



The Office on Children and Youth

Placement Description

Networking, assessment of community needs, development and implementation of community programs working with children and teens (pre-k – 12th grade)

Intern or Field Placement Responsibilities/Opportunities

- Assist with overseeing a variety of OCY programs (Teen Pregnancy Prevention, Reading Road Show-Gus Bus, and Migrant Education) that serve a diverse youth population in the surrounding region
- Observe how a local non-profit works: funding, daily operations
- Attend community meetings
- Assist with planning and implementation of the of the annual teen health fairs - held at two schools each year (Spring Only)
- Work with the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Youth Council
- Assist with fund development and grant writing
- Facilitate the administration of the bi-annual Youth Data Survey (Fall Only)

Contact Information

- Contact Person: Michael Maurice, Program Director
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- Visit us at <http://www.theocy.org>

Read about students' experiences at this site below:



Jessica Valacer

The Office on Children and Youth (OCY) is an umbrella organization that includes Youth Council, Reading Road Show (Gus Bus), Youth Suicide Prevention, Teen Pregnancy Prevention and Migrant Education. The OCY's mission is to promote positive youth development in the Harrisonburg/Rockingham County community by gathering and analyzing data on youth, coordinating and implementing programs and acting as a community resource for youth related concerns.

As an intern at the OCY, students are able to participate in a multitude of programs and experiences. They learn effective methods for youth outreach and get hands on experience working with non-profit fundraising, promotion and organizing of projects and events. A large part of the work is done in an office setting and the majority of an intern's time is spent on a computer completing research, writing grants, entering data into an excel sheet and completing other tasks and paper work of the sort. I did all the previously mentioned computer work as well as took on the large project of compiling and completing the OCY's Youth Data Survey.

The survey asks about topics such as sexual behavior, alcohol and drug use, criminal activity, gang activity, body image, eating behaviors, suicidal ideation and community participation. The data collected is used to inform community members and businesses of how the youth is doing compared to years past as well as the different youth oriented programs the OCY runs. Once the survey is printed as a published report the OCY presents the information to the community as well as uses the information to apply for grants and improve their services.

While completing the Youth Data Survey as well as participating in other programs like the Gus Bus I gained an interest in working with at-risk youth. I gained a greater appreciation and understanding of what it takes to run a non-profit organization and what a big difference a positive program like Youth Council or Migrant education makes in the lives of youth. I also acquired the knowledge of how to research and apply for grants which is not a skill that is easy to come by. I have enjoyed my time at the Office on Children and Youth and would recommend this site to future students who are interested in community outreach programs, data analysis or working in the non-profit sector.