

## Success Story 3

Ann Torbert

4-H Youth Specialist

### Flooding in Cedar Rapids

In the days leading up to the flood, I started researching what would be the best youth development response to this devastation in my community. Below is a listing of tasks that I did – some of them are still on-going.

1. Worked with County Director to locate immediate response publications for families, youth, and financial information. These publications were placed in distribution stations throughout Cedar Rapids.
2. Partnered with family life specialist to make sure emergency child care – run by 2 churches was appropriate for early childhood and school age youth.
3. Provided programming for the school age youth at the emergency child care centers – rocketry, pet therapy and tie blankets. Staff shared that ALL of the kids enjoyed the tie blankets – and for many of them this program helped replace their comfort item that was lost in the flood.
4. Provided leadership to the Cedar Rapids After School Alliance – and served as the collection spot for over \$5500 worth of donated materials and funds. Donations have been delivered to the following partners: Waypoint, YMCA, Boys and Girls Club, The Arc, The Girl Scouts of East Central Iowa, Taylor School Tiger Club, The Community of Vinton, Partnership for Safe Families. All donations received thank you notes. Donations came from NW Iowa, Virginia- Extension Offices and clubs, Embrace Iowa, and Hoyt Middle School as well as Wal-Mart- and too many more to list.
5. Partnered with Reach out and Read to distribute over 600 books titled “The Flood the Came to Grandma’s House”. I added processing questions for parents/caregivers to share with the youth who read the book. Processing is how youth learn to assimilate what they have experienced.
6. Researched, created, and distributed 45 “My Page” flood kits to youth and their after school staff. The research that I found showed that youth who were touched by natural floods recouped best with art, music or physical types of activities. These kits also include starter questions, supplies, and a simple evaluation tool for after school staff. This project is ongoing.
7. Worked with CYC to develop a simple application for club leaders and members who were directly impacted to obtain donated funds. (Some of the donations were specifically labeled for those in community club programs. In Linn County, we know of 2 families who were flood impacted- though there could be more.)