Jump Around Fun Zone:

Birthday Party Program Evaluation

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Introduction:

For my culminating project I chose to complete a program evaluation at Jump Around Fun Zone. Jump Around Fun Zone is known around Whatcom County and Skagit Valley as the premier birthday party and play center for children 10 years old and younger! I have been working here the past two years and was able to watch the company grow and develop lasting relationships with the local community. Since they opened in 2008, they have hosted over 2,000 birthday parties for children and families in Whatcom County and Skagit Valley; because of this, Jump Around Fun Zone plays a crucial role in their community to provide a safe, clean, and fun space for children and families to celebrate birthdays. There are approximately 13 different aspects of the birthday party process that can be evaluated to develop a better understanding as to how well Jump Around Fun Zone is successfully fulfilling this community need. Success can be seen through:

- Ease of booking the party

- The party was affordable for the family

- Checking into the party was easy for the party family and guests

- The party room was ready when the guests arrived

- The party room was a fun and comfortable space

- All staff members were respectful

- The party host was helpful to the family

- The party host made the party less stressful

- All guest questions were answered quickly and efficiently

- The guests enjoyed the party

- Everyone involved had a good time

Birthday parties at Jump Around Fun Zone:

The birthday party experience at Jump Around Fun Zone varies depending on each of the three available party packages (basic, super, and all-inclusive). Each party is assigned a host and follows the same format, regardless of desired package. Every party lasts for two hours, one hour spent on the floor jumping and having fun, and the second hour spent in the party room eating cake and opening presents. In addition to what is provided by Jump Around Fun Zone, guests are more than welcome to bring in additional items (decorations, food, etc.), as long as there aren't any nuts, silly string, confetti, weapons, or alcohol.

The Basic party package is as it sounds, sweet and simple. This includes a party room, utensils, cups and plates, and party host. Guests are welcome to bring any food they like (as long as there are no nuts) and any decorations! This party follows the same format as listed above, but only includes up to 10 kids.

The next available package is the Super party. It too follows the same format as listed above but includes a few benefits compared to the Basic party. Balloons and water bottles for each child are included, as well as a personal party host to help in the room and allows up to 15 kids.

The final and most inclusive party package is the All-Inclusive party. This includes everything listed in the previous to party packages plus some. In addition to the party host, balloons,

utensils, cups and plates, the all-inclusive party includes three 1-topping pizzas, cake, the option of switching water bottles for soda or juice, a t-shirt for the birthday child, and goodie bags! This package allows up to 18 kids.

Data Sample and Method:

For this program evaluation I developed two types of surveys to analyze the birthday party program. One survey was developed specifically for staff members and learning about their perspectives regarding the birthday party system. I handed hard copy surveys to five current employees and emailed six surveys to past employees that I had contact information for. During this process I also spoke with two co-workers about the surveys and was able to conduct an interview with them.

The second version of the survey was directed toward customers. I handed out about 15 hard copy surveys and emailed nearly 500 surveys to customers who have had a birthday party with Jump Around Fun Zone in the last two years (since I began working here). I chose to only send surveys back two years for a couple of reasons. Most important to me was the credibility of the data I would be collecting. If I went farther back than these two years I would likely only receive extremely positive or extremely negative feedback from our customers. Within this two year mark I can assume they are more likely to remember the majority of the details of their birthday party. If I had sent out surveys past this date the data wouldn't be as accurate, or credible, and may or may not have been useful in my evaluation.

The second reason I chose not to go farther back was because I have only been employed here for two years and I don't know how different our birthday parties were before I began. I am aware that the birthday parties have changed since Jump Around Fun Zone opened, but I do not know to what extent. To keep my data useful and accurate I needed the birthday parties to all follow a similar format.

Limitations:

This evaluation has many limitations, as with any other. One of the most notable is the lack of collected data. Although I distributed over 500 surveys to guests, I received only about 3% of responses (13 surveys). This can be contributed to a possible change in email address, my email being sent to their Junk mailbox folder and therefore not seen, the email being ignored by guests who view it as unimportant or maybe don't have the time in their schedule to dedicate to it, or simply being forgotten about, among other reasons. Had I received nearly, or all, of the 500 results my data analysis would be more likely to provide an accurate portrayal of how successful the birthday parties have been. With only the 13 responses my results do not accurately portray the success of the birthday party systems but can provide a vague idea, as they only represent 0.6% of the birthday parties ever hosted at Jump Around Fun Zone.

Another Limitation my program evaluation experienced is in the staff survey results. Although I distributed approximately 11 surveys but I only received three responses (one survey, and two interview responses). According to Chadwick C. Higgins, Joe W. Kotrlik, and James E. Bartlett II, this does give an accurate portrayal of the whole, because it is approximately 30% of the entire

population (total number of party hosts who had worked on parties in the last two years). However, in my opinion it is not quite enough. For me to fully trust my data I would have hoped to receive at least two more responses, making it approximately 45%.

Aside from having limited results my evaluation was also limited in the amount of time available for its completion. This evaluation is being used as my culminating project at Western Washington University and because of this I am also stretched for time with classes and other assignments. I am also under the constraints of a 10 week deadline. From these restraints I have not been able to stretch out and collect as much data in person as I would have liked. However, I do intend to provide staff at Jump Around Fun Zone the materials I have developed (surveys, current analysis, and analysis method) to allow them to continue this project if they desire.

The questions asked in my surveys have also limited my data results. After reviewing the responses I had received I developed a better understanding as to which questions were irrelevant to its purpose and which could have been rewritten. For example, when I asked for demographic information I should have specified the party parent versus the birthday child, provided more options for respondents to list an explanation next to "other" (such as when asking "what was your main reason for choosing this package"), or including "other" as an option in some areas where it was left out (such as when asking for gender identity). Adjusting these questions would have allowed for more detailed responses, and therefore more accurate results.

Data Analysis:

From the collected data results I was able to develop a new understanding of how successful Jump Around Fun Zone's birthday parties are. Unfortunately from the lack of responses to my survey I am unable to clearly state exactly how successful the birthday parties are. Out of the approximately 500 surveys distributed to birthday party parents at Jump Around Fun Zone (distributed via email and face-to-face), I received only 13. The following results will be based on these 13 random surveys alone.

Results from guest surveys:

Party Package Frequency

- Basic — 54%
- Super — 15%
- All-Inclusive — 31%
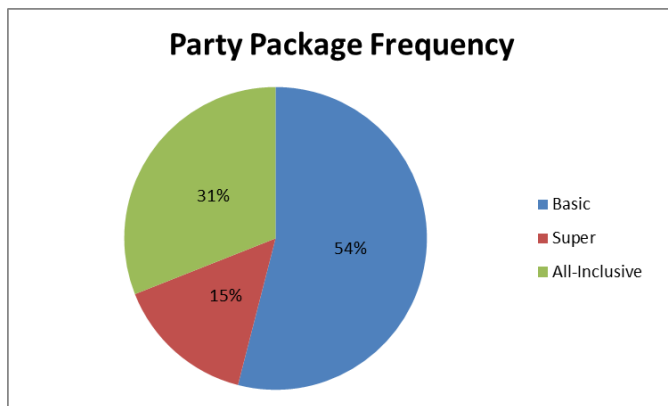
The majority of respondents chose the basic party package followed suit by the All-Inclusive party package. One theory, as displayed in the collected data, is that these two packages are the most affordable for their included benefits, and this is why they were so popular. For example, the All-Inclusive party package consists of everything a family could need to host a birthday party and the basic includes the bare minimum. Nine out of the 13 responses chose price and included benefits as the reason for their package

Reasons for choosing party package

- Price — 46%
- Included Benefits — 23%
- Party Host — 8%
- Other — 23%
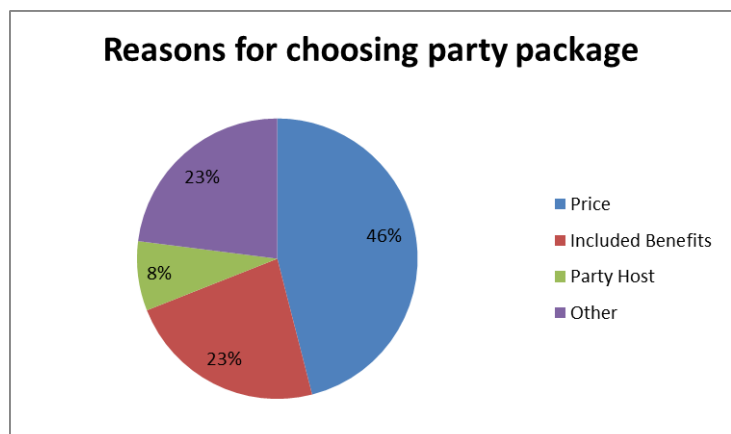
selection. More specifically, Six out of 13 respondents selected the basic party package and the

price as being the reason for choosing

their package. As displayed, 46% of

respondents chose the price as being

the leading factor in choosing their

party package. This leads to the

importance of having affordable parties

available to their community. Being

Party Affordability
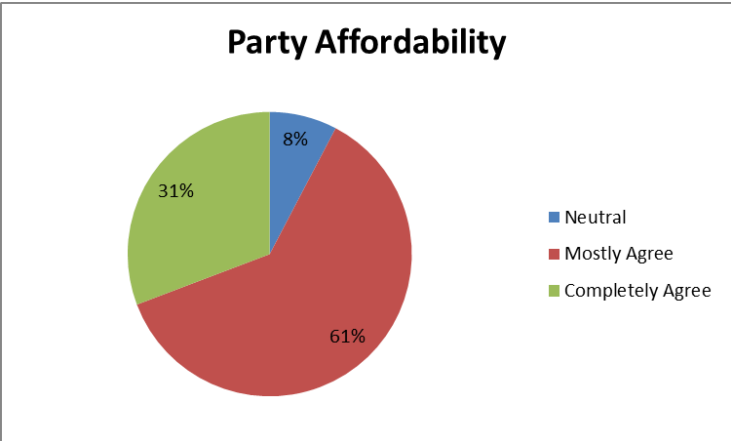
affordable is essential to being succesful in a diverse community. According to the data

gathered from the Jump Around Fun Zone guest survey, 61% of guests agree that their party

was affordable. In the current economy, affordability plays a large role in the success of any

business; and the fact that Jump Around Fun Zone meets that community requirement adds to

the success of their birthday parties.

To understand the over all experiences of the guests I took all the responses from the scaled (1-

5) portion of the survey and included it all in one pie chart. This best explains the level of

Over-All Birthday Party Enjoyment
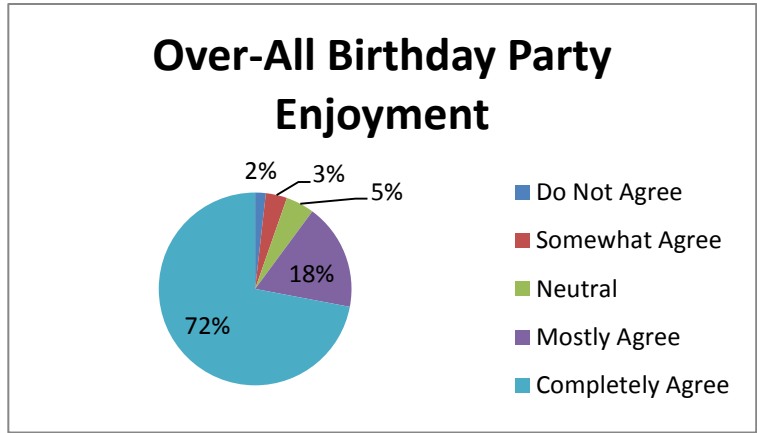
enjoyment, or the over all

experiences, of birthday party

parents, guests, and children at

Jump Around Fun Zone. From my

collected data I can confirm that

72% of guests completely enjoyed

their birthday parties and ony about 2% disliked their experiences. Over-all birthday party

enjoyment means they didn't have any issues in the booking, check in, or preparation of their party. It means everyone their interacted with was respectful and helpful. It can be visible seen in a clean party room that was ready when the party arrived and the facility was a comfortable and clean environment for everyone to enjoy. Essentially, it means the majority of responses rated highly on the scaled questions assessing their experience. This is the most important part to my program evaluation as it shows the true results to my original question: does Jump Around Fun Zone successfully fulfill their communities need for a safe, clean, fun environment to hold birthday parties? The answer, according to my data, is yes.

> "[We] wanted a stress-free guided party so that my wife and I could enjoy it too. We loved the idea of one stop shopping and the high quality of service we received. Being able to book face painters was a definite plus. Having the party hostess keeps track of time, guiding the children's activities and serving made for a very enjoyable experience. Excellent service and although the total cost is somewhat pricey we felt it was worth it."

Results from staff surveys:

I also analyzed the results collected from three staff members (current and past). From these results, I noticed that all three were in agreement that having the party host helped the birthday party process and made it less stressful for the party family. Each respondent claimed a different aspect of the process was most difficult (these included cleaning and drawing specifically, as well as "other"). One respondent I spoke with who marked "other" explained to

me that it really depended on a variety of factors and each party has its own issues. This could

be contributed to parties leaving on time to not having adequate help from co-workers. It was

also common that the party host was listed as the best feature of these birthday parties.

Conclusion and Recommendations:

Based on the data I collected, I have come to the understanding that the birthday parties at

Jump Around Fun Zone are generally liked by the community

but there were a few specific recommendations that were

suggested in some responses. A common them among them

was the crowded floor and how warm the party rooms get. I

suggest having fans in each party room and instructing all

employees how to turn them on and adjust them according to

their party needs.

> "Too many people – limit the number of general admission, more light and ventilation in party rooms, maybe sound panels or something to help with the noise,"

Another recommendation that stood out to me was to have all employees come in and sing

"happy birthday" to the birthday child. This is an excellent idea and shows support from all staff

members. Many restaurants gather multiple staff members together

to sing for a birthday and it typically brings with it a fun, inviting, and

type of excitement with it. Of course this would be a situational

event. It would not work for staff members to stop helping a

customer in order to come sing, but if any are available at the time it

> "Maybe have the employees all come in and sing for the birthday party"

may be a good idea to bring in more friends for this celebration.

Another recommendation I have is to ensure that all parents who book a birthday party are made aware at this point and again during the party confirmation that the children attending the party cannot go back out onto the floor and jump again after eating in the party room. From my experience, there have been many occasions when this has been made unclear to the party family and therefore, causing confusion and bringing down their over-all experience. Ensuring there is little to no confusion in the party process will dramatically effect whether the birthday party program turns out to be successful for this family or not.

"Make it very clear during the booking process that kids are required to jump first"

Of the three responses I received from current and past staff members two of them listed recommendations. These recommendations include:

- Providing more assistance from co-workers during the clean-up and preparation of birthday parties – making it a group effort

- Mention the other add-ons available to birthday parties (such as clowns, magician, face painting or temporary tattoos) during the booking process

- Ask party guests to bring in a signed waiver for every child in order to avoid back up while checking in for birthday parties and

- Host staff drawing lessons.

Human Services skills relative to this project:

In the development of this project I needed to use many of the human services skills I developed over the course of being in the Human Services Program at Western Washington University. The first and most identifiable skill I used was with confidentiality. Every response I received remained anonymous and nobody but myself viewed the spreadsheet with collected data. These precautions were also mentioned on the cover page of my survey.

I also used the concept of informed consent when developing my surveys. Instead of passing out a simple survey I created a cover page that explained who I am, why I am doing the survey, who all would see the data, and how it would be presented at the end of my evaluation. I made sure to provide all the necessary details of my evaluation process so that the customers who were completing my survey felt more comfortable in providing honest feedback.

The Human Services Technology Standards were also a big part in the development and creation of my birthday party program evaluation. Through the development of the surveys to the distribution and collection methods I was sure to ethically use the technological tools at my disposal.

Applying Human Services Skills

·	Critical thinking	·	Informed consent
·	Research and Information fluency	·	Survey Development
·	Digital citizenship	·	Systems analysis
·	Writing proficiency	·	Survey/Data analysis
·	Question assumptions	·	Program analysis
·	Communications	·	Technology
·	Diverse understanding	·	Professional breadth

Applying Human Services Ethics and Values:

Standards used: 2, 3, 5, 12, 13, 14, 15, 18, 19, 20, 26, 28, 35, 36, & 37

STATEMENT 2 Human service professionals respect the integrity and welfare of the client at all times. Each client is treated with respect, acceptance and dignity.

STATEMENT 3 Human service professionals protect the client's right to privacy and confidentiality except when such confidentiality would cause harm to the client or others, when agency guidelines state otherwise, or under other stated conditions (e.g., local, state, or federal laws). Professionals inform clients of the limits of confidentiality prior to the onset of the helping relationship.

STATEMENT 5 Human service professionals protect the integrity, safety, and security of client records. All written client information that is shared with other professionals, except in the course of professional supervision, must have the client's prior written consent.

STATEMENT 12 Human service professionals understand the complex interaction between individuals, their families, the communities in which they live, and society.

STATEMENT 13 Human service professionals act as advocates in addressing unmet client and community needs. Human service professionals provide a mechanism for identifying unmet client needs, calling attention to these needs, and assisting in planning and mobilizing to advocate for those needs at the local community level.

STATEMENT 14 Human service professionals represent their qualifications to the public accurately.

STATEMENT 15 Human service professionals describe the effectiveness of programs, treatments, and/or techniques accurately.

STATEMENT 18 Human service professionals are knowledgeable about the cultures and communities within which they practice. They are aware of multiculturalism in society and its impact on the community as well as individuals within the community. They respect individuals and groups, their cultures and beliefs.

STATEMENT 19 Human service professionals are aware of their own cultural backgrounds, beliefs, and values, recognizing the potential for impact on their relationships with others.

STATEMENT 20 Human service professionals are aware of sociopolitical issues that differentially affect clients from diverse backgrounds.

STATEMENT 26 Human service professionals know the limit and scope of their professional knowledge and offer services only within their knowledge and skill base.

STATEMENT 28 Human service professionals act with integrity, honesty, genuineness, and objectivity.

STATEMENT 35 Human service professionals strive to personify those characteristics typically associated with the profession (e.g., accountability, respect for others, genuineness, empathy, pragmatism).

STATEMENT 36 Human service professionals foster self-awareness and personal growth in themselves. They recognize that when professionals are aware of their own values, attitudes, cultural background, and personal needs, the process of helping others is less likely to be negatively impacted by those factors.

STATEMENT 37 Human service professionals recognize a commitment to lifelong learning and continually upgrade knowledge and skills to serve the populations better.

<u>Application National Organization of Human Services Standards:</u>

Standards 3, 13, 14, 28, and 35 were incredibly important to recognize in the work of this culminating project, although I do recognize that all of the standards listed above are also relevant to my work on this culminating project. In this portion I will describe how they were applied and why they were important in this project.

STATEMENT 3 Human service professionals protect the client's right to privacy and confidentiality except when such confidentiality would cause harm to the client or others, when agency guidelines state otherwise, or under other stated conditions (e.g., local, state, or federal laws). Professionals inform clients of the limits of confidentiality prior to the onset of the helping relationship.

This standard is one I took very seriously in the completion of my culminating project. When asking for client, or guest, information it is important to express to them that all of their information will remain confidential and anonymous to everyone but myself. In some surveys, not mine in particular, respondents are asked personal questions they may not otherwise feel comfortable answering without the rules of confidentiality in place. Confirming their right to privacy also helps in building rapport and mutual trust. Having this developed prior to them taking the survey will help them to feel more comfortable in answering all of your questions with honesty.

STATEMENT 13 Human service professionals act as advocates in addressing unmet client and community needs. Human service professionals provide a mechanism for identifying unmet client needs, calling attention to these needs, and assisting in planning and mobilizing to advocate for those needs at the local community level.

When developing a program plan this ethical standard is key. The purpose of its development is to solve an unmet need within a community as seen through the needs assessment conducted in advanced. In my program plan I did not conduct a needs assessment but instead wanted to evaluate whether our current birthday parties were being successful and enjoyed by our guests. Having a happy birthday party for children is an important part of growing up and as a business we wanted to be sure we are doing everything we can to make it memorable and fun for everyone involved. As I continue to understand the results of this evaluation I will advocate for the necessary changes to make our birthday parties better and any other needs our guests express in the delivery and set up of our parties.

STATEMENT 14 Human service professionals represent their qualifications to the public accurately.

This standard expresses the importance of being honest with the clients you are working with. As a student it was important for me to explain this is the reason why I am doing this and how I am knowledgeable and skilled in program evaluation. This eliminates all assumptions of my qualifications to the guests I will represent with my findings and allows them to feel more comfortable in providing feedback on the services they received. In all surveys that were distributed I was sure to attach a cover page that explains who I am and my qualification as well

as why I am doing this project (in terms of the outcome and for academic purposes). I was sure to explain that I am a student and I am still in the learning process and that I am completing this evaluation for my culminating project. I also explained that all responses will be held strictly with confidentiality, will remain anonymous, and will only be used for academic purposes and in the presentation to Jump Around Fun Zone owners Cris and Nikki Wesselman. In all fact to face interactions I also verbally explained to them the purpose of the evaluation as well as who I am and why I'm doing it. Representing yourself well to your clients, or guests in my case, is incredibly important in building mutual trust and rapport. It will also give them more reason, and sometimes interest, in answering your questions.

STATEMENT 28 Human service professionals act with integrity, honesty, genuineness, and objectivity.

This is probably the most important ethical standard every human services professional needs to express in their work. It shows the importance and respect for the client, or guest, and demonstrates your obligation to the Human Services ethical standards. Acting with honest, genuineness, integrity, and objectivity show the client that you are serious in advocating for them and you want to help create change. Through the development of my program evaluation I was sure to express this standard with all guest interactions (via email or face to face). By acting in this manner I was to build rapport much quicker and develop a mutual trust between myself and the guests at Jump Around Fun Zone.

STATEMENT 35 Human service professionals strive to personify those characteristics typically associated with the profession (e.g., accountability, respect for others, genuineness, empathy, pragmatism).

This was a big part of my distribution of surveys and interpersonal interactions with guests. Although I wanted to make sure all guests were informed that I am a staff member at Jump Around Fun Zone and a student in the Human Services Program, it was also important for them to understand that I am going strive to act with professionalism associated with this academic program. This included incorporating informed consent into my cover page of every survey I distributed and providing a detailed description as to who I am and why I am completing this evaluation. It was also important to associate myself with this profession to instill a mutual trust and respect between me and the guests, express genuineness, and accountability. Showing that I am going to act with these characteristics throughout my project also provides comfort for guests in knowing that I can be trusted with their responses and will not try to sell their information to any other organizations.

Appendix:

A) <u>Survey to staff:</u>

- Does that party family seem less stressed with a party host?

  ___ Yes ___ No

- When it comes to cleaning and prepping a party room, which areas are more difficult to

  complete on time?

  ___ Drawing ___ Cleaning ___ Getting materials ready (balloons, food, drink) ___ Other

- How do you think we could improve in this area?

B) <u>Survey to guests:</u>

Demographics:

- Gender Identity: Male Female

- Age:

- Current City:

Please Circle all that apply:

- What Party package did you choose? Basic Super All-Inclusive

- What was your main reason for choosing this package? Price Included benefits (food,

  balloons, water, etc.) Party Host Other

1= Do not agree, 2= Some-what agree, 3= Neutral, 4= Mostly agree, 5= Completely Agree

- My party was easy to book 1 2 3 4 5

- My party was affordable 1 2 3 4 5

- Checking into my party was easy 1 2 3 4 5

- The party room was ready for me when I arrived 1 2 3 4 5

- The party room was a fun and comfortable place for the party 1 2 3 4 5

- All Jump Around staff were respectful 1 2 3 4 5

- My party host was helpful to me 1 2 3 4 5

- My party host made my party less stressful 1 2 3 4 5

- All of my questions were answered respectfully and in a timely manner 1 2 3 4 5

- I enjoyed my birthday party 1 2 3 4 5

- My children had fun 1 2 3 4 5

- My party guests enjoyed the birthday party 1 2 3 4 5

- I will recommend Jump Around Fun Zone to family and friends 1 2 3 4 5

- In what ways would you like to see Jump Around Fun Zone improve their birthday parties:

- What areas of Jump Around Fun Zone's birthday parties did you enjoy / Any other comments:

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