

## 'Summer at Sherman' Enrichment Camp

This August, 25 young children (three through ten years old) participated in the 'Summer at Sherman' enrichment camp. The goal of this experience was to provide positive and fun learning experiences for children from lower-income families living in the Meriden Family Zone target neighborhood.

Another reason for this camp is to help address the learning lost by many youngsters during the summer. Research suggests that two-thirds of the academic achievement gap in reading and language is explained through the loss that occurs during the summer months of the early school years. Lower-income students are especially vulnerable, losing 1/3 of a school year during the summer months vs. one month lost for their middle-income peers.

This special nature-themed program was designed and delivered by some of Meriden's best public school teachers. It combined science, math, and reading enrichment activities with fun experiments, discussion, and games. Fields trip included a nature walk at Hubbard Park led by Meriden's own Bob Pagini, apple picking at Lyman Orchards, and a visit to Auer Farm in Bloomfield.

Summer at Sherman was the idea of the Meriden Early Childhood Council Early Education Committee, sponsored by Meriden Children First and the Meriden School Readiness Council. Key partners included New Opportunities, YMCA, the Midstate Christian Academy, Roger Sherman Elementary and the Meriden Public School system.

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