

3. UNIT ACTIVITIES

3.04 UNIT ACTIVITIES “SAMPLER”

CEC is a network of members working together for a common purpose—better outcomes for individuals with exceptionalities. Sponsoring successful chapter activities is one of the most effective ways to recruit and retain members. If you provide activities that fulfill a need, people will get involved and participate.

Activities that units have found successful include:

- Community Projects
 - Sponsor a "games day" where a local athletic team participates in a training program or plays games with exceptional individuals.
 - Assist with or sponsor a Boy Scout or Girl Scout troop for exceptional individuals. Or, encourage established troops to recruit exceptional individuals.
 - Visit a facility for children with exceptionalities and play games, paint the children's faces, etc.
 - Hold a scavenger hunt. Pair a special child with a buddy to work as partners.
 - Set up a babysitting service or respite care program for families who have special needs children.
 - Conduct/sponsor a parent training activity.
 - Sponsor a Club for Careers in Special Education.
 - Sponsor Teacher Mini-Grants.
 - Sponsor an exhibit of exceptional children's art that "travels" around the community to schools, libraries, etc.
 - Contact the program director at the local radio station(s) about doing a series of programs on the education of children and youth with disabilities and/or are gifted. Different members can be responsible for each short presentation.
 - Hold an Exceptional Children's Week or Awareness Day.

- Workshops and "How-To's"
 - Ideas Swap Workshop. Each person comes with a pre-determined number of teaching ideas to share among members. Everyone goes home with something!
 - Training workshop on working with individuals with disabilities (do this for students who would like to work with Special Olympics, as babysitters, etc.).
 - Invite winners of mini-grants to present how they used the grant money.
 - Make-It-Take-It Workshop. Provide materials and participants make materials to use in their classrooms.
 - Teachers Show and Tell. Teachers are asked to demonstrate/share one particularly good activity with the rest of the group.
 - Invite specialists from throughout the area to present workshops on art, music, creative drama, communication, evaluation, etc.

- Discussions, Panels, Speakers

- Find out what would interest your members. Some suggestions:
 - Resume Writing and Job Interviewing
 - First Year Teacher Topics
 - Teacher Gimmicks and Games
 - Legislative Update
 - Teacher Certification Issues
 - Inclusion
 - Learning Disabilities (or any disability)
 - Students Who Are At-Risk
 - Translating Research into Practice
 - Motivation
 - Stress Management
- Utilize community resources such as health services personnel, educators (both regular and special), parents, professionals, politicians, superintendents, directors, etc.
- Have a panel of parents discuss their concerns and issues.
- Invite representatives from educational materials companies to demonstrate their products

- Speakers' Bureau

Develop a list of members and others who are interested in and capable of speaking to groups upon request. A speakers' bureau should be coordinated by someone who can take the time to keep a detailed file of information up-to-date. The file may include names, areas of expertise, topics previously presented and verified by at least two people (in writing) to be professionally valuable, new topics that could be addressed but would not carry written recommendations, addresses, phone numbers, and file origination dates.

Units sponsoring a speakers' bureau should also take care to provide a disclaimer regarding their recommendation of specific speakers. The listing of speakers should not carry unit endorsement of the speakers' content or capability.

- Other Ideas

- Take general education students through disability simulations.
- Arrange a tour(s) of community agencies who offer/provide services to individuals with disabilities so members can be aware of their services. Members can share what's learned with their colleagues and the parents of their students.
- Invite teachers to submit their good ideas and techniques. Review the entries and then develop a booklet to distribute to all members and contributors.
- Contact the local director of special education and offer to assist in the orientation of new teachers. In this way, members can provide new teachers with knowledge and information about the special education services and needs of exceptional students.
- Work with the local director of special education to arrange for community officials to be taken on a tour of the special education programs.