

2012 WIC Obesity Prevention Mini Grant Project Summary

Local Agency Number and Name:

LA-42 Williamson County & Cities Health District

Title of OPMG Project:

Let's Cook with Colors and Heritage Community Garden

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Project Overview

List target audience and number of participants seen:

Our target audience is WIC families in Williamson County.

- 24 WIC clients participated in our Let's Cook with Colors cooking classes.
- 5 WIC eligible families have a community garden at Heritage Community Garden.

List type of activities for this project (a group class, cooking class, physical activity, gardening, breastfeeding, other):

Our Let's Cook with Colors classes includes cooking skills, nutrition information, physical activities, gardening.

Heritage Community Garden assists all gardeners with organic gardening education, donations of food to our area food pantry and use of fruits, vegetables and herbs in our cooking classes.

Overall goal for this project:

- We are creating a pathway to healthy life choices.
- We demonstrate easy and economical ways to increase the consumption of fruits and vegetables.
- We promote getting physical activity daily.

- We model growing and using vegetables, fruits and herbs from your own containers, garden or community garden.

Objectives for this project:

- Our outcome objectives are to increase by 50% the consumption of fruits and vegetables in our students daily menu planning and meals.
- We want to see 50% of our students start or increase their daily physical activities.
- We want 10% of our students to grow something they can enjoy, a basil plant or a tomato plant, anything healthy.

Project description:

We offer cooking classes that focus on using fresh seasonal produce. It offers information on nutrition, portion sizes, label reading, using herbs, reducing salt, sugar and fat and increasing the consumption of fruits and vegetables. This class highlights the benefits of phytochemicals, antioxidants and fiber. We emphasize the advantages of physical exercise, drinking water and gardening.

Heritage Community Garden is an organic garden. We support families, groups and individuals in their efforts to grow their own fruits and vegetables. 10% of their harvest is donated to the local food pantry. Heritage herbs and produce are used when available in our cooking classes.

List results and objectives met:

Our surveys reveal:

- increase consumption of fruits and vegetables by 32%
- increased physical activities by 39%
- increased interest in growing something healthful 18%

List curricula, kits or other educational materials used:

We have a Let's Cook with Colors curriculum in each of our WIC clinics. We use visual teaching tools and handouts from USDA.

List other resources used, if applicable:

List collaborating agencies or individuals, if applicable:

List the type of incentives that were given:

- Pedometer
- cutting sheets
- reusable shopping bags
- cook books
- aprons

Helpful ordering information for materials or incentives (if available):

Tips for Other Agencies

What worked well for this project?

- Cooking and tasting new recipes works well.
- Hands-on instruction works. Herb show and tell is still a favorite.
- Having a relaxed and interactive learning environment is our most successful component.

What were the challenges?

Choosing recipes for new facilitators was challenging plus, new facilitators building their cooking skills and confidence.

What changes would be made for next time, if any?

OPMG coordinator will take a more active role in recipe choices and varying the cooking demonstrations.