

Shalom Park

Activity Programming

Name of Program: Theme Luncheon (Back to School)

Recommended Duration of Program: 1 hour

Size of Group: Depends on the size of the room and the staff available.

Goals and Objectives: Designed for providing residents an opportunity to socialize with peers. Give the experience of "dining out". Provide for reminiscing, challenge thinking and being entertained.

Materials and Equipment: List of dietary concerns: thickened liquids, food allergies, fluid restriction, change in texture, etc. Determine who will serve, activity staff or dietary staff. Latex gloves. Prepare any food necessary.

Decorations and Centerpieces: The decorations and centerpieces can be made ahead of time in craft programs. Gather materials and/or purchase items needed. Ahead of time print the "program". You can use 11 X 17 inch paper folded; on the front put the name, date, location, and appropriate clip art. The inside page can include the menu; give the food additional names like "memorized" macaroni and cheese. On the remaining pages we have either games or information about the theme. For a "back to school" theme have "readin', 'riting, and 'rithmetic. The games can be unscrambling the words, fill in the blank, etc. We had large "flash cards" we made from the 11 X 17 paper for wall decorations. The centerpieces were books covered with brown paper, (decorated by the residents earlier), and other school supplies. We also had lunch boxes, bottles of glue, a ruler, pencils freshly sharpened, and a spiral notebook.

The staff dressed like students did in the 50's with plaid skirts, "letter" sweaters, bobby socks and saddle shoes. We sang the ABC song, School Days. and "The Wheels on the Bus." We stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance. For "entertainment" we had a Pep Rally complete with cheerleaders from a nearby high school. We took "school" pictures and printed them immediately so the residents could have them.

Theme luncheons will all be different. For a more "formal" lunch we generally hire entertainment. A harpist goes well with an "Evening in Paris" theme. A fiddler or banjo for a western theme and an accordion for the fall festivals are always good choices. For a Wedding theme, we contacted a consignment shop who loaned us wedding dresses for the day. We had couples re-new their wedding vows. The list of themes is endless; don't be afraid to do the unusual.

Be creative and have fun! Try to have a theme luncheon once a month. You will be surprised what you can come up with when you brainstorm with your staff.

Submitted by Brenda Scott/ADC