

idea corner

A Program for 4-H Families

Planning a program for nearly 400 persons ranging from infants to senior citizens is no small task! That's what the Family Study Center at the University of Missouri-Kansas City tried with a "Bicentennial Salute to Missouri 4-H Families" in June, 1976. And was very successful.

The program was planned as an honor for the *whole* family. Each county of Missouri had an opportunity to select one "Bicentennial 4-H Family." In every case, the selections were "true" 4-H families with one and usually both parents being leaders and all the children being active 4-Hers.

Of 98 families honored, 78 came to Kansas City and the University of Missouri-Kansas City for the 2-day program. In addition to a recognition banquet and an evening of family fun, there was an educational program to explore unique family "rules" of behavior and family strengths.

There were also tours of agricultural, historical, and cultural sites in Kansas City.

The families praised the program as a unique and meaningful honor. They also reported that it reinforced their feeling of importance as a family.

Expenses for the families were kept as low as possible. Busses, tour admissions, and funds for the banquet were donated by area businessmen. The Missouri 4-H Foundation was a co-sponsor, underwriting the cost of certificates and entertainment. Many families had meals and mileage paid by a local Extension council or club. Campus dormitories were available for inexpensive lodging.

The idea of involving the whole family in programs seems most appropriate to the needs of today's families. Although our nation's Bicentennial provided the occasion for this program, others might capitalize on a local or state celebration to use the same program idea.

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