

Establishing SNAC Clubs at Local Boys & Girls Club of Lake Tahoe

SUMMARY

CalFresh Healthy Living, UCCE (CFHL, UCCE) and 4-H programs provided eight weeks of nutrition education, cooking lessons, and youth leadership opportunities to nearly 40 youth by establishing Student Nutrition Advisory Council (SNAC) Clubs at the Boys and Girls Club of Lake Tahoe (BGCLT). The goal of SNAC Clubs is to create opportunities for youth in low-income communities to develop life and leadership skills in cooking, nutrition, gardening, and healthy living. Plans have been set to provide SNAC Club members opportunities to impact their peers by developing leadership skills in planning accessible events with nutrition information and food tastings. These activities will attempt to further reach about 190 younger peers in two BGCLT sites.

BACKGROUND

The BGCLT provides life-enhancing programs to its members. They have helped over 200 families and provided over 640 hours of academic support in a year's span. In response to reopening their site after the COVID-19 pandemic, the BGCLT was seeking innovative programming to offer to reengage their club members.

CFHL, UCCE and 4-H partnered with the BGCLT to offer its first in-person SNAC Club, an interactive, program that educates participants about nutrition, gardening, and youth leadership. Using research-based curricula educators provided 8 to 9 sessions of hands-on, experiential learning programs to 11 middle school and high school youth and 40 elementary school students reaching a total of 51 youth for the first year of the SNAC Club program.

SOLUTION

In the summer 2021, the first SNAC Club launched at the BGCLT. There was one SNAC Club offered to 11 students in middle and high school. SNAC Club participants engaged in eight sessions consisting of nutrition education, cooking, and community service projects. The students expressed they enjoyed learning knife skills and getting to create their own dishes/meals from participating in their first SNAC Club.

Due to the success of the first SNAC Club, the BGCLT partnered with CFHL, UCCE and 4H to offer three SNAC Clubs over the 2021 – 2022 school year. Through their involvement with SNAC

Club students reported cooking new foods and trying them with friends was their favorite part.



"I liked SNAC Club because I got to cook and have a fun experience with older kids!"

Max Smith, 4th grade student, making Pumpkin Spread on the first day of SNAC Club.

OUTCOME

Since starting in summer 2021, the amount of participants has steadily grown from 11 to nearly 40 SNAC Club members. The 40 participants are distributed between two BGCLT sites which extends the reach of their three community service projects. By the end of FFY 22, SNAC Club members will have completed combined, 55 hours of cooking and nutrition education and will have completed three service learning projects. In

For more information or to get involved, contact Carmela Padilla, Program Supervisor for the University of California Cooperative Extension in the Central Sierra at cmpadilla@ucanr.edu



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addition, by the end of the 2021-2022 school year, this program will have reached nearly 230 students.

Future plans include SNAC Club members having the opportunity to use a brand new campus garden space to grow their own produce and teach peers about nutrition and gardening simultaneously.

During this summer, CFHL, UCCE educators plan to introduce the idea of stenciling the playground blacktop with designs that encourage physical activity (PA). Youth leaders would be able to promote PA with a stenciling project and leading CATCH activities for other BGCLT members. All in all, establishing SNAC Clubs at the BGCLT has empowered youth to make informed decisions about their health and their physical environments.

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