

**Camp Fire First Texas  
Teens In Action  
Fort Worth, Texas**  
<https://www.campfirefw.org/>

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***Key words:*** Truancy, Graduation, Pride, Thrive, and Preparedness.

**Funding Sources:**

Teens in Action is funded by:

- Community Youth Development
- Private Donors

**Project Cost and Budget Narrative:**

Teens in Action is grant funded. A total of \$48,000 was allocated for the program plus costs for food, snacks and transportation.

**Project Description:**

Teens in Action is a youth led and youth driven program that is guided by a mentor. In each of the schools the mentor is assigned to, they conduct group activities after school. The mentors visit the schools twice a week, sometimes more, to have lunch with the students and also to recruit new students for the program. During the afternoon they do life skills worksheets, tutoring and other activities to boost the students' self-worth. The youth will come up with a plan for a service project after they identify the needs of the community. In the past they have built new parks, tutored, raised donations and gave resources to schools.

As students complete their projects, they see their hard work pay off. This gives them a sense of pride, shows them they can work with others and boosts their self-esteem.

**Staffing Pattern:**

Camp Fire employs two employees; one staff member who works with middle school students, and the other staff member who works with high school students.

**Population Served:**

The population served is students from low income, high truancy areas of Fort Worth, Texas (6<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> grades). The selection is made based on whomever is interested and through referrals for students in need of services.

**Project Origination:**

Teens in Action evolved from the program Step-Up School Completion. Step-Up focused on Truancy and Dropout issues in a specific zip code in Fort Worth, Texas. The demographic of the program was predominately Hispanic. Teens in Action expanded on the Step-Up Program to support students year-round and keep them engaged in school. The program works with the family, increases community engagement, works on grades and attendance, while instilling confidence and leadership skills in the students.

**Issues Addressed:**

Some of the issues addressed by the Teens in Action are:

- Truancy
- Social Emotional Education
- Mentoring
- Confidence building

**Desired Outcomes and Measurable Objectives:**

Desired measurable outcomes are used by:

Camp Fire uses Program Quality Assessment (Youth) to evaluate the program, as well as a Camp Fire Youth Assessment Questionnaire for both pre- and post-program.

The mentors evaluate how the students do by evaluating them on their growth in the program. They see how they change from the beginning to the end. They see how they interact with each other and others. They look at their grades and attendance at school.

**Strategies and/or Interventions of the Project:**

Teens in Action uses:

- InterAction – A program that teaches students to become confident, respected speakers who successfully problem solve in daily life. It not only teaches students how to interact with adults and other students, but gives them skills to resolve conflicts.
- Thriveology SEL Program – A research-based program framework founded on social/emotional learning. It helps students identify their spark, develop a growth mindset, learn goal management, and allows time for reflection.
- Lead4Change Student Leadership Program – A leadership curriculum with a framework for community service. The program can be integrated into any content area and is designed for implementation in grades 6-12.
- Other partners who are brought in for special engagements.
- Home visits conducted by the mentors assigned to the school.

**Results (Outcomes and Achievements):**

The students reported an increase in:

- Social and emotional well-being
- Positive outlook
- Grades

**Project Timeline:**

The timeline is ongoing and will continue as long as the grant is funded.

**Outcomes Related to School Completion, Dropout Prevention, and/or Graduation Rates:**

One hundred percent of the seniors in the program graduated in the 2018-2019 program year, and 100% of students in lower grades were promoted to the next grade level.

**Special Conditions, Expertise, and/or Skills Required to Carry Out Project:**

In order to carry out the program, staff need to have experience working with teens from all aspects. Teens come to school with many issues from outside of school. Since staff provides transportation for students to and from meetings and other special events, they need to be able to transport the teens using Camp Fire vehicles.

**Current Status of Project:**

Teens in Action is ongoing. It replaced the program (Step-Up) that was geared toward working with truancy. Teens in Action works with multi-level interventions.

**Role in Project as a NDPS Certification Program Participant:**

As a Stay-In-School Coordinator, I identify students who are struggling with school and have other issues which cause struggles in or out of school. I refer these students to community resources so they may receive additional assistance and possibly get back on track to be successful in school.

**Lessons Learned:**

I learned that the more the community and service agencies are working together to help students, the more successful outcomes that are possible and probable in schools with at-risk students. Graduation rates will rise and truancy will decline due to students wanting to be at school.

**Advice for Dropout Prevention Practitioners about the Project:**

Community resources like CAMP FIRE can be important partners to schools. They can help with truancy and dropout prevention measures. Not only do they come to the school and work with groups of students, they also provide service-learning projects and sometimes take students camping at Camp El Tesoro, their local meeting place for camping.

***Program Source Personnel***

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