Chapter Name
Junior Auxiliary of Columbia, MS

Submitted by Name and Email Address
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Population Category
under 15,000 - 15,000 - 2,000

Name of Project
Cyberbullying

Cost of Project
3500.00

Number of Active Members Involved
20
Number of People Served
975

Description of Need for Project
easy-for-ja.docx

Digital Photo
IMG_E2059.JPG

Project Summary
ESSAY-II.docx

Project Evaluation
ESSAY-III.docx

Sent from National Association of Junior Auxiliaries, Inc.
Junior Auxiliary of Columbia, Ms “Cyberbullying”

I. The need for the project

Junior Auxiliary of Columbia, MS attended the AEC 2017 and at that time we heard Tina Meier speak on “Cyberbullying” due to her daughter committing suicide. Her message was something that we knew our community needed to hear. We have four schools that have 7th-12th graders. One school had two suicides in the past few years. The chapter acknowledged the need to get someone knowledgeable about this subject to speak with our local youth and teachers. These are just a few of the reasons our Chapter determined that our community children needed to here Tina Meier’s presentation on “Cyberbullying.”
II. Summarize Project

On January 23\textsuperscript{rd} and 24\textsuperscript{th} 2018 Junior Auxiliary of Columbia, Ms held a presentation on Cyberbullying for all the local school children in grades 7\textsuperscript{th} – 12\textsuperscript{th} in Marion County, Ms. We wanted to have every child at this event but conflicts arose from some of the schools and they were unable to attend. There were some grades that did not come to this presentation but the grades that did attend went back to school telling everyone about what they had just heard.

Tina Meier, the founder of the Megan Meier Foundation, led the two day seminar. Tina is the mother of Megan Meier who committed suicide at the age of 13 due to cyberbullying. Megan had struggled for years with her weight and self-esteem and at an early age told her mother she wanted to kill herself. Tina got Megan the help she needed and things got a lot better until junior high. Megan changed schools between the 7\textsuperscript{th} and 8\textsuperscript{th} grade and things were going great. She was involved and seemed to have lots of friends. Megan came to her mom and wanted to get a MySpace account. Tina was hesitant but felt that her daughter would go behind her back and create an account. This way she felt she could monitor Megan’s use on the account. She began to add friends and everything was going well. Megan came to her mom and wanted to add a boy, Josh Evans. Tina was reluctant, but Megan was persistent, so Tina let her add him because she felt Megan would just create another account and add him anyway. They talked and got closer over the next several weeks and everything seemed to be going good. Then one
day Megan came home upset that Josh had told her “he did not know if he wanted to be friends with her because he had heard she was not very nice to her friends.” Megan and her mom argued about the MySpace and Megan ran up to her room. A few minutes later Tina knew something were wrong and ran up to Megan’s room and found her. Megan had hung herself in her closet. Megan Taylor died the next day three weeks before her 14th birthday. The family would later find out that a neighbor and her daughter down the street, who Megan had played with and spent the night with when they were younger, had created the fake MySpace account to see if Megan had been saying anything about the daughter. Because at that time there were no laws on cyberbullying so nothing could be done to the neighbor.

While Tina was dealing with the death of her daughter she made the decision to start the foundation in memory of Megan. Since starting the foundation, Tina travels all over the country talking to teens about the real issues that go along with social media and the effects of what can happen. She says if she can help one teen from suffering her daughter’s fate then she has done her job.

The two day seminar was held at Woodlawn Church, with the first day hosting 7th and 8th grade students from the local public and private schools in the county. The 2nd day hosted the 9th thru 12th grade for the same schools.

The population of Marion County is around 25,503. There are three public high schools that are Columbia High, East Marion, and West Marion. Then
two private schools which are Columbia Academy and Woodlawn Preparatory.

Junior Auxiliary of Columbia, Ms has 33 active members in our chapter. We had three members that helped plan this presentation and worked five hours having planning meetings for this event along with numerous hours on the phone and emails. The seminar lasted from 8:30 am until 10:30 am each day. There were seven-teen chapter members that helped during the presentation and in attendance. The kids ages ranged from twelve years old to eighteen years old and we served approximately 975 children, teachers and community leaders.

We contacted the local newspaper about our presentation and invited them to come listen and talk with Tina Meier for a story to be published in The Columbian Progress.
III. Project Evaluation

We received great feedback from the schools about the cyberbullying presentation. There was a question and answer session after the initial seminar where the students could ask questions or tell personal experiences. The high school students had lots of feedback with questions and personal stories about their own experiences or someone they knew and how this helped them. The schools set aside time for the students when they returned back to school if they needed to talk more.

One of our school counselors emailed us about our Cyberbullying presentation and here is what she wrote. “The Principal and I encouraged all of our Junior High and High School Faculty to attend if possible. Many of them did report that they used the presentation as a spring board for sharing and talking to their students. They need to hear the ramifications, the laws, the consequences of this regularly. We always appreciate your commitment to our children and all the programs you do each year. But I thought this one was particularly good.”

This program had a great impact on the community by bringing awareness on just how present cyberbullying really is in our small town. Cyberbullying is everywhere. It is not just limited to the big cities. With today’s technology, everyone walks around with some device in their hands on a daily basis no
one is shielded from what happens on social media. This program would be
great for any community or chapter to hear.

Our chapter’s goal is to have Tina Meier come back at a future date and
not only talk to our youth but also to the parents. Cyberbullying does not just
happen to teens, it happens to adults also. We would like to have Tina Meier
come back in a year or two and expand on the program.