



UC CALFRESH NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM

Program Highlights

Over 2,900 low income Placer and Nevada County school children received nutrition education in their classrooms.

Over 10,000 adults learned about nutrition through workshops, newsletters, our website, and Facebook.

During the past year, more than 1,500 youth and adults attended community events we participated in or hosted.

\$398,516 USDA grant to provide UC CalFresh programs to low income Placer and Nevada County youth and adults.

Let's Eat Healthy! is Placer and Nevada Counties name for the UC CalFresh Nutrition Education Program. The vision of *Let's Eat Healthy!* is to help CalFresh eligible children and families in Placer and Nevada Counties to maintain healthy lifestyles through wise food choices and physical activity.

Let's Eat Healthy! Education is extremely important due to the fact that childhood obesity has tripled in the past three decades. One in three Americans younger than 18 is overweight. The likelihood of developing type 2 diabetes, high blood cholesterol, and high blood pressure are greatly increased in overweight children. If left unchecked these risk factors and associated diseases could shorten a child's life span by as much as five years.

The purpose of *Let's Eat Healthy!* is to promote healthy lifestyles, as outlined in the Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2015—2020, in schools and community programs with large numbers of CalFresh and CalFresh eligible participants. This is done by teaching students about the importance of physical activity and healthy food choices. Eligible schools receive nutrition lessons, UCCE nutrition curricula, resources, and teacher trainings. We reach parents through adult workshops as well as family events at participating schools.

Physical activity, good nutrition, and quality education go hand-in-hand. Well-nourished children have higher test scores, better school attendance, and fewer classroom behavior problems. Research shows that knowledge and skills children learn today help them choose healthier foods tomorrow and into adulthood.

In these difficult economic times families have to deal with stretching their food dollars to feed their families. Trying to make these meals nutritious adds to the challenge. Through nutrition workshops adults are learning how to plan and cook nutritious meals for their families while saving money and time.



COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH



Kaseberg Student Nutrition Action Council creates posters for the cafeteria.

We get to teach kids how to stay healthy!

-SNAC student quote



Rock Creek Boys and Girls Club slice fruit to top Delicious Berry French Toast.

ISSUE

Childhood obesity is epidemic in the United States, and is expected to increase the rates of many chronic diseases. Increasing physical activity and improving nutrition are keys to obesity prevention and control. Changing individual behavior is difficult. While nutrition education can teach children what it means to be healthy and what foods they should eat, a comprehensive, coordinated strategy is needed to achieve the greatest benefits. Areas to be included in a comprehensive approach include: nutrition education and promotion, family and community partnerships, and foods available on the school campus.

WHAT WAS DONE

Nutrition Education & Promotion - Students were taught two hands-on nutrition lessons and teachers received curriculum to continue the education throughout the school year. Tastings were also offered in all classrooms. Cooking, gardening, and physical activity lessons were being conducted in afterschool programs.

Family and Community Partnerships - Parents received nutrition facts sheets pertaining to the information taught in their child’s classroom. They also received information as well as a recipe on the vegetable supplied at the tastings. *Let’s Eat Healthy!* hosted annual Family Fun Health Fairs at select participating schools. These provide an opportunity for students and families, school staff, and community members to come together and enjoy fun activities while also learning how to stay healthy.

Foods Available on the School Campus - *Let’s Eat Healthy!* staff have become Technical Advising Professionals (TAPS) through Smarter Lunchrooms Movement trainings. The mission of the Smarter Lunchrooms Movement is to equip school lunchrooms with evidence-based tools that improve child eating behaviors and thus improve the health of children. TAPS assist food service in promoting fruits and vegetables as well making healthy food choices.

IMPACT

Schools look to us for support in their efforts to create a healthy school environment. This year we provided assistance with Jump Rope for Heart, Jog-A-Thon, and classroom cooking projects.

All schools received direct education, tastings and at least one other component as we strive to increase our comprehensive efforts.

- Cooking Academy
- Garden Education
- Zumba/Catch
- Parent Nutrition Lessons
- Smarter Lunchrooms Movement
- Student Nutrition Action Council



GARDENING

"Is there anything to taste in the garden today?"

"When will the Strawberries be ready?"



Cirby Elementary



Rock Creek Elementary

ISSUE

While classroom nutrition education is the cornerstone of the *Let's Eat Healthy!* program it is not the sole influence on children's fruit and vegetable choices. There is mounting evidence that school gardening, especially when combined with a healthy lunch program and/or nutritional education, encourages more healthful food choices. Students are more likely to try eating vegetables they have grown themselves and to ask for them at home.

WHAT WAS DONE

During the 2016-2017 school year, garden education was implemented in two Placer County schools. *Let's Eat Healthy!* provided hands on garden education and activities to 2nd and 3rd grade students at Rock Creek Elementary School in Auburn, and to TK thru 4th grade students, at Cirby Elementary School in Roseville.

In each school students were taught the basics of gardening and what plants need to grow. They were educated on garden prep such as weeding and soil amendment. Students were taught about cool and warm season crops and were allowed to choose many of the plants they planted in the garden. Throughout the school year students were taught how to care for growing plants and when plants were ready to harvest.

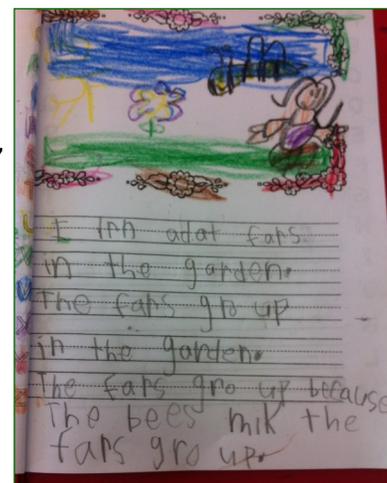
IMPACT

Rock Street Elementary School:

- Students planted cabbage, carrots, radishes, leeks, potatoes, broccoli, cauliflower, peas and garlic.
- Students tasted broccoli, cauliflower, radishes, carrots and cabbage.

Cirby Elementary:

- Students planted peas, radishes, spinach and a variety of herbs.
- Students tasted radishes, peas and spinach.
- Kindergarten students planted pumpkins at the end of the school year to be harvested in first grade in the fall. These pumpkins will support a first grade pumpkin project done every year at the school.



Thank you for a fun day today...

Lizbeth came back and wrote the cutest journal entry.

—Kim (Kindergarten Teacher Cirby Elementary)



TASTINGS

ISSUE

Children who develop healthy eating habits at a young age are more likely to maintain a healthy diet over their lifetime. A healthy diet includes eating a variety of fruits and vegetables daily. Introducing new produce items in school settings helps familiarize children to new fruits and vegetables. Studies show, when children are taught about the nutrients in fruits and vegetables, how they help their bodies, and how the foods are grown, they are more likely to eat them.

WHAT WAS DONE

During the 2016-2017 school year, six Placer County and one Nevada County elementary schools participated in fruit and vegetable tastings. Classroom and lunchroom tastings were conducted.

Lunchroom tastings were coordinated with cafeteria staff and conducted during lunch periods. Students were given the opportunity to taste Opal apples, and red, yellow, and green bell peppers. The students were then surveyed and asked “did you like the new produce”, and “would they eat it again if it was served in their school salad bar?”

During classroom tastings, students tried raw Brussels sprouts. Students were asked to describe the Brussels sprouts using their senses, such as sight, smell, touch, and taste. Following the tastings, students participated in a discussion about the nutrients in Brussels sprouts, how those nutrients help their bodies, and how Brussels sprouts are grown. Students were given a hand-out to take home, which included a recipe for roasted Brussels sprouts. Many classroom teachers were surprised at the mild flavor of the sprouts and the number of students that were willing to try the Brussels sprouts raw.

IMPACT

The popularity of the lunchroom tastings prompted food service staff to offer Opal apples and bell peppers more regularly in the school salad bar.

Many of the students were unfamiliar with the Brussels sprouts, but were very excited to try a new food. Some notable comments the students made included “they look like alien heads,” “they look like lettuce on the inside, but taste like broccoli”, and “ they are good and vegetable.”

Results of the Brussels sprouts survey show:

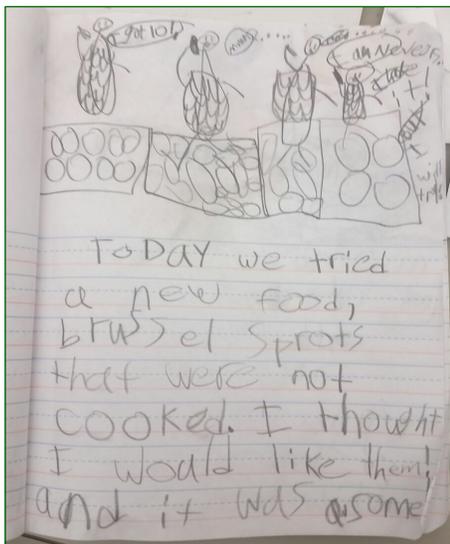
- 47% of the students had tasted Brussels sprouts before the lesson.
- 97% of the students tried the Brussels sprouts sample in class.
- 61% of the students would be willing to eat Brussels sprouts again at school.
- 58% of the students would be willing to ask for the Brussels sprouts at home.



SNAC Club students assisting with Opal Apple tasting at Kaseburg Elementary.

“I like Brussels sprouts for a snack. I would eat them anywhere.”

-1st grade student from Auburn Elementary School.



Student journal entry after Brussel sprouts tasting.



ADULT EDUCATION

ISSUE

One in every five residents in Placer County and over one quarter of the residents in Nevada County are eligible for SNAP benefits. In these difficult economic times, many struggle with stretching their food dollars to feed their families. Trying to make these meals nutritious adds to the challenge.

WHAT WAS DONE

The UC CalFresh Nutrition Education Program taught series-based nutrition workshops to eligible adults utilizing the research based curricula *Plan, Shop, Save & Cook* and *Eating Smart, Being Active*. The series *Plan, Shop, Save & Cook* focuses on planning balanced, nutritious meals and saving money at the grocery store. The *Eating Smart, Being Active* curriculum educates adults about healthy lifestyle choices, including physical activity and choosing foods that are lower in fat, sugar, and salt. The audiences reached include participants from Consolidated Programs and Assessment, Woodbridge Elementary School, Mothers in Recovery in Roseville and Auburn, KidzKount Placer Community Action Council, and WIC offices in Rocklin and Auburn.



A monthly tasting at the AIFC

At the Auburn Interfaith Food Closet (AIFC), monthly tastings of low-cost, nutritious foods were offered to clients. These tastings demonstrated how to create healthy meals utilizing the more nutrient-dense items given out at the food closet such as whole grain pasta, dried beans, and seasonal vegetables. UC CalFresh was also involved with the food closet's Nutrition Committee, whose purpose is to provide recipes and resources to enable clients to maximize their food budgets and use foods offered at the Auburn Interfaith Food Closet. Through the Nutrition Committee's efforts, the food closet started giving out bags of frozen vegetables to clients, who were very thankful for this healthy option. In November 2016, UC CalFresh supplied food safety handouts as part of the Auburn Interfaith Food Closet's first annual turkey drive, which provided over 500 turkeys to the community.

UC CalFresh also conducted a training for the Child Advocates of Placer County about fast foods and MyPlate. Adults participated in an eye-opening activity where they figured out the amount of fat, sugar, and sodium in different fast food meals. The Child Advocates will use this knowledge when deciding if and where they will take their mentees out to eat and to help empower these foster youth to make healthy choices.

IMPACT

An Intent to Change survey was given to participants at the end of each workshop to see if they planned to change their eating pattern.

- 100% of participants who ate fast foods reported they will eat fast foods less often within the next week.
- 90% of participants reported they will eat foods from all five food groups each day more often within the next week.



Woodbridge Elementary school parents participated in Plan, Shop, Save & Cook workshops.



Child Advocates of Placer County participated in a UC CalFresh training called "Can Fast Food Be Healthy?"



NUTRITION EDUCATION IN PRESCHOOLS



Loomis Head Start students are jumping rope during the Go, Glow, and Grow lesson.

After learning about "Glow" foods, a preschooler took a bite of carrot and then asked, "are my eyes shiny?"

-Clipper Gap Head Start



First Street Head Start students are playing with the Go, Glow, and Grow activity cube.

ISSUE

Research shows 1 in 8 preschool age children are obese. Children's food preferences and eating habits develop early in life. For this reason, early childhood is the perfect time to introduce the importance of eating healthy and getting plenty of exercise.

WHAT WAS DONE

The *Let's Eat Healthy!* program served nearly 400 children in 15 preschools this year by delivering an introductory nutrition lesson. Children were taught the importance of choosing foods from MyPlate to help their bodies "Go, Glow, and Grow". The lesson provided children with plenty of opportunities to run, jump, and wiggle their bodies. They were taught that playing is both fun and important to keep their bodies healthy. Children sang a new song to help remind them to wash their hands before they eat and they participated in a discussion about the importance of brushing their teeth.

Preschool teachers were provided with the activity cube used by the UC CalFresh Nutrition Educator during the lesson. This will enable teachers to facilitate structured physical activities and reinforce nutrition messages about "Go, Glow, and Grow" foods with their students.

Letters were sent home with the students to inform parents about "Go, Glow, and Grow" foods, so that parents would be encouraged to use the same words at home when talking to their children about healthy food choices.

Three Nutrition Newsletters were sent out to over 100 local preschool educators. These newsletters contain up-to-date nutrition information, recipes, and activity ideas for preschool age children.

IMPACT

- Many children learned a new association between choosing healthy foods and how those foods help their bodies when using the "Go, Glow, and Grow" terms.
- Many children learned that playing is both fun and important to keep their muscles and bones strong.
- Preschool teachers use the Preschool Nutrition Newsletters to extend the nutrition learning throughout the school year.



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY



(Above and below): Zumba at First Street Family Fun Health Fair.



Grass Valley school district staff after a Zumba class.



Zumba at the Cirby Family Fun Health Fair.

ISSUE

The *Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans* outlines the recommendations for physical activity needed each day for adults and children. Adults should get at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity each week. Children and adolescents should get 60 minutes or more of physical activity each day. The prevalence of overweight or obese adults is 63% in Placer County and 55% in Nevada County. Less than half of all elementary school-age students in Placer and Nevada Counties meet the *Physical Activity Guidelines* every day.

WHAT WAS DONE

Zumba Fitness

The UC CalFresh Nutrition Education Program incorporated Zumba fitness into adult nutrition workshops as a way to encourage participants to become more physically active. Zumba is a Latin-inspired fitness program that uses music and dance moves to create fun aerobic workouts. Over the four week series, adults and their children at Consolidated Programs and Assessment and Mothers in Recovery in Roseville were invited to participate in 20 to 30 minutes of Zumba at the beginning or end of each nutrition lesson.

As part of the Grass Valley Unified School District's wellness program, UC CalFresh's certified Zumba instructor was invited to teach Zumba fitness classes. Staff participated in four weeks of classes, becoming role models for their students.

In conjunction with Cirby Elementary's Walking Wednesdays Program, UC CalFresh taught a weekly Zumba class before school in the multipurpose room. Children who participated in Zumba also got credit for the physical activity and were entered to win prizes.

Mrs. Sassman and her second grade students at Rock Creek Elementary School in Auburn participated in UC CalFresh's Zumba fitness classes twice a month. Each 30 minute session contributed toward the students' weekly required physical activity minutes.

Zumba was also featured at all three of the UC CalFresh Family Fun Health Fairs in April and May. At Cirby Elementary School, children eagerly jumped onto the stage to show off their dancing talents to their parents. Some even stayed to participate in both Zumba sessions offered at the Family Fun Health Fairs.

IMPACT

Children and adults increased their physical activity by participating in UC CalFresh led Zumba fitness classes. They had fun while getting their heart pumping at the same time. Parents and children reported their enjoyment of being physically active and having more energy. A special education teacher remarked that her students had better concentration and behavior when they participated in Zumba.



FAMILY FUN HEALTH FAIRS



A Cirby student balances her breakfast.

“It was clearly an event that captured the true meaning of what the State is looking for in family engagement legislation—linked to learning, hands-on and family friendly for all ages.”

*-Karen Quinlan, Principal
at Cirby Elementary*



A First Street student pedals his way to a strawberry-kale smoothie.

ISSUE

Childhood obesity is a major public health issue, and prevention requires a comprehensive approach. While classroom nutrition education is a vital obesity prevention strategy, children are more likely to make wise food choices if they receive healthy eating messages in the classroom, lunchroom, at home and around their community. The Family Fun Health Fairs bring these four environments together to provide children and their families with a fun and informative healthy lifestyle experience.

WHAT WAS DONE

The *Let's Eat Healthy!* program hosted Family Fun Health Fairs at First Street School, Cirby Elementary and Bell Hill Academy to complement a year of nutrition education in the classroom. Attendees embarked on a California Road Trip, receiving stamps on their road map for each activity they completed. There were 20 booths with themes such as nutrition, physical activity, gardening and food safety. Activities included a smoothie bike, Zumba, produce tastings, an exercise wheel, planting, and a tour of Germ City. Several activities were facilitated by partner agencies, who also provided valuable resources and program information for the families. The fairs featured a total of 23 partner organizations representing the many health and wellness programs available in Placer and Nevada Counties.

The Family Fun Health Fairs were a perfect opportunity for family members to directly participate in their child's nutrition education while having fun together. These events would not have been possible without our volunteers, partner organizations or the generosity of the many local businesses who donated gift cards, product and staff time to help make this event a success.

IMPACT

This was the fifth fair held at Bell Hill and the second at both First Street and Cirby. The activities reinforced the *Let's Eat Healthy!* program's vision to help families maintain healthy lifestyles through wise food choices and physical activity. The events connected families to the nutrition education curriculum that the students receive in the classroom throughout the school year. The Family Fun Health Fairs were a successful collaboration between UC CalFresh and the many people who impact a child's eating behaviors, including family members, school staff and teachers, food service staff and local community partners.