

College students turn feeding program into extended VBS

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CLEBURNE—When [Iglesia Bautista Agape in Cleburne](#) accepted the invitation to sponsor a summer feeding program for children, college students Jessica Perez and Jasmyne Robles turned it into a seven-week series of day camps.

[Community Outreach Connection in Dallas](#) introduced the feeding program to churches in Cleburne. The agency agreed to provide hot meals if church volunteers served them.



Jasmyne Robles enjoys mealtime during a day camp sponsored by Iglesia Bautista Agape in Cleburne. “By faith, I accepted the opportunity,” Pastor Julio Robles said. “One of the purposes of the church is to be more involved in the community, and what better way to help than by providing meals to the children during the summer?”

The coeds, who are serving as children’s ministers at Agape this summer,

took on leadership roles and turned the church into more than just a meal provider. They designed a Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Vacation Bible School-style program called “Fun in the Son.”

Robles’ professor at Hill College allowed her to earn college credit for developing the program. From March to May, she and Perez organized seven weeks’ worth of lesson plans, rotation schedules, volunteer coordination, outdoor activities, music and crafts.



Volunteers Stephanie Vega and Ana Galvin help serve meals during a day camp sponsored by Iglesia Bautista Agape in Cleburne. With volunteer help from other Cleburne churches, Agape offered the program to give children meaningful activities, provide two nutritious meals a day, allow them to build friendships and, most importantly, “have God touch their heart,” Robles said.

The \$10 weekly fee for Fun in the Son is miniscule compared to daycare prices, she said. Parents told volunteers they appreciated the low cost—and their children’s improved behavior at home.

“They feel the love of their teachers. They see that they’re actually paying

attention to them,” Robles said. “When they’re in their classes, they get that one-on-one interaction” they may not be able to get in school or daycare.

Forty-five children from ages 4 to 12 attend Fun in the Son regularly, she said. They hope to reach more by the end of the summer.



Volunteer Cindy

Hernandez helps children make crafts based on the Bible lesson for the day. In addition to breakfast and lunch, the children also receive books through Literacy Connexus, an organization that provides resources within a Christian context to allow churches to share the gift of literacy.

“It’s exciting to see the families and kids end up with the books,” said Pam Moore, media coordinator for Literacy Connexus.

In collaboration with H-E-B, [Literacy Connexus](#) donated 500 books for children at Fun in the Son. This month, Literacy Connexus will sponsor a family reading fair at Agape to give books and Bibles to children and their families.

Each child also will receive a bookcase at the fair. As the craft for that day, they will personalize their bookcases with stickers and paint, Moore said.

Pastor Robles believes the program will continue in the years ahead.

“Our goal is always to introduce kids to salvation in Christ. That goal has been and is being accomplished every day,” he said. “I believe this program is an opportunity to bless our community and provide hope for the city of Cleburne.”