

# Alphabet Squares, Fruit & Vegetable Hopscotch, Bike Trails and More!

## Using Playground Stencils to Increase Physical Activity with Kindergartners

Lorena Hoyos & Annabelle Factura, CalFresh Healthy Living, UCCE San Joaquin County



### Introduction

The CalFresh Healthy Living, UCCE San Joaquin County Program (CFHL, UCCE SJ) partnered with Westwood Elementary School to increase physical activity among kindergartners.

The partnership began in 2021 when the CFHL, UCCE SJ team was approached by kindergarten teacher, Mrs. Freeman, and PE teacher, Mrs. Van Rossum. Mrs. Freeman's daughter is a Girl Scout and wanted to work on her final Gold Star project. Her plans were to get children more physically active, while promoting nutrition, through two stencil projects on campus. The kindergarten playground project was complete in the summer of 2022.

### Method

- Summer of 2021, teachers were trained on the Coordinated Approach to Child Health (CATCH) curriculum.
- Girl Scout, Aliyah Freeman, and CFHL, UCCE SJ educator, Annabelle Factura, worked on playground sketches.
- Beginning of summer of 2022 the playground blacktop was resurfaced.
- July 19, 2022 Westwood Elementary staff, Girl Scout volunteers, and CFHL, UCCE SJ staff stenciled and painted the kindergarten playground.
- July 29, 2022 Kindergarten playground ribbon cutting ceremony.

### Next Steps

- Aliyah is currently working on a teacher guide that describes how the stencils can be used.
- Sketches of the primary playground have been developed.
- Plans to begin work on the primary playground stencil project have started.
- Training and technical assistance of the CATCH curriculum is ongoing.

### Results

#### Playground Stencil Assessment Results

- Pre and post stencil assessments (including an environmental scan and teacher survey) were collected at Westwood Elementary on May 27th and October 28th of 2022.
- The stencil project resulted in an increase in the number and type of playground markings from a single Number Hopscotch stencil to 11 stencils including Playground Paths, Number Hopscotch, Letter Hopscotch, Letters A-Z, Words (crawl, cross, hop, swim, walk, fly), Footprints, Fruits, Vegetables, Traffic (bike, cross walk, yield, stop, speed limit), Shapes (circle, square, diamond, pentagon, heart, star), Numbers 0-9 – showing 10 new stencils.
- Of the students observed, 8 (29%) were active on the pre-scan and 16 (47%) on the post-scan – **representing an 18 percent point increase in active students from pre to post.**
- The playground and teacher staff support score for the one participating teacher was 9 out of 11 during the pre and post-scans – indicating strong teacher support for student physical activity on the playground before and after the stencils were painted.
- Following the stencil painting project, the teacher also reported actively engaging with students using the stencils by: encouraging students to use the stencils, facilitating physical activity for students using the stencils, participating in physical activity with students using the stencils, and also using the stencils to incorporate physical activity into the school day outside of the set outdoor break times.

