



Dal Lemmon, Children and Families Program Coordinator

Betty Kwan Chinn Day Center

133 Seventh Street

Eureka, CA 95501

(707) 407-3833

dlemmon@srcharities.org

Script for KINS:

Hello my name is Dal Lemmon. I am the new Children and Family Program Coordinator at the Betty Kwan Chinn Day Center, and the Director of our after-school program called Bridges. I retired after teaching at Ferndale High School for 30 years and have been volunteering at the center for last couple of years.

We are always looking for help as we strive to meet the needs of the kids we serve. Our kids are at-risk youth between the ages of 5 and 12. I have a strong desire to help these children become academically successful. We currently help students with their homework and we work with them to improve their reading skills. Prizes are given to those that do their homework every day and to those that reach reading goals. It's amazing how even a small reward can motivate children to do more than they normally would. As a former high school teacher, I know firsthand the importance of reading; almost without exception, my students who struggled in school did so as a result of being poor readers. They also tended to be the students getting into trouble. The ability to read is a crucial building block in the foundation for a successful life.

Studies show that at-risk students involved in after-school programs have higher academic achievement, have improved social and personal skills, and they are generally healthier. The hours after school are the times that our children are most likely to be involved in risky behavior. During these hours many of them might be marginally supervised if they just went home. The hours of 3-6 pm are the peak times for children to suffer abuse or get involved with drug use. Automobile accidents involving children are also more prevalent during these hours than any other time period.

Another area I am very passionate about is opening their minds to what is available to them. Just last week a girl told me she longed to go back to the Serenity Inn because it was such a great place for a kid. My heart ached to hear her talk because this is all she knows; she is not aware of all life has to offer. I believe that we can break the cycle of homelessness and underachievement if these children become goal oriented and have clear pictures of what they can achieve in life.

I am currently looking into different activities, tours, speakers and other ways to open up the great opportunities and sites we have available to us locally for the expanded hours we have the children during the months of July and August. I plan on taking the children hiking, fishing, on tours of local businesses, and to art and theatre workshops, to name just a few of the ideas for summer activities.

If you would like to help I have many opportunities for you. Ways you could be of assistance are volunteering in our afterschool program, being a guest speaker, providing incentive prizes for homework/reading, volunteering for our camp in Maple Creek June 19th-23rd (or just part of the camp!), giving a tour or adding to our summer activities when the children are with us longer, or just helping us financially. I am open to ideas as well. The program is open from 3-5:30 during the school year and from noon to 5:30 during the summer months. Please feel free to contact me if you would like to help out.

my telephone number is (707) 407-3833

Thank you and have a great day.