

RELEVANCE

Early childhood nutrition is critical as it lays the foundation for lifelong health and well-being. Currently, 90% of the U.S. healthcare expenditure is allocated to managing largely preventable chronic diseases and mental health conditions, which are often linked to poor dietary habits, physical inactivity, and lack of access to nutritious foods. In many areas, particularly those with significant numbers of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients, diets often fail to meet recommended nutritional standards, raising the risk for chronic diseases. For instance, the prevalence of adult obesity in these regions is notably high, and physical inactivity is a significant concern. Furthermore, food insecurity and limited access to healthy food options exacerbate these issues. Research underscores that addressing these challenges from early childhood can have profound effects on long-term health outcomes. Programs like gardening not only provide physical activity but also promote mental well-being by offering social interaction and exposure to nature. Such activities, along with improved access to nutritious foods, are essential for fostering healthier future generations and reducing the burden of preventable diseases.

RESPONSE

THE LUBBOCK COUNTY FCH/BLT PROGRAM AREA COMMITTEE ASSISTED AGENT BOZEMAN IN IDENTIFYING NEED AND POTENTIAL SITES TO REACH SNAP RECIPIENTS WITH NUTRITIONAL EDUCATION SERIES. THE OVERALL GOALS OF THESE SERIES ARE TO HELP PARTICIPANTS INCREASE THEIR CONSUMPTION AND ACCESS TO FRUITS AND VEGETABLES, BE MORE PHYSICALLY ACTIVE, IMPROVE FOOD SECURITY STATUS, AND PREVENT RISK FACTORS FOR CHRONIC DISEASE SUCH AS OBESITY, DIABETES, AND CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE. THE TARGET AUDIENCE WAS THE 8,500 SNAP BENEFIT RECIPIENTS IN LUBBOCK COUNTY, THAT ATTEND PUBLIC PREK1 NDDERGARTEN. THE PROGRAM WAS IMPLEMENTED THROUGH CLASSROOM EDUCATION (IN-PERSON AND ZOOM), WEEKLY RADIO SPOTS, SOCIAL MEDIA, MONTHLY NEWSLETTERS, COOKING DEMONSTRATIONS, AND TASTING EXPERIENCES.

COLOR ME HEALTHY	CLASSROOMS	EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATIONS	COOKING DEMONSTRATIONS	NEWSLETTER	RADIO	SOCIAL MEDIA
Idalou ISD	2	16	8	6	6	12
Roosevelt ISD	4	32	8	6	6	8
New Deal ISD	4	32	8	6	6	8
Carmona Harrison Elementary-Lubbock ISD	8	48	16	6	6	8

VALUE STATEMENT

Creating opportunities, changing lives.

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Better Living for Texans programs provides community nutrition education to limited resource adults, youth and children. Curricula series offered cover the lifespan and encourage participants to make healthier food choices, plan healthy meals, prepare food safely, increase physical activity, and grow their own vegetables. The benefit of making healthier food choices and adopting a physically active lifestyle play a role in the prevention of many chronic diseases.

1 in 8

9 million

CHILDREN EXPERIENCE HUNGER
SOURCE: FEEDING AMERICA 2021

22%

of 12-19 year olds are obese

SOURCE: NATIONAL HEALTH AND NUTRITION EXAMINATION SURVEY 2017-
MARCH 2020 PREPANDEMIC DATA FILES-DEVELOPMENT OF FILES AND
PREVALENCE ESTIMATES FOR SELECTED HEALTH OUTCOMES, TABLE 3



RESPONSE

Creating Opportunities, Changing lives

Color Me Healthy is a program developed to reach children ages four and five with fun, interactive learning opportunities on physical activity and healthy eating. It is designed to stimulate all of the senses of young children: touch, smell, sight, sound, and, of course, taste. Through the use of color, music, and exploration of the senses, Color Me Healthy teaches children that healthy food and physical activity are fun.

- 9 circle time lessons
- 7 original songs on a CD (also available digitally)
- Weekly parent/guardian newsletters (both English & Spanish)
- 5 colorful posters (3 classroom & 2 parent/guardian posters)
- Picture cards for circle time lessons
- Weekly fresh food tastings
- Certificate of completion after students finish the program

This is a 9-lesson curriculum extension that coordinates with Texas TEKS for Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten students. Each lesson is about 20-60 minutes long. Steps to Health Color Me Healthy has 9 circle-time lessons, which may include imaginary trips, songs, and dances. Students also learn how different foods are grown. Every lesson allows children to describe and taste different fruits and vegetables.



EVALUATION STRATEGY

Pre and Post Surveys were administered through a paper format and entered into a Qualtrics System (Howdy Health) or through a QR-code given to sites and participants.

RESULTS



291 participants



98%
of participants increased physical activity



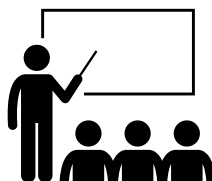
98%
of parents said participants were more likely to try new foods



67%
of families tried recipes at home



90%
of teacher said students were more open to trying fruits and vegetables



100%

of teachers plan to continue with programs next year



SUMMARY

Through implementation of the three program series at four different sites, the overall goals of helping participants increase their consumption and access to fruits and vegetables, being more physically active, improving food security status, and preventing risk factors for chronic disease such as obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease were successfully addressed, and the needs determined by the Lubbock County FCH/BLT were met with the target audience of Snap-ed benefit recipients, specially targeting youth.

FUTURE PROGRAMMING

Upcoming Programming 2024-2025:

- Idalou ISD
- New Deal ISD
- Roosevelt ISD
- Carmona Harrison Elementary School
- Slaton ISD



Amber Bozeman

EXTENSION AGENT
URBAN YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
LUBBOCK COUNTY

(806) 775-1740
Amber.bozeman@ag.tamu.edu
916 Main St., Suite 401
Lubbock, Texas

