summer, and with help from the youth interns, they are responsible for the planning and implementation of the program. Some of the service projects performed this summer included creating greeting cards for hospice care patients, planning a recycling program for their site, holding a car wash to raise funds for cancer research and making brownies for their local fire department.
- Weekly mountain biking trips providing the opportunity to spend a day enjoying nature while engaged in vigorous physical activity. This summer, the youth mountain biking program logged 1,551 miles on trails in Dallas County.

Our participants shared what they felt was most meaningful to them about their summer at Project Transformation.

“Summer is usually boring, but because I’m in PT, I made new friends this summer and had fun.” 5th grade student, Casa Linda UMC

“I’ve become a better leader.” 3rd grade student, Oak Cliff UMC

“I have become more expressive this summer.” 5th grade student, Elmwood UMC

“I’ve learned to understand words when I am reading. I can read better.” 3rd grade student, Christ Foundry/Walnut Hill UMC

“I’ve learned to be respectful to others and do your best at everything.” 4th grade student, Pleasant Mound/Urban Park UMC

“I’ve learned science is FUN!” 2nd grade student, Wesley Rankin Elementary

“PT has changed me by telling me more about God and Jesus.” 5th grade student, Oak Cliff UMC

“PT has kept me out of trouble.” 8th grade youth student

“PT has made me a better person. I feel I used to be bad, but during devotions, I feel like it changed me.” 8th grade youth student

“I am less timid and I speak out more. I share my opinion and I don’t worry about what other people think.” 9th grade youth student

“I’ve learned about God and how he always has a good purpose for us.” 7th grade youth student

Urban Camp at Camp Bridgeport

Following the day camp experience, Urban Camp is a week for youth aged participants (grades 6-9) to experience and participate in a sleep-away camp style experience. Youth are assigned to a cabin with the interns that have been serving with them during the summer. Many of these youth boast it is the best week of their life, and the only time they are able to leave their homes. Urban Camp had high attendance this summer, with 164 registering for camp. Youth are able to select four different activities they would like to participate in, selecting from over twenty choices. Opportunities include archery, horseback riding, zip line and ropes courses, fishing, swimming, cooking classes, newspaper and other sport-centered activities. Each day the youth participate in activities, meals and daily worship services and activities. Girls and boys are separated from each other for the entire week of camp, to give these youth a chance to open up with their group and with their interns, to share the challenges they may be facing at home, school or in their communities.

In addition to our campers, 22 participants in our LITE (Leaders in Training Experience Program, grades 10-12) attended camp as junior counselors. These students are former participants of the program, and are selected to be placed in a leadership role during the summer. The goal of the program is to encourage these adolescents in their faith, as

well as persuade them to finish school and to stay away from pressures they face in their neighborhoods, such as gangs and drugs.

Our camp participants write stories of their experience at Bridgeport, and share how being at Urban Camp has made a difference in their lives.

“Camp is a place where everyone fits in, although none of us look alike.” Jazmin, age 12

“Camp has changed my point of view on life. Ever since camp, I’ve been wanting to do more things that are appealing to God and to go to church more. Urban Camp is an incredible place for Christians to be. I hope that when I get old enough that I’m given the opportunity to be an intern for Project Transformation. I’ve learned to be a better person and I feel that the new person I am is the person that appeals to the Lord.” Giselle, age 12

“This summer was amazing and I can honestly say I am a changed person because of Project Transformation. I’m more responsible, patient and understanding.” Alexa, age 15

“Camp makes a difference in my life because it’s one of the only weeks in my year that is outside the city [of Dallas].” Fernando, age 15

“I want to thank everyone in camp because they helped me to be a better person, for helping me withstand everything that gets in my way, and for giving me a place that I can call home.” Jose, age 15

“I feel safe when I’m at Urban Camp.” Kenneth, age 13

“All the interns teach me how to love. I’m trying to make good friends and the right choices.” Jedidiah, age 14

“Camp is a way for me to leave home on my own. I hope to return next year. I hope to also come back as an intern when I’m in college.” Breanna, age 15

“I am happy I chose Urban Camp because it’s been the best thing that has happened to me.” Juan, age 10

Interns

Ninety nine college-aged interns successfully completed Project Transformation’s ministry exploration and leadership development experience. This hands-on ministry opportunity embodies the “transformational” aspects of Project Transformation as these young adults served over 1,000 underserved children and youth, lived with their peers in Christian community, and strengthened their spirituality. We are confident that this group, like the interns who served before them, will go on to either work or volunteer in some form of ministry. In fact, our surveys show that over 60% of the interns increased their likelihood of pursuing a vocation in a ministry-related field as a result of their experience at Project Transformation. 18% also planned to change their course of study as a result of their experience at PT. Common examples of new studies include: religion, social work, pastoral care, urban education, youth ministry, and counseling.

“I have experienced transformation in so many ways, from watching children learn to read and experience a God who loves them unconditionally to discovering my own calling to a vocation in ministry.” Katie, 2010 intern

“This summer has been a wonderful experience. It’s not everyday that you get the opportunity to make meaningful relationships with over 50 kids and their families. Living in community with 100 other college-aged students with all different perspectives has been enriching on so many levels. This summer will definitely stay with me for the rest of my life.” Josh, 2010 intern

“I’ve gotten to teach kids how to read, swim, work together, and value the fruits of the Spirit. What’s more, God has used PT and the ‘Friday ministry experiences’ that interns receive to confirm my calling toward ministry.” Julia, 2010 intern

“There have been many wonderful moments this summer, but my favorite has been the Perkins Friday Experience. I am now seriously considering Perkins for seminary!” Rachael, 2010 intern

“I have never felt more loved, alive, or filled with the Spirit than I do now. Especially because of the idea of using Fridays as days of intern development! I feel we grow as Christians more than I had expected.”

Parent Feedback

End of program parent evaluations showed that parents overwhelmingly feel that our program is essential to their children’s healthy spiritual, intellectual, physical, and social development.

Parental response to the following questions:

- Do you feel that the program impacted your child’s reading ability? **99%**
- Do you feel that the program impacted your child’s attitude about reading in a positive way? **99%**
- Do you feel that your child benefited from his/her interactions with the young adult staff? **99%**
- Are you satisfied with the summer program and activities provided? **100%**

“If the program wouldn’t have been available, my children would have spent the majority of the summer watching television.”

“Thank you for giving him a safe positive place to go while I was working.”

“Project Transformation has made a big difference in my child a great deal. She is more talkative, she talks about the Bible stories she has learned. And she enjoys being with the interns and the other kids.”

“I feel my kids have learned how to interact with adults as well as other children.”

“My children are more confident, more open than ever. They read and communicate more. They have fun and they love the interns.”

“This program helped my child out a lot. He’s learned many things and has interacted with many different kids as well as adults. It gave my sons attending

this program a purpose and they also enjoyed it. They were safe in the program, well-fed and had a great time.”

“This year, my kids loved it more than last year. All I can say is it gets better and better each year!”

“His reading and writing improved. He made a lot of new friends and talks about God all the time, which is great.”

Volunteers

Our summer program could not exist without the help of reading and dinner volunteers from our 80 partner churches. More than 1,100 volunteers dedicated their time and talents to serve through Project Transformation this summer. We are truly grateful for their loyal support. We are particularly proud that our volunteer survey results show that 100% of volunteers felt that their time with Project Transformation was a positive experience. Based on their experience, 100% said they would be interested in volunteering with PT again, and 100% said they would tell others about PT. *This summer, 5,131 volunteer hours were spent reading one-on-one with a child in our program.*

Volunteers shared the following comments on their surveys about their experience:

“The kids were very sweet and the PT interns were very appreciative for our help.”

“The kids seemed more excited to read every time we returned.”

“This volunteer experience was so much fun!”

“The [intern] staff was friendly and gracious. The kids were very excited for us to be there.”

“We really enjoyed our time volunteering and will definitely sign up again next summer!”

Project Transformation had a wonderful summer program this year, and is in part to your support of our programs. Thank you again for your continued support of this program.