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2015
**EXCELLENCE IN
INNOVATION**
Awards Program

recognizes the

Cleveland County DSS

for development and implementation of the

Sound the Alarm Program

Team Member:

Allison Clark

LGFCU Excellence in Innovation Award Project Evaluation

Project Number	PIP-4
Title of Program	SOUND THE ALARM
Program Category	Public Information/Participation
Submission Date	6/8/2015 1:57:00 PM
County	CLEVELAND
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Employee title	PROGRAM MANAGER
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County Manager	Jeff Richardson
Supervisor	Karen Ellis
Implementation Date	4/1/2014
FLSA Designation	Exempt
Project Team Members	Alison Clark

Description of Productivity Improvement

Every citizen should be alarmed about the growing numbers of child abuse and neglect in our county and state. As a result, we developed a brand new theme and awareness event for Child Abuse Awareness Month, called "Sound the Alarm." The event was held on April 1, 2014 at 2:30. The purpose and objective for this event was to raise awareness about child abuse and neglect in Cleveland County. Additionally, we wanted to message that everyone must take personal responsibility and make a personal choice to report child abuse and neglect. To make this event happen, Cleveland County DSS sent letters to Department Heads, Chief of Police's, the Sheriff. We also followed up with telephone calls. We used our local media, the Shelby Star to help promote our project. On April 1, 2014 at 2:30 p.m. we met in the front of the Cleveland County Department of Social Services. DSS staff filled our Blue Pinwheel Garden(symbolic for child abuse) with noise makers, whistles, bells, and horns. We distributed noise makers to our county citizens and community partners who came to participate in this important event. Our community partners consisted of the school system, local churches, four local law enforcement agencies, and fire departments, EMS, Children's Homes of Cleveland County, Cleveland Community College, local Businesses, Guardian Ad Litem Program staff, State Representatives, Elected Officials, County Commissioners, and DSS Board Members. Fire trucks, Ambulances, Police Cars, Sheriff Deputy Cars along with our noise makers all sounded their alarms/sirens at 2:30 pm on April 1, 2014. The sound was ear piercing! Those who could join us onsite, sounded their alarms at various locations throughout our county. The event was most successful! People were calling and pulling over wanting to know what was going on. This provided the perfect opportunity for DSS staff to provide community education to our citizens.

Description of why this project was initiated

Sound the Alarm event was most successful and spread across all corners of our county because of other committed city and county servants who sounded their alarms in an effort to prevent another child from being abused or neglected.

Sound the Alarm event received local and state media attention. Additionally, the County Commissioners issued a County Proclamation "Sound the Alarm" Stop Child Abuse and invited the DSS Director and Staff to be recognized at a County Commissioners meeting in their efforts to Prevent Child Abuse/Neglect. This event was successful in that our reports of child abuse and neglect increased remarkably in May 2014 and remained consistent throughout the summer.

The challenges we faced when coordinating this event was arranging a time and date that all of our county partners were available and able to participate. This event could be utilized in all one hundred counties throughout North Carolina. We planned early with our community partners in order to secure a date/time that worked for everyone.

This project will continue in our community each year as our partners and citizens in our community stand together, "Sounding Their Alarms" in unison in our effort to keep our children safe and free from abuse and neglect.

Quantifiable results (sustainability, cost savings, cost avoidance and/or a higher level of service).

Indication of what resources were used and what was done with any accrued time savings

This project used resources available to us without added costs to our department or county.

Other descriptive information

Our Department promoted intergovernmental cooperation and coordination in addressing the shared problem of child abuse.