

Federally-Recognized Tribes Extension Program
2008 HIGHLIGHTS

FRTEP UNIT: Wind River Reservation, Wyoming

PROGRAM AREA Youth Development/4-H

PROGRAM TITLE: 4-H After School Program

ISSUE(S) ADDRESSED: Currently the Wind River Reservation has very few extracurricular activities, besides school sports, to keep children out of trouble and engaged in productive activities. Transportation is also an issue on the Reservation as it spans 2.2 million acres with five main communities' dispersed throughout the Reservation's borders. This geographical scattering of communities makes it difficult for parents to transport their children long distance in order to attend various extracurricular activities. In order to provide youth an opportunity to participate in activities that build citizenship, leadership and life skills an after school 4-H program has been developed.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION: 4-H programs across the country have been offering youth opportunities to grow in citizenship, leadership, and life skills for decades. The four "H's", which stand for Head, Heart, Hands, and Health are used as the basis for promoting positive development of youth through a variety of fun, educational activities. Traditionally, 4-H has been focused around agricultural but today the program encompasses a wide variety of other disciplines as well. Some of the more popular activities among youth who do not have strong agricultural backgrounds include shooting sports, rocketry, art & crafts, photography, sewing, fishing sports, cooking, cake decorating, and gardening. Since many youth on the Wind River Reservation do not have much exposure to agriculture practices it was decided that the after school program would be directed more towards children who live in residential communities. The activities were also designed to fit within an hour and a half time frame so students would be able to take advantage of after school transportation provided by the school for children participating in sports and tutoring sessions.

PROGRAM IMPACT: During the past year the 4-H After School program has gotten off to a great start at Wyoming Indian Middle School. The kids have done a variety of fun, educational activities such as building rockets, bird watching, cooking, career development, animal tracking, sewing, and even increasing their awareness of various types of disabilities. These youth have been given the opportunity to develop life skills in a safe environment that allows them to interact with their peers in a positive manner. The program has also encouraged the participation of other community entities such as the local conservation district, the NRCS, nutrition and food safety experts, and state disability awareness personnel. Response from the principle, after school coordinator, and teachers employed at the school has been positive thus far. The program will soon be expanding to a nearby elementary school.

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