



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.

\$301,000 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.

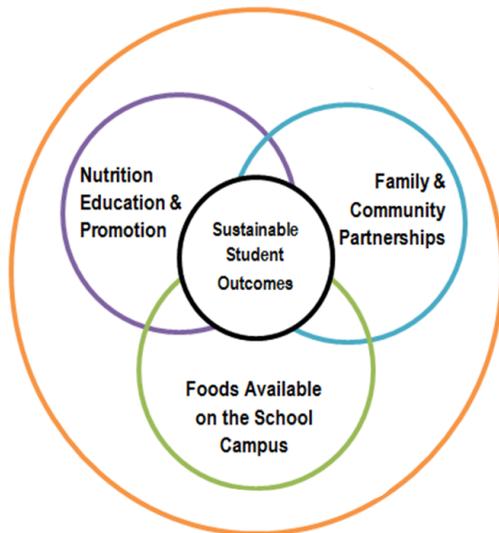
The purpose of *Let's Eat Healthy!* is to promote healthy lifestyles, as outlined in the Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2015—2020, in schools and community programs with large numbers of CalFresh and CalFresh eligible participants. This is done by teaching students about the importance of physical 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 good 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



Story from a third grade teacher at Rock Creek Elementary:

So we did a musical play called "Geology Rocks," and there is a song that has a line about broccoli. The verse goes: "Oh to be a fossil fuel, you know that would be cool, heating homes in winter, cooking up your dinner, Is that broccoli? Man your mom is cruel!" The students said that they like broccoli and changed the line to "Man your mom is cool."

ISSUE

Healthy students are better learners. They are better on all levels of academic achievement. 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.

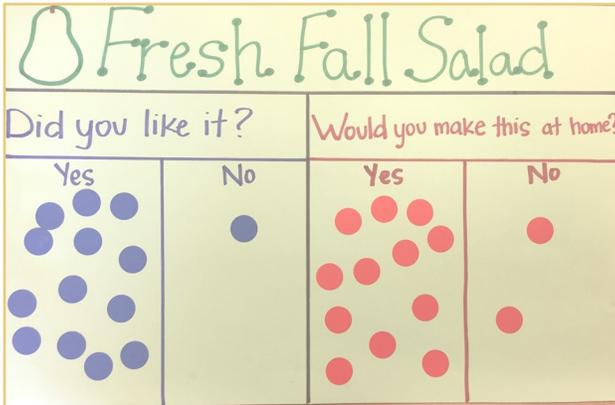
Foods Available on the School Campus - **Let's Eat Healthy!** staff have become Technical Advising Professionals (TAPS) through Smarter Lunchrooms Movement trainings. The mission of the Smarter Lunchrooms Movement is to equip school lunchrooms with evidence-based tools that improve child eating behaviors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

IMPACT

- Approximately 2,900 Students received two hands-on nutrition lessons and tasted edamame; many for the first time.
- TK teacher at Rock Creek Elementary reported that a student brought edamame for the Saint Patrick's Day party. At the tasting only one student had previously tried edamame. This time students were excited to eat them. Many said, "this is what we had with Mrs. Carter!"
- Family Fun Health Fairs were held at four participating schools. Parents at Cirby had so much fun they were posting comments to the Cirby Facebook page during the event.
- Kids at First Street School can't wait to go through the lunch line and check out the new signage. One little girl said, "these just make lunch fun!"



COOKING WITH KIDS



Fresh Fall Salad was a success with 93 percent of the students saying they liked it.



Youth give a BIG THUMBS UP to the Fresh Fall Salad.

ISSUE

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2015-2020 looked at the country's trends in food intake and found that most Americans are not following healthy eating patterns. The average diet is high in processed foods and low in fruits and vegetables. Eating a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and low-fat dairy has been shown to help prevent many chronic diseases but often times kids don't eat healthfully. Including children in the kitchen to help with the preparation of meals can help increase the likelihood of that child trying a new, healthy food. Children are less likely to reject foods that they helped to make.

WHAT WAS DONE

UC CalFresh implemented monthly cooking lessons for 16 students with the Boys and Girls Club afterschool program at Rock Creek Elementary School. Once a month students would join UC CalFresh educators to learn cooking basics such as food safety, recipe reading, knife skills, and mixing ingredients. Recipes were selected from "Cooking Up Healthy Choices," a component of the "Shaping Healthy Choices Program." The recipes contained foods from all five food groups of MyPlate. This enabled the students to connect the cooking lessons to their classroom education. Many of the recipes also introduced vegetables or types of foods that were new to students. After the kids completed the preparation of all the ingredients, an educator would cook the food or assemble the ingredients. The children were then able to taste test all of the foods that they helped to prepare and take home a recipe to parents.

IMPACT

Students were excited to attend the cooking lessons each month and the Site Director of Boys and Girls Club overheard students discussing the classes all month long. Dot surveys were completed at the end of each class asking students if they liked the recipe and if they would like to make it at home. The Fresh Fall Salad was a success with 93 percent of students saying they liked it and 86 percent noting they would like to make it at home. Additionally, one observation made by the afterschool program staff was the advancement of students' knife skills. The chopped vegetables were the correct size and uniform by the end of the year.



GARDENING

"Can we pick broccoli?"

"Can we pick Strawberries?"

*– Boys & Girls Club students
Rock Creek Elementary School*



First Street Elementary 4th grade



Rock Creek Boys & Girls Club

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 2015-2016 school year, garden education was piloted in two Placer County schools. **Let's Eat Healthy!** provided classroom and hands-on garden activities at First Street School in Lincoln to 4th and 5th grade students. Hands-on garden activities were also provided to Boys and Girls Club afterschool students at Rock Creek Elementary in Auburn. These two groups were chosen in order to determine the effectiveness of each delivery method.

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

First Street Elementary:

- Students planted lettuce, cabbage, carrots, radishes, leeks, potatoes and cilantro.
- Students tasted potatoes, radishes, cilantro and cabbage.
- Students learned about how unexpected weather conditions can effect the growth of plants.

Rock Creek Elementary Boys & Girls Club:

- Students planted lettuce, carrots, radishes, kale and snow peas.
- Students harvested and tasted radishes and lettuce.
- Lettuce was used for salad during a cooking lesson.



FAMILY FUN HEALTH FAIR



"It was great family fun! Lots of positive feedback from parents. It would be great to make it an annual event. The volunteers did a great job. Thanks for thinking of Cirby students and families. Huge success."

— Karen, Cirby Principal



ISSUE

Children and adolescents make choices about which foods to eat every day at home, at school, and in the community. More than one third of youth are overweight or obese and while teaching the importance of good nutrition in the classroom is important, alone it is not enough to change children's behavior. Parents, teachers, food service, and community members all influence what a child chooses to eat; involving these individuals to create a multifaceted approach is essential to fighting obesity.

WHAT WAS DONE

The **Let's Eat Healthy!** Program put on Family Fun Health Fair events at First Street, Cirby, Bell Hill, and Rock Creek combined with Auburn Elementary. The theme of these events was "Around the World." Activities included making and eating nutritious foods, gardening, and physical activity. The events this year included the addition of Zumba as a physical activity both kids and adults could enjoy together. Attendees included students from all grades, siblings, parents, teachers, food service staff, kids from the afterschool program, and preschool.

These events would not have been possible without the collaboration and support from other UCCE programs, local health agencies, and local community stores. Partners from UCCE included Nutrition BEST, 4-H, CYFAR, and Master Gardeners. Other partners and sponsors from the communities included Placer County Network of Care, Auburn Interfaith Food Closet, Lincoln Lighthouse, Kids First, Placer Food Bank, Dairy Council, Public Health Institute, NEOP Nevada County, Western Placer Food Services, GVSD Child Nutrition Services, Sierra Harvest, Nevada County CalFresh, Raley's, Target, Home Depot, Safeway, Starbucks, Briar Patch Co-Op, Grocery Outlet, Sam's Club, Walmart, Bear Yuba Land Trust, Tess' Kitchen Store, The Wooden Spoon, Golfland Sunsplash, Roller King, Any Time Fitness, Smart & Final, Great Clips, Trader Joe's, Peet's Coffee, and Eisley Nursery.

IMPACT

This was the fourth year the Family Fun Health Fair was held at Bell Hill, second year at Rock Creek, and the first year for both First Street and Cirby elementary schools.

Each activity done during these events was chosen to complement the classroom nutrition lessons and was a great way to connect parents to health topics their children are learning at school.

These events are an opportunity for students and their families, school staff, and community members to come together and enjoy fun activities while also learning about how to stay healthy. A combined total of over 800 people attended.



SMARTER LUNCHROOMS

ISSUE

The USDA's National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs serve over 31 million children each school day. School meals provide 47 percent of the day's intake for participating children. Smarter Lunchrooms Movement (SLM) focuses on behavioral economics and choice architecture; which gives subtle cues or nudges children towards a healthier option. Implementing SLM best practices can help children make smarter choices in the lunchroom and have a powerful impact on their overall diet. Displaying food in an attractive manor, putting the unhealthy options out of reach and having fun signage can all influence children's choice.

WHAT WAS DONE

Let's Eat Healthy! worked with five schools in Placer and Nevada Counties to help implement SLM techniques. Team members became Technical Advising Professionals certified by SLM and were able to help support food service staff. Score cards were completed at five different schools. Once focus areas were identified **Let's Eat Healthy!** and food service staff worked together to implement changes. Signs were created to give the fruits and vegetables unique names. School mascot entrée identification signs encouraged students to try new entrée options. Nutrition Corners displaying student artwork, healthy eating, and how to be physically active were created and exhibited in the lunchroom to bridge the gap between the food served and the nutrition lessons taught in the classroom. **Let's Eat Healthy!** also collaborated with Roseville City School District food service staff, who received a Team Nutrition Grant to implement SLM. Together we are working to bring about positive changes in both Woodbridge Elementary and Kaseberg Elementary lunchrooms.



IMPACT

The food service manager at First Street School in Lincoln displayed one of the new school mascot entrée identification signs to highlight tostadas, a less popular item. She ended up selling out of the tostadas and attributed it to the signage. The children could see the sign as they were waiting in line and all wanted the tostadas on "Tostada Tuesday." On a typical day they would have sold out of the other option, pizza, since it is a fan favorite. The manager said that she will now use the signage to highlight new entrees or less popular ones.





PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

ISSUE

The *Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans* outlines the recommendations for physical activity needed each day for adults and children. Adults should do at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity each week, and include muscle-strengthening activities on two or more days a week. Children and adolescents should do 60 minutes or more of physical activity each day. In Placer and Nevada Counties less than 27 percent of children and teens (2-17) are physically active for at least an hour everyday. Fourteen percent of adults aged 20 and over reported they had no leisure-time physical activity other than their regular jobs.

WHAT WAS DONE

In the spring of 2016, the UC CalFresh Nutrition Education Program introduced Zumba into 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 a four week series, adults and their children at Consolidated Programs and Assessment in Roseville were invited to participate in 20 to 30 minutes of Zumba at the end of each nutrition lesson.

Zumba was also featured at all four of the UC CalFresh Family Fun Health Fairs in April and May. Both children and adults had fun dancing to the upbeat music, not even realizing all the physical activity they were getting. Some even stayed to participate in both Zumba sessions offered at the fun fair.

IMPACT

Over 125 adults and children participated in Zumba during classes and at the fun fairs from March through May 2016. They increased their physical activity and had fun at the same time. Parents and children reported their enjoyment of being physically active and having more energy. Adults at Consolidated Programs and Assessment asked for more Zumba classes in the future. Parents at the fun fairs requested Zumba classes for their children as a way to keep them physically active.



Students get physically active during Zumba as part of the 2016 Bell Hill Academy Family Fun Fair.



A student from the Cirby Family Fun Fair enjoys some water after participating in Zumba with her new fruit and vegetable friends.



ADULT EDUCATION



Auburn Chapa-de participants compare unit prices during a grocery store tour.

“This class has helped me learn how to prepare healthy and nutritious food for my family and save money at the same time.”

*—UC CalFresh Participant,
Placer County*



Child Advocates of Placer County participated in a UC CalFresh training called “Eat Great with MyPlate!”

Advocates were so excited about the information they learned, they asked staff for additional workshops for advocates and their youth.

ISSUE

The 2015–2020 Dietary Guidelines are designed to help Americans eat a healthier diet. The Dietary Guidelines outline how people can improve their overall eating habits. This can be challenging for all Americans but is even more so for over 69,000 adults in Placer and Nevada Counties who qualify for CalFresh.

WHAT WAS DONE

The UC CalFresh Nutrition Education Program taught series-based nutrition workshops to eligible families using research based curricula. The series *Plan, Shop, Save & Cook* focuses on planning nutritious meals and shopping on a budget. *MyPlate for My Family* emphasizes nutrition education based on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and promotes physical activity. *Eat and Play Together* is a nutrition and fitness curriculum for parents and their children. The audiences reached include participants from Consolidated Programs and Assessment in Roseville, Mothers in Recovery in Roseville, Chapa-de in Auburn and Grass Valley, and CalWorks in Auburn and Rocklin.

Nutrition lessons on food safety, fruits and vegetables, mindful eating and fats were taught at the Placer County Auburn and Rocklin WIC offices.

At the Auburn Interfaith Food Closet, monthly tastings of low-cost, nutritious foods were offered to clients. These tastings demonstrated how to create healthy meals utilizing the foods given out at the food closet.

UC CalFresh also conducted a training for the Child Advocates of Placer County about MyPlate and sugar-sweetened beverages. Adults participated in a measuring activity to figure out the amount of sugar in popular beverages. The Child Advocates will use this knowledge to help empower foster youth to make healthy choices.

IMPACT

Over 300 adults sampled a healthy dish at the Auburn Interfaith Food Closet. Over 125 parents attended UC CalFresh classes at the Placer County Auburn and Rocklin WIC offices. Over 115 parents participated in the *Plan, Shop, Save & Cook* workshops. A retrospective survey was given to participants at the end of the series.

- 71 percent of participants now read the Nutrition Facts Label to make food choices.
- 54 percent of participants now plan meals ahead of time.