



HEALTHY HABITS, TOO

IMPLEMENTATION MANUAL



IMPORTANT GUIDELINES FOR PHOTOCOPYING

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FOREWORD

In the United States today, three out of 10 youth are overweight or obese, and many of these youth may face serious health problems at some point in their lives, including diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, cancer and asthma. Although the childhood-obesity problem has become an epidemic in the past few decades, there are steps we can take to reverse this trend.

We know that young people today do not eat enough nutrient-rich foods. According to the [2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans Report](#), the top sources of calories for children and adolescents are grain-based desserts, pizza and beverages. And the average American child spends about seven-and-a-half hours a day watching TV and movies, using cell phones or computers, or playing video games. With increased access to fast foods, frequent snacking and eating-on-the-go, larger portion sizes, fewer home-cooked meals, sedentary lifestyles and more “screen time” — youth today are less healthy than ever before.

The [Let's Move!](#) campaign, initiated by First Lady Michelle Obama, is fighting the obesity epidemic by engaging schools, families and communities to positively impact the health of youth. Boys & Girls Clubs of America's sponsors and partners, The Coca-Cola Company and the WellPoint Foundation, have committed to championing these national efforts through their ongoing support of Triple Play: A Game Plan for the Mind, Body and Soul. This national initiative takes a holistic approach to helping young people balance good nutrition, becoming more active and developing positive relationships.

Healthy Habits is the “Mind” component of the Triple Play strategy, and this new resource guide builds on and enhances the original program launched in 2006. Through small-group learning experiences, Boys & Girls Club members aged 6 to 18 will learn to develop positive attitudes and behaviors related to nutrition and fitness.

We urge you to incorporate Healthy Habits, Too into your Club's programming. We challenge you to work with other community agencies to join the nationwide fight against childhood obesity. We all have a role in making sure our young people adopt lifelong, healthy lifestyles that include a daily practice of nutritious eating and physical activity.



Jim Clark
President and CEO
Boys & Girls Clubs of America

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IMPLEMENTATION MANUAL

PROGRAM BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

TRIPLE PLAY: A GAME PLAN FOR THE MIND, BODY AND SOUL

Triple Play: A Game Plan for the Mind, Body and Soul is a dynamic Boys & Girls Club initiative that demonstrates how eating nutritious foods, keeping fit and forming positive relationships add up to a healthy lifestyle for Club youth. Healthy Habits is the “Mind” component of Triple Play. An emphasis on eating smart and maintaining physical fitness is geared toward improving the overall well-being of Club members.

Through the support of The Coca Cola Company and the WellPoint Foundation, BGCA has developed this new resource guide to build on and enhance the original Healthy Habits program launched in 2006. Like the activities in the original program, these enhancement experiences are dynamic, interactive and encourage open discussion.

As Club professionals, you can use these enhancement activities to continue to teach youth to understand nutrition and make better food choices. You can engage members in daily physical activities for the health of their growing bodies and demonstrate the fun in staying fit. The Healthy Habits program is designed to:

- Teach young people about the benefits of healthy habits such as eating smart and being physically active.
- Equip young people with skills to adopt healthier habits by participating in fun and engaging learning activities both at the Club and at home.
- Encourage young people to take small steps toward positive behavior change.

FORMULA FOR IMPACT

BGCA’s Formula for Impact is a research-based theory of change that describes how individual Clubs and the Movement as a whole will increase our impact — exponentially — on the young people of America. Each element of our Formula for Impact incorporates research into the ways that young people grow and thrive, as well as analysis of the best practices and traditions of highly effective Clubs.

Our Formula begins with the young people in Clubs. It calls for us to consistently provide the most powerful Club experience possible — by implementing the Five Key Elements for Positive Youth Development, offering high-yield activities, providing targeted programs and encouraging regular attendance — all of which we know help youth achieve priority outcomes.¹ Because studies have shown that attending the Club more frequently and over a longer period of time makes young people even more likely to achieve positive outcomes², it also is important to pursue strategies for increasing attendance, program participation and member retention.

GREAT FUTURES START HERE

FORMULA FOR IMPACT

YOUNG PEOPLE WHO NEED US MOST



OUTCOME-DRIVEN CLUB EXPERIENCE



PRIORITY OUTCOMES



FIVE KEY ELEMENTS FOR POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

•
HIGH-YIELD ACTIVITIES

•
TARGETED PROGRAMS

•
REGULAR ATTENDANCE



ACADEMIC SUCCESS
Graduate from high school ready for college, trade school, military or employment



GOOD CHARACTER & CITIZENSHIP
Be an engaged citizen involved in the community, register to vote and model strong character



HEALTHY LIFESTYLES
Adopt a healthy diet, practice healthy lifestyle choices and make a lifelong commitment to fitness

OUTCOMES OF THE TRIPLE PLAY INITIATIVE

In 2009, BGCA conducted an evaluation with Youth Development Strategies, Inc. to measure the impact of the Triple Play initiative on the habits of participating youth. The program was found to improve youth’s knowledge of nutrition and their engagement in healthy habits and, in addition, it proved helpful in preventing the decline in eating nutritious foods that typically comes with age. The evaluation revealed several interesting findings about the success of the Triple Play program.

Impact on different racial and ethnic groups. White and African-American youth benefited more from participating in the program than Hispanic youth. This is particularly noteworthy, because Hispanic youth are at greater risk for obesity than other groups of young people.

Impact on girls. Participation in Triple Play had a significant impact on the physical activity of girls (who are typically less active than boys are). Girls who took part in Triple Play are now engaging in about two hours more physical activity a week than those who did not. Girls also gained a greater sense of mastery and control than non-participants did. This is significant, because a high level of mastery for girls is linked with lower levels of depression.

Impact on at-risk youth. The program had more impact on the most at-risk youth; those who were the least active, unhealthy eaters were more significantly impacted than their peers who already had basic healthy habits.³

RATIONALE FOR THE HEALTHY HABITS, TOO RESOURCE GUIDE

Health of Children and Adolescents Today. Childhood obesity in the U.S. has tripled in the past three decades, and studies show that nearly one in three children today is overweight or obese.⁴ These children are at great risk for health problems later in life, including diabetes, heart disease or high-blood pressure. The rise in childhood obesity is due, in part, to the increase in fast-food eating, more snacking, larger portion sizes, fewer home-cooked meals, more sedentary lifestyles and more “screen” time — watching TV and movies, using cell phones and computers and playing video games. Recent studies show that youth in the U.S. continue to have eating and fitness behaviors that are less than ideal. For example:

- More than three-fourths of high-school students do not eat enough fruits and veggies.
- More than half of children ages 2 to 17 do not eat enough fiber.
- Eighty-five percent of adolescent girls do not consume enough calcium.
- Nearly one-fourth of adolescents (ages 12 to 19) do not eat breakfast.⁵

These snapshots point to the ongoing and critical need to help youth develop better nutrition and fitness habits.

Childhood Obesity Task Force Recommendations. The *Let's Move!* campaign, launched in 2010 by First Lady Michelle Obama, is designed to address the childhood obesity epidemic in America. President Obama established a task force to develop a *strategy and action plan*, including 10 steps parents can take to help kids become healthier.

1. **Decrease Screen Time.** Decrease children’s screen time to less than two hours per day.
2. **Encourage Physical Activity.** Make sure kids get 60 minutes physical activity every day.
3. **Walk or Bike.** Encourage kids to walk, ride a bike, run or ride a scooter between home, school and after-school activities.
4. **Provide Access to Recreational Sites.** Take kids to local parks and community sites.
5. **Check Childcare Activities.** Make sure childcare programs include physical activity.
6. **Stay Informed.** Use websites to find science-based nutrition information.
7. **Learn about Food Labels.** Learn to read and understand nutrition labels to make decisions about food choices easier.

8. **Reinforce Key Messages.** Reinforce these messages with children and teens every day:
 - Balance energy intake with energy output.
 - Drink water and low-calorie/no-calorie beverages as much as possible; moderate intake of beverages with calories.
 - Reduce the intake of calories from solid fats and added sugars.
 - Eat more fruits, vegetables, whole grains and lean proteins.
 - Choose low-fat or fat-free dairy products (such as one-percent or skim milk).
9. **Teach Kids about Nutrition.** Teach kids how to use the ChooseMyPlate.gov food-system, which encourages eating well-balanced meals, choosing appropriate portion sizes and selecting nutritious foods.
10. **Make the Most of Mealtimes.** Make mealtimes an event. Instead of eating out, find a kid-friendly, nutritious recipe the family can cook together.⁶

2010 Dietary Guidelines. The U.S. Department of Agriculture and Department of Health and Human Services released revised dietary guidelines for Americans in 2010. The report found that all Americans need to reduce their intake of calories, increase physical activity, reduce solid fats and added sugars, consume more nutrient-rich foods (such as vegetables, cooked dry beans and peas, fruits, whole grains, nuts, seeds, seafood, fat-free/low-fat milk products) and consume moderate amounts of lean meats, poultry and eggs. Americans, but particularly America's youth, have diets that are high in energy but low in nutrients. For example, children and adolescents aged 2 to 18 years get most of their energy from grain-based desserts (cakes, cookies, doughnuts, pies, granola bars, etc.), pizza (all types), soda, sports drinks and energy drinks. The new 2010 guidelines call for the following actions for children and teens:

- Balance energy intake with energy output.
- Have fewer hours of screen time.
- Participate in more hours of active play.
- Greatly reduce intake of sugar-sweetened beverages.
- Increase intake of vegetables and fruits.
- Drink smaller amounts of fruit juice (especially for overweight children).
- Consume smaller portions of foods and beverages.
- Eat meals from fast-food restaurants infrequently.
- Eat breakfast habitually.⁷

Physical Activity Guidelines for Youth. In 2008, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services issued Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, which provide science-based recommendations to help kids aged 6 years or older improve their health through physical activity. The guidelines recommend that children and adolescents should have 60 minutes or more of physical activity daily.

- **Aerobic.** Most of the 60 or more minutes a day should be either moderate- or vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity and should include vigorous-intensity physical activity at least three days a week.
- **Muscle-strengthening.** As part of 60 or more minutes of daily physical activity, children and adolescents should include muscle-strengthening activity at least three days a week.
- **Bone-strengthening.** As part of 60 or more minutes of daily physical activity, children and adolescents should include bone-strengthening activity at least three days a week.⁸

OVERVIEW OF HEALTHY HABITS, TOO RESOURCE GUIDE

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The program contains the background information, step-by-step plans and handouts you need to teach sessions and conduct activities on 10 topics. Sessions are designed for four age groups: 6-to-9-year-olds, 10-to-12-year-olds, 13-to-15-year-olds and 16-to-18-year-olds.

Generally, each lesson and activity takes about 30 minutes for 6-to-9-year-olds and about 45 minutes for older youth. You can shorten or lengthen the time frame according to the needs and interests of your group. Lessons cover the following topics:

- **Lesson 1: Choose A Healthy, Balanced Plate!** The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) [MyPlate](#) is the federal government’s new icon that serves as a reminder for Americans to make healthy food choices. Similar to MyPyramid, the [MyPlate](#) icon uses a simple plate as a visual cue to help consumers adopt healthy eating habits consistent with the [2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#). In this lesson, young people learn the basic principles of the [ChooseMyPlate.gov](#) food system and the five food groups.

Note: Please conduct this lesson first. Teaching about the [ChooseMyPlate.gov](#) food system and how to follow it provides an important foundation for conducting the other lessons in this program. You may want to allow extra time to teach this lesson and conduct the activity. After you teach the [MyPlate](#) lesson, you may teach the other lessons in any order.

- **Lesson 2: Stamp Out Portion Distortion.** Members become more aware of portion sizes — the amount they choose to eat — compared to serving sizes defined by the nutrition facts food label and amounts recommended by USDA’s [ChooseMyPlate.gov](#). They also learn about “portion distortion,” which is eating amounts of foods and beverages that are too big for their body size, too big in relation to the amounts of other foods and beverages they have in a day or too big for the amount of physical activity they do.
- **Lesson 3: Power Your Body and Brain with Breakfast.** This lesson teaches youth about the benefits of eating breakfast, including whole-grain options.
- **Lesson 4: Power Snacking.** Members learn to distinguish “energy-rich” snacks that provide energy from “nutrient-rich” snacks that provide important nutrients.
- **Lesson 5: Pick Up on Produce — Fruits and Veggies.** Many young people (and adults) fall short on eating recommended amounts of fruits and vegetables. This lesson teaches youth to try a variety of fruits and veggies from all the different color groups.
- **Lesson 6: Fluids and Hydration.** In this lesson, members begin to understand the importance of water and hydration.
- **Lesson 7: Building Healthy Bones and Teeth.** The eating, exercise and oral hygiene habits young people establish now may last a lifetime. In this lesson, members learn how to keep their bones and teeth strong and healthy.

- **Lesson 8: Your Body — All Systems Go!** Members learn about the important jobs different body parts perform and how to keep them in top condition.
- **Lesson 9: Focus on the Food Environment.** This lesson helps youth learn about different types of food cues and how they affect when and what they eat.
- **Lesson 10: Eating Away from Home.** This lesson helps members learn to make healthier choices when purchasing foods at fast-food restaurants, school cafeterias, vending machines and convenience stores.

Note: The introduction to each lesson forms the foundation of the activity. The material may be very familiar to some youth, or it may be too advanced for others. Because you know your Club members best, you can adjust the level of the material to their experience, interest and developmental level. Be sure to engage children and teens frequently by calling on their experience. Keep your talking to a minimum: a general rule of thumb is to make sure youth have at least two to three minutes of processing, engagement or application time for every 10 minutes of information you present to them.

LESSON FORMAT

Each lesson includes tools to make it easier for you to teach youth about the topic.

- **Objectives.** Each session is designed to meet specific objectives for each age group.
- **Materials.** Materials needed to conduct the activity are listed at the start of each session.
- **Resources and Handouts.** A listing of resources and handouts details the materials you need to prepare for and facilitate the lesson (all necessary resources and handouts follow immediately after the lesson directions).
- **Advance Preparation.** Steps for preparation are detailed at the start of each lesson.
- **Key Teaching Points.** To guide you in teaching youth about the topic, each lesson summarizes key points, the important lessons youth will take away from the session. Adapt the level of detail you provide to the age and learning level of the group.
- **Leading the Activity.** Step-by-step guidelines are included for leading the activity.
 - *Warm-up Exercise* — To promote physical activity during each session, lead the kids in at least one warm-up exercise and review the benefits of physical activity. Choose an idea from the Get-Moving Exercises list (on page 16 of this Implementation Manual), come up with your own idea or ask kids to think of creative ways to get moving.
 - *Introduction* — Each lesson provides step-by-step instructions to help you prepare for and conduct the lesson. It is a good idea to read the lesson carefully a few days in advance, so you will have time to prepare.
 - *Group Learning Activity* — The group learning activity is the core of each session, the time when youth practice, develop or demonstrate what they have learned. The activities are age-appropriate and designed to be fun while reinforcing key concepts.
 - *Individual Application* — Brief application activities follow the group activity, giving youth a chance to apply learning in their own lives. They also promote small steps toward adopting healthy habits.
 - *Snack Time* — During snack time, youth share new learning and insights.

- *Take-home Challenges* — At the end of each session, you will find suggested challenges for participants to do at home before the next meeting. These challenges reinforce what members have learned about healthy eating and physical activity.
- **Additional Resources.** Additional websites are listed at the end of each lesson for finding more information on the lesson's topic.

ONLINE RESOURCES

BGCA has reviewed all websites and deems them appropriate for Club staff and members; however, cited links to other sites may not meet the same standards. Most links are not affiliated with host sites and might contain objectionable material. Some sites may request personal identifying information from users. Please keep in mind that the content of websites changes constantly, so you may not always be able to find a referenced resource, and you should screen any websites before allowing Club members to visit them. Club staff should closely supervise youth when they use the Internet. To ensure safety and appropriate use of your Club's computers, we encourage you to develop and adopt an Acceptable Use Policy. This policy should outline specific guidelines and procedures for staff and members to follow, including securing written permission from parents or guardians for their children to use the Internet at your Club and requiring members to complete an orientation to Internet use prior to receiving access. For guidance on creating an Acceptable Use Policy, visit the [Club Tech Planning Resources](#) section of [bgca.net](#).

GENERAL FACILITATION TIPS

LEADING THE ACTIVITIES

Before an Activity. You will have more success if you do the following before each lesson:

- **Review the Activity.** Review the activities and become familiar with the issues yourself, including key terms used.
- **Prepare Youth.** Before beginning the activities with youth, you may want to spend a few minutes telling them what they will be doing and why, asking questions to see how much they already know and introducing key terms in language they understand.
- **Gather Materials.** Be sure all materials are available before beginning each activity.

During an Activity. While conducting the activities/lessons, be sure to:

- **Establish Ground Rules.** Make it clear what behaviors will be acceptable and what behaviors will not be acceptable by setting ground rules and reinforcing them as necessary.
- **Be Patient.** Keep in mind that some activities will be difficult for some youth and easy for others. Encourage, challenge and support youth, but do not push them.
- **Take Advantage of Learning Opportunities.** Be ready for the “teachable moment” and use it to further understanding of the concepts.

After an Activity. At the end of each activity or session, it is a good idea to do the following:

- **Provide Closure.** Give youth a chance to reflect on what they have learned after each activity and discussion.
- **Evaluate the Activity.** Consider whether the objective of the activity was accomplished and try to understand why it was or was not.

UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF RACE, GENDER, ETHNICITY, CULTURE AND POVERTY IN HEALTH HABITS

As you encourage Club members to develop healthy habits related to nutrition and physical activity, it is important at the same time to understand the influences that may be at play in their eating and fitness choices. We know that the prevalence of childhood obesity varies with different groups of children, and the reasons for these differences are complex. It is clear that race, gender, ethnicity, culture and socioeconomic factors all play a role. The following are some of the factors to be aware of as you work with various groups of children and youth.

- **Access to Nutritious Food Options.** Lower-cost foods make up a greater percentage of the diet of lower-income families. Race and ethnicity also play a role in access.
 - Predominantly African-American neighborhoods have six times more fast-food restaurants when compared to predominantly white neighborhoods.⁹
 - Predominantly African-American communities have 52 percent and Hispanic neighborhoods have 32 percent of the supermarkets that are available in predominantly white neighborhoods.¹⁰
 - Compared to even the most impoverished white neighborhoods, African-American neighborhoods are 1.1 mile further from the nearest supermarket.¹¹

- **Socioeconomic Factors.** The cost of buying nutrient-rich foods is a significant barrier for families in lower-income groups: one recent study based on the U.S. Department of Agriculture Thrifty Food Plan found that buying nutritious foods can cost as much as 35 to 40 percent of an American low-income family's food budget.¹²
- **Stress.** Stress, which can relate to poor eating habits, may be higher for families living with limited resources or families living in poverty. Stress also can result from discrimination by race or ethnicity or from the pressures experienced by foreign-born families trying to navigate two cultures. Recent studies have found a connection between health and neighborhood factors — such as unemployment, crime physical decay, noise, heat, pollution — that contribute to stress for those living in urban areas.¹³
- **Body Image.** Body image in youth often is influenced by parent's attitudes. For example, white mothers' ideas about appropriate weight can influence their daughters' weight and dieting behaviors. In contrast, Latinas tend to prefer a lean body for themselves, but a plumper figure for their children.¹⁴
- **Cultural Pressures.** Some immigrant families, in trying to fit into the mainstream American culture, may discard their traditional foods and adopt the higher-calories foods, beverages and snacks they see advertised on TV. For example, school-age youth from immigrant Mexican families often reject the more nutritious traditional foods served at home and pressure their parents to switch to foods from mainstream culture.¹⁵
- **Exposure to Food Ads.** One study found that exposure to food-related ads on TV (with fast-foods as the most frequent advertiser) was 60 percent higher among African-American children than children of other races. Exposure to food marketing, then, may be related to culture. Marketing strategies, in fact, often target specific ethnic groups.¹⁶
- **Lifestyle Choices.** Another study found periods of TV watching highest among African-American children (an average of nearly six hours daily), then Hispanic children (about five-and-a-half hours daily), followed by white children (about three-and-a-half hours daily). Research has shown that the number of hours spent watching television or engaged in other sedentary activities is linked to overweight and obesity.¹⁷
- **Role-models for Physical Activity.** Children tend to model the physical activities their parents exhibit. For example, parents in a culture that views rest after a long work day as healthier than exercise are less likely to have children who understand the importance of physical activity. In a recent study, less than half of African-American adults (49 percent) and Hispanic adults (47 percent) reported engaging in some type of leisure-time physical activity on a regular basis (and only 20 percent of those living in poverty).¹⁸
- **Perception of Risk.** Culture also may influence how parents view obesity. For example, studies have found that many Latino mothers of obese children believe them to be healthy and are unconcerned about their weight. At the same time, these parents believe that obese children in general should get help for weight loss. Among African-American parents, there is not as much awareness of obesity as there is other serious health conditions.¹⁹
- **Access to Health Care.** Culture also affects families' use of health services. For example, higher proportions of Latinos lack health insurance (33 percent compared to 17 percent of the general population) or transportation to healthcare providers — making it less likely that they will use healthcare services.²⁰ Some cultures may have values that are in conflict with healthcare practices — beliefs about the causes and cures of illness, the stigma attached to certain illnesses or the types of interactions that are considered appropriate or acceptable between patients and providers.

ECONOMIC FACTORS

The families of some Club members may struggle with economic issues or other factors that make certain foods unavailable to them. As you teach these lessons, please be sensitive to this possibility and adjust the talking points, activities and food examples accordingly.

No one should go hungry. If it appears that a Club member needs food assistance, consider contacting the parent or caregiver to offer information about the many Nutrition Assistance Programs provided by the [U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service](#).

Club staff members are encouraged to visit this website, too. In addition to information for providing food for families, the Food and Nutrition Service can help Clubs partner with other agencies in the community to apply for federal programs that provide after-school snacks, summer lunches and other healthy benefits for members.

RESPONDING TO DIFFERENT AGE GROUPS

Activities in this Resource Guide are geared specifically to youth in the targeted age group. You may, however, want to divide the group of 6- to 9-year-olds, for example, into two smaller age groups. Because there is such a difference in interest, reading level and maturity between a 6-year-old and a 9-year-old, having two groups may be more effective. With the youngest children (6-year-olds), you will have to assist with reading, simplify the language you use and eliminate terms they may not understand.

Youth in the 10- to 12-year-old group present a challenge, especially when it comes to working in groups. This is a time when youth in this age group are developing identity, so peer influences are particularly strong. They may be reluctant to share personal experiences, attitudes or feelings. Give them time to get comfortable and encourage them to speak, but do not force them if they are reluctant.

Youth in the 13-to-15 and 16-to-18-year-old group respond well to performance-based activities such as drama, dance, video, music and anything that involves use of computers.

HELPING FAMILIES IN NEED

Feeding America. Through the continued partnership between BGCA and Feeding America (formerly America's Second Harvest), many Clubs across the country have connected with local food banks to provide meals and snacks to hundreds of members and their families. Programs such as Kids Cafe and the Backpack Program are allowing many Clubs to serve daily hot meals and send food items home to sustain families over weekends and during school vacations.

Feeding America secures donations from the food and grocery industries, government agencies, individuals and other organizations. Donated food is moved through member food banks to where it is most needed. Member food banks ensure the safe storage and reliable distribution of donated goods to local charitable agencies; food is provided to people in need through food pantries, soup kitchens, youth programs, senior centers and emergency shelters.

Boys & Girls Clubs of America is committed to helping Clubs make sure they are equipped with the knowledge and resources to help provide food to children and families in need. Clubs are encouraged to use the **Food Bank Locator** to find food banks serving their communities.

USDA Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). During the school year, many children receive free and reduced-price breakfast and lunch through the School Breakfast and National School Lunch Programs. What happens when school lets out? Hunger is one of the most severe roadblocks to the learning process. Lack of nutrition during the summer months may set up a cycle for poor performance once school begins again. Hunger also may make children more prone to illness and other health issues. The Summer Food Service Program is designed to fill that nutrition gap and make sure children get the nutritious meals they need.

USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). The Child and Adult Care Food Program plays a vital role in improving the quality of day care and making it more affordable for many low-income families. Each day, 3.2 million children receive nutritious meals and snacks through CACFP. This program also provides meals to children residing in emergency shelters, as well as snacks and suppers to youth participating in eligible after-school care programs.

INVOLVING PARENTS

Parents play a crucial role in the ways youth view nutrition and fitness — and in the ways they form lifelong habits. It is important to keep them involved and informed about what their children are doing in the program. The only way to involve parents is to reach out to them; parents are more interested in becoming involved if they know and trust the advisor and feel as if they are kept up to date on Club events.

- Please distribute copies of the Program Participation Letter to Parents and the Parental Permission/Food Allergy Waiver Form (found on [page 20](#) of this Implementation Guide) to each member before the beginning of the program.

- Encourage each member to discuss any possible food allergies with his or her parent(s), ask the parent(s) to sign the waiver and return it to the Club before the program begins.
- It is good practice for you to continue contact with parents on a regular basis throughout the implementation of the Healthy Habits program.

SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES

Boys & Girls Clubs of America’s mission is to enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, caring, responsible citizens. BGCA believes in the power of strengthening families. Deliberate and sustained efforts by Clubs to ensure that parents and caregivers have the necessary opportunities, relationships, networks and supports to raise their children successfully benefits the entire family.

Family PLUS. BGCA recognizes that the more we can help the family unit as a whole, the greater the impact we have on the child. Our ongoing work to strengthen families helps us achieve this mission by ensuring that America’s youth have strong, engaged families to help them reach their full potential. Seeking to empower and strengthen adults in their roles as parents, nurturers and providers, Family PLUS works on the premise that broad-based support will enhance family stability, develop caregiver competencies and promote the healthy development of children.

Triple Play Parents Game Plan. Young people not only eat several meals a day at home, but also learn eating habits from parents and caregivers. BGCA’s Triple Play Parents Game Plan engages parents by teaching them about making smart food choices, keeping active and forming positive relationships.

BGCA’s current strategic plan calls on the Boys & Girls Club Movement to strengthen families through program opportunities, training and recognition, with the ultimate goal of increasing our effectiveness in Clubs and communities.

HELPING YOUTH MOVE TOWARD CHANGE

Change is a process, and every individual experiences it differently. You can begin to help young people make changes in their health choices and habits by encouraging them to:

- **Take small steps.** Make sure youth understand that change does not happen overnight. Trying to change too much too quickly can hurt their chances of success. Suggest to youth that they take small steps, one at a time. By paying attention to changes and writing them down, youth can see the progress they are making.
- **Pay attention to current eating and activity habits.** Suggest that youth use a food and activity journal for several days to get a good picture of their habits: their food choices, their activities and their feelings. They can then review their journals to see important patterns: are they skipping breakfast, getting enough fruits and vegetables, being physically active every day or eating when they are stressed? For help keeping a food and activity diary, check out the [ChooseMyPlate.gov SuperTracker](https://www.choosemyplate.gov/supertracker), which provides an individualized assessment of food intake and physical activity. This tracking tool automatically calculates energy balance by

subtracting the energy expended from physical activity from food calories/energy intake. This tool can help youth better understand their energy balance and the link between nutrition and regular physical activity.

- **Set realistic goals.** Suggest that youth start first by moderating the different types of beverages they consume. Suggest increasing consumption of no- and low-calorie options. Then, set a few more goals, like eating more fruits or getting more physical activity each day.
- **Identify barriers.** Help youth identify their particular obstacles to making healthier choices. Is the food at school high in fat and added sugars? Are there non-nutritious foods at home that are too hard to pass up? Encourage them to identify the problem areas and develop a plan for change that addresses the barrier.
- **Ask for support.** Having a friend at school or someone at home to support the new habits can help youth make changes and stick with them.
- **Stay positive.** Encourage youth to focus on the goal, which is to feel, look and be healthier. Accept that they may not always do it perfectly, but can keep going if they do not give up.

GET-MOVING EXERCISES

As part of each lesson, lead members in doing one or more of the following warm-up exercises for at least five to 10 minutes. Longer is even better!

Each time, review or quiz the members on the following facts about physical activity:

- Kids and teens need at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day. It is fine to total up your 60 minutes in smaller chunks of at least 10 minutes throughout the day.
- Physical activity helps you feel great! It also helps you stay at a healthy weight and helps reduce your risk for health problems in the future.
- Any physical activity is great: walking or jogging, dancing, kicking a soccer ball, shooting baskets, jumping rope, playing tag, playing catch with a softball or football, playing Frisbee®, working out with exercise equipment, playing with a hula hoop, doing jumping jacks, doing shadowboxing or kickboxing, doing stretching or yoga, doing knee lifts or arm circles, doing strengthening exercises (wall presses, push-ups, pull-up, sit-ups, or lunges) and walking up and down stairs.

Introduce these fun activities to Club members to get them moving!

BOBSLEDDING BODIES

This is a team relay. Form teams of four to six players. Teams sit in a line and wrap their legs around the person in front of them. Place masking tape about 10 to 15 feet away from where teams are sitting to mark end line. When you say “go,” teams use only their hands to slide their way to the end. If a team breaks apart, it must get back together before continuing.

BUMPER TAG

This is just like regular tag, but instead of tagging with their hands, youth must tag with their hips. Be sure to remind players that all that is needed is a little bump. (Nobody should purposely be knocked to the ground.)

CIRCLE BASEBALL

Divide the group into two teams and give one member on each team something to throw. Teams form a circle around the person with the object. That person throws the object and then runs around the circle saying everyone’s name. If he or she makes it around the circle, it counts as a run. At the same time, the other team is chasing the object. Team members form a line behind the first one to get the object; they then pass it between their legs until it reaches the last person, where it is then passed overhead back to the first person in line. Once the object gets back to the first person, the team yells out and the other team stops counting runs. Teams alternate throwing and catching.

CROCODILE RACE

Form teams of four to 10 players. Each team stands in a straight line. One person is the leader, and all of the others on the team put their hands on the shoulders of the person in front of them. The team crouches down, forming the crocodile. Races can be to a certain point and back or whatever the space allows.

DRAGON RACE

Form two equal lines with players in a single file line. Each player reaches his left hand through the legs and grabs the right hand of the person behind. This forms the Dragon Chain. The object of the game is to have each dragon run around a given point or person and back to a designated spot without breaking the chain. Any time a team breaks, they have to run back and start over.

FIRE ON THE MOUNTAIN

Have group members lay flat on their backs. When you say “fire on the mountain,” youth are to stand up as quickly as possible. The last one up has to do 10 jumping jacks, push-ups or sit-ups. When lying on their backs, they are to lie perfectly still. If you say something other than “mountain” and someone flinches or begins to get up, he or she must do the jumping jacks.

HUMAN PINBALL

Everyone stands in a circle facing outward except one player, who is the “dodger.” Have players in the circle stand with their legs spread and feet touching the person beside them. Instruct them to bend and swing their arms between their legs. The goal is for them to become “flippers” and hit the dodger with a ball (the “pinball”). The dodger tries to avoid being hit. The person who hits the dodger with the ball gains a point and becomes the next dodger. The dodger gains a point each time the ball goes outside the circle.

INDY FIVE HUNDRED

Group members sit in a circle and call off numbers one through four. Assign each number a name of a car (for example, ones are Porsches, twos are Ferraris, etc.). When you call out a car name, all players with those cars have to get up and run around the circle. There is a twist to this game: each car has something wrong with it. For example, a car can have a *flat tire* (the player has to hop around on one foot), it can run out of *gas* (the player has to crab walk), or it can have *no muffler* (the player has to run while making noise).

PYRAMID PIGGYBACK

Divide the group into teams of eight to 10 people. If possible, have an even number of players on each team. Line teams up at one end of the playing area. The relay simulates a wilderness trip, where the team first carries a canoe, then climbs a mountain and finally backpacks home. When you say “go,” each team selects one person to be the canoe. All other team members form two lines facing each other and link arms. The “canoe” lies down on the row of arms and the team runs while carrying the “canoe” down to the other end of the “wilderness.” When they get there, all team members but one form a pyramid and the single team member climbs over the “mountain.” In pairs, teammates then take turns “backpacking” (piggybacking) each other back to the starting line.

SHARK AND OCTOPUS TAG

Everyone begins the game as an octopus and stands on one side of the playing area. One person is chosen to be a shark and stand in the middle. Play begins when the shark calls out, “Octopus, Octopus, swim in my ocean!” All players must run across the playing field trying to get to the other side without getting tagged by the shark. Anyone who is tagged must sit down where tagged. They now become the shark’s helpers. When the shark calls out “Octopus, Octopus, swim in my ocean!” again, the players try to run back to the other side. Anyone who runs within arm’s reach of the sitting players and gets tagged must sit down. The game continues until there is only one person left.

SNAKE’S TAIL

Group members line up single file and place their hands on the shoulders of the person in front of them. When you say “go,” the person in the front of the line tries to catch the person at the back of the line, without breaking the line. Rotate the group from front to back or back to front for each round of play. Once each group has caught its own “tail” once or twice, have them try to catch the tail of a different “snake.”

ULTIMATE KEEP AWAY

This game is similar to the tradition game of Keep-Away, but much more fun. There are two teams, each with an identifying tag (yellow vs. purple bandanas, for example). You throw several balls into the group, and whoever catches a ball must throw it to a teammate. Anyone tagged by a person on the other team while still holding a ball must go to jail — players must keep throwing the balls to fellow teammates as quickly as possible. The ball keeps moving, players keep going to jail — every so often, you can call “jail break,” so players can resume play.

PROGRAM PARTICIPATION LETTER TO PARENTS

This letter is intended to inform parents, guardians and other caregivers about their child's participation in the Healthy Habits program and to encourage their support of your endeavors. Re-type the following letter, filling in the information in parentheses with your Club's information, print it out on Club letterhead and distribute to member's caregivers.

(Club logo here)

(Insert your Club's name here)

Healthy Habits Program

Dear *(Caregiver name)*:

(Insert member's name) has chosen to take part in the Healthy Habits program at the Club. This program is part of Triple Play: A Game Plan for the Mind, Body and Soul, a dynamic Boys & Girls Club initiative that demonstrates how eating nutritious foods, keeping fit and forming positive relationships add up to a healthy lifestyle for Club youth. Healthy Habits is the "Mind" component of Triple Play, and its goal is to encourage youth to eat smart and maintain physical activity as a way to improve their overall health and well-being. Program experiences will teach Club members about the benefits of good nutrition and physical activity, equip them with the skills and knowledge they need to adopt healthier habits and encourage them to take small steps toward positive behavior change.

Because the program uses a team approach that involves Club staff, peer leaders, parents and community representatives, we are sending this letter to all parents and caregivers to ask for your help in making this program a success. There are a number of ways you can be of assistance and we would appreciate anything that you can do help make Healthy Habits even more effective.

For example, *(member's name)* may wish to talk to you about some of the topics we will address, including: good nutrition, physical activity, healthy breakfasts, snacking smart or eating away from home. Anything you can do to help prepare youth for making positive choices would be greatly appreciated!

We thank you for your time and your support. Our success at *(your Club's name)* begins at home.

Sincerely,

(Your name here)

PARENTAL PERMISSION/FOOD ALLERGY WAIVER FORM

The purpose of this form is to obtain the permission of parents, guardians and other caregivers for their child to participate in the Healthy Habits program and to learn of any food allergies members may have. Re-type the following form, filling in the information in parentheses with your Club's information, print it out on Club letterhead and distribute to member's caregivers.

(Club logo here)

(Insert your Club's name here)

Permission/Food Allergy Waiver Form

Healthy Habits Program

Member Name _____

I give permission for my child to participate in activities of the Healthy Habits program. I understand that the program involves some food tasting and frequent snacks.

My child **does not** have any food allergies.

My child **does** have food allergies (listed below).

Signature of Parent or Guardian _____

SAMPLE GRANT FUNDING PROPOSAL

For assistance and samples of Grant Funding Proposals, see bgca.net.

CLUB BEST PRACTICES

BASKETBALL BINGO/FRISBEE® TIC-TAC-TOE

Area:	Parent Involvement
Ages:	10 to 12 (and parents)
Materials:	Bingo cards, index cards, one ball for each pair of students, cones and pencils (for Basketball Bingo); nine Frisbees® in two colors, four jump ropes or nine Hula hoops (for Frisbee Tic-Tac-Toe)
Preparation Time:	Two hours
Delivery Time:	30 to 45 minutes
Club Name:	Bella Vista Unit
Organization:	Boys & Girls Clubs of Benton County, Ark.
Contact:	Kari Fletcher, 479-273-7187, kfletcher@bgcbentoncounty.org

The Bella Vista Club developed a program to allow family members to learn about Triple Play and participate in a fun activity with Club youth. The goal was to help family members leave with an understanding and a desire to incorporate good nutrition and physical activity into their lives. Club members and family members played two different games, enjoyed a snack together during a brief presentation about Triple Play, then had 30 to 45 minutes of free time so parents could see what other activities their child enjoyed at the Club.

Frisbee® Tic-Tac-Toe. This game provided fun engagement for youth and family members.

- A large game board was created using jump ropes or Hula hoops (four jump ropes to form nine squares or nine Hula hoops to form nine circles).
- Two or more participated on a team. Each team had a set of different colored Frisbees®.
- A player from Team 1 threw his or her Frisbee®, attempting to land it in an open square on the game board.
- A player from Team 2 did the same.
- The team to finish the tic-tac toe first (horizontally, vertically or diagonally) signaled the start of a new game.

Basketball Bingo. A more active game kept everyone involved and engaged.

- Youth worked in pairs. Each was given a basketball and a bingo card — four squares by four squares (to represent four bounce and four chest passes with various repetitions).
- Cones were spread out throughout the gym. Under each cone was a task card with directions (for example, seven bounce passes) and a pencil.
- Pairs traveled to a cone together, tipped it over and looked at the task card. If the amount and type of pass was written on their bingo card, they placed an “X” in that square. They then completed the task by performing the proper amount of bounce and chest passes. (Even if the task was not on the card, they still had to complete the task.)
- Pairs continued this process until they had four “X”s vertically, horizontally or diagonally.

CHAMPIONS OF HEALTHY HABITS

Area:	Easy Snack and Meal Ideas
Ages:	All ages
Materials:	Paper, Smoothie ingredients, coloring sheets, crayons
Preparation Time:	30 minutes each day
Delivery Time:	30 minutes each day per program
Club Name:	Romulus Clubs — Merriman Site
Organization:	Boys & Girls Clubs of Southeastern Michigan
Contact:	Tiffany Motsch, (734)697-8863, tmotsch@bgcsm.org

In all of their Club programs, the Romulus Clubs have incorporated healthy ideas regarding eating and cooking. Participants in the SMART Girls program made Smoothies, (banana, strawberry and raspberry). Participants in Kids in Control had a lesson in the five food groups and appropriate portion sizes. Staff members made these experiences fun, and held contests at the end for more excitement. The Club also had a walking club every morning: youth walked either in the gym or outside, keeping track of their laps. A free lunch consisted of nutritious snack food for the entire group. During the YEA Program (Youth Enrichment Activities), staff members distributed coloring sheets, activities and other games that encouraged nutritious eating and healthy living.

LIGHTS ON AFTERSCHOOL

Lights On Afterschool builds support and raises awareness of afterschool programs that keep youth safe, inspire them and benefit families and communities. This initiative is part of the Afterschool Alliance, which is dedicated to ensuring that all children have access to affordable, quality afterschool programs.

CHANGING FAMILY HABITS

Area:	Parent Involvement
Ages:	All ages
Materials:	None
Preparation Time:	None
Delivery Time:	None
Club Name:	Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Washington
Organization:	Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Washington, D.C.
Contact:	Stuart Michie, 202-540-2342, smichie@bgcgw.org

The Boys & Girls Club of Greater Washington developed a special handout to send home with Club members that detailed how parents could help their children stay healthy and active. The flyer explained ways to change family eating habits by developing a nutritious food plan, reducing foods high in fat, salt and added sugars, eating more whole grains, serving a variety of fruits and vegetables, substituting flavored water for sodas, including youth in food preparation and eating together at the table instead of in front of the TV. The flyer also stressed the importance of physical activity, summarized the physical activity guidelines for Americans and suggested creative ways to stimulate interest in physical fitness.

COOKING 101

Area:	Food Program Partnerships
Ages:	6 to 9, 10 to 12
Materials:	Volunteer assistance from local Cooperative Extension, nutritious snacks, variety of fresh fruits and vegetables, gardening tools, room suited for classroom-style teaching that can accommodate a large group (with a sink nearby)
Preparation Time:	Two weeks
Delivery Time:	Two months (one hour a day, one day a week)
Club Name:	Boys & Girls Club of El Dorado County, Western Slope
Organization:	Boys & Girls Club of El Dorado County, Western Slope, Calif.
Contact:	Deneisa Jamerson, 530-863-8753 (ext. 107), byefaithalone@gmail.com

The Boys & Girls Club of El Dorado partnered with two groups, Cooperative Extension and UAMS Area Health Education Centers South Arkansas (AHEC)/ and Project TOUCH (Tremendous Opportunities for Union County Health). Both groups provided educational and nutritional programming for the Club during the summer. Cooperative Extension came to the Club once a week and ran programs with members aged 6 to 9 and 10 to 12.

Cooperative Extension held a weekly nutrition class for all Club members aged 6 to 12. In each class, youth learned about kitchen safety and how to prepare nutritious meals that were age appropriate. There is a garden on site that was planted and maintained by the children. Cooperative Extension taught youth about the different vegetables and allowed them to harvest vegetables to take home.

AHEC/Project TOUCH allowed the Club to use their CATCH (Coordinated Approach to Child Health) program as a companion to the Club's Healthy Habits program for the 6-to-9 age group. This program provided visual aids to enhance the nutrition lessons in the Healthy Habits program. This group also provided other resources such as a tabletop vending machine, test tubes that show fat content in popular foods, plastic foods in proper portion sizes and super-sized portions, animated nutrition activity sheets, restaurant menus and sporting equipment for physical activity.

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SYSTEM

The Cooperative Extension System, a division of the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture, is a national educational network of local and regional offices that provide useful, practical and research-based information on food and agriculture to agricultural producers, small-business owners, youth and youth-serving organizations, consumers and others in rural areas and communities of all sizes. (To find an office in your area, visit [Cooperative Extension System Offices](#) on the USDA site.)

COOKING AND GARDENING

Area:	Food Program Partnerships
Ages:	6 to 9, 10 to 12
Materials:	None
Preparation Time:	None
Delivery Time:	One hour
Club Name:	Franklin Unit and Riverside and Chegwin Extensions
Organization:	Boys & Girls Club of Fond du Lac, Wis.
Contact:	Karissa Steffes, 920-924-0530, steffesk@fonddulac.k12.wi.us

The Fond du Lac Clubs partnered with the University of Wisconsin Extension Program and the Wisconsin Nutrition Education Program (WNEP), which provided programming during the school year and the summer. During the school year, WNEP offered programming for three of the Club's after-school program sites (six times at each of the three sites, programming with two different grades).

Cooking Class. During the summer WNEP conducted a cooking class and allowed the Club to bring 10 of its teen members to each class. Youth learned how to make nutritious meals and were able to bring back the recipes to share them with the Club. UW Extension also ran a program called "Junior Master Gardeners." Ten of the Club's fourth- and fifth-graders went weekly to UW Fond du Lac throughout the summer, where they planted and harvested a garden and used the food they harvested to make nutritious snacks.

Special Events. WNEP also took part in the Club's special events. They had a booth at the "Lights On Afterschool" event and a multicultural fair. For both events, WNEP brought nutritious snacks and helped families learn how to make the snacks at home. They also took part in the Club's "Parents as Teachers" events, in which the Club partnered with the local school district to host family nights for youth ages 8 and under.

COOKING CLUB

Area:	Easy Snack and Meal Ideas
Ages:	All ages
Materials:	Microwave
Preparation Time:	One hour
Delivery Time:	One hour
Club Name:	Orion/Oxford Club
Organization:	Boys & Girls Clubs of Southeastern Michigan
Contact:	Katie Rose, 248-365-5000, krrose@bgcsm.org

During the school year, the Orion/Oxford Club ran a once-a-week Cooking Club program. Members signed up in advance so Club staff knew how much food needed to be purchased, and they charged a \$2 program fee to help cover the costs. They restricted the number of members participating to about 10 to 12, because of limited kitchen facilities. Most weeks, they cooked a meal or a snack that members could replicate at home, but sometimes they made more difficult items so members could experience preparing and trying new foods. The Club also taught members

how to make homemade or more nutritious versions of common, kid-friendly foods (like pizza or macaroni and cheese). Each evening's recipe was distributed to participating members. Members also enjoyed bringing favorite recipes from home to share and try.

Club staff began each session with a discussion of a different topic related to cooking or nutrition. The first week, they reviewed kitchen rules and helped members realize that there are many dangerous things in the kitchen. They discussed guidelines for the proper handling of food. (The Club is licensed by the county as a food-service facility, so it was important that members followed health-department regulations when preparing food). Other topics included nutrition, measurements, common cooking terms and table manners.

The Club also invited guest chefs to come to the Club and cook with youth, and they had dietitians present to the group and speak to youth about nutrition. A typical Cooking Club menu included meals such as:

- Week 1: Breakfast for dinner
- Week 2: Homemade chicken fingers with sweet-potato fries
- Week 3: Tacos with beans and Spanish rice
- Week 4: Scary Eats and Yummy Treats
- Week 5: Tofu stir-fry
- Week 6: Sandwiches
- Week 7: Thanksgiving dinner
- Week 8: After-school snacks
- Week 9: Homemade chili and cornbread
- Week 10: Christmas Party

COOKING WITH THE CHEF!

Area:	Easy Snack and Meal Ideas
Ages:	10 to 12, 13 to 15, 16 to 18
Materials:	Ground turkey, sauce, noodles, butter, garlic, herbs (various types), 8" x 8" baking pans (metal or disposable), cheese (low-fat), egg whites and onions
Preparation Time:	25 minutes
Delivery Time:	One hour
Club Name:	Matilda R. Wilson Boys & Girls Club of Auburn Hills
Organization:	Boys & Girls Clubs of Southeastern Michigan
Contact:	Lekita M. Jones, 248-852-1336, ljones@bgcsm.org / mbrown@bgcsm.org

Boys & Girls Clubs of Southeastern Michigan invited a local chef to cook healthy meals with Club members. The Club partnered with Chef Robert, owner of several local restaurants in the metro Detroit area, and he provided members with a cooking lesson at a local church. Members learned how to cook turkey lasagna, and the chef offered informa-

tion on calories, fat and cost. He also talked to members about giving back to the community and the importance of service. Club members had a great time, learned how to cook a nutritious meal and took home a recipe to their parents that the whole family could enjoy.

FAMILY FALL FESTIVAL

Area:	Parent Involvement, Teen Peer Leaders
Ages:	13 to 15, 16 to 18
Materials:	Cooking equipment, food for dinner, Healthy Habits curriculum, Microsoft Word (and Publisher software, if available)
Preparation Time:	One hour of pre-planning in advance; two to three hours of additional preparation on the day of the festival
Delivery Time:	Two to three hours
Club Name:	Haslam Family Club University (formally Caswell)
Organization:	Boys & Girls Clubs of the Tennessee Valley, Tenn.
Contact:	Christina Baker Smith, 865-248-1135, cbakersmith@bgctnv.org

The Haslam Family Fall Festival has been held annually each November. Teen Club members worked with staff to plan and create a dinner for parents. Club members met with staff four times during October and November to plan the event. Between 12 and 15 members participated in the pre-planning and in the festival itself. Members learned about healthy foods from the Healthy Habits curriculum, then applied their new learning to create a nutritious, delicious menu for the festival. Staff members also included information about cooking safety and food preparation.

Club members issued invitations to the festival, inviting their parents and immediate family. In addition, Club members set the tables with cloth napkins and tablecloths, and were asked to wear more formal clothing. Club members prepared all the food items for the festival, and several members were assigned to serve parents. All cooking was finished by the start of the festival so that Club members, parents and staff could sit together and enjoy the meal.

FITNESS CHALLENGES

Area:	Healthy Habits throughout the Club
Ages:	All ages
Materials:	Microsoft Excel (to track weight loss/body fat); prizes, facts and trivia about weight loss
Preparation Time:	None
Delivery Time:	None
Club Name:	Haslam Family Club University (formally Caswell)
Organization:	Boys & Girls Clubs of the Tennessee Valley, Tenn.
Contact:	Christina Baker Smith, 865-232-1135, cbakersmith@bgctnv.org

Based on the premise that staff members should lead by example, the Haslam Family Club conducted staff fitness challenges. These friendly competitions ran for three months in two different formats.

The Biggest Loser Contest. Staff paid a \$5 entry fee to participate in the contest. During the last 30 minutes of each day, staff members led Club youth in a group aerobic activity. Guest speakers were invited to the Club for staff members to interact with as well. Healthy tips, snacks and websites were posted weekly for staff to read and investigate. Staff members also started a walking club with members and taught them how to use pedometers. Ultimately, Club members and staff walked together a certain number of minutes each week. Staff members were weighed weekly, and the “biggest loser” won the entry fee money. The winner lost 19 pounds in three months.

2010 Staff Summer Fitness Challenge. In order to involve staff members who were interested in both weight loss and fitness, the fitness challenge was introduced. A free \$25 gift card was offered to all staff interested in participating. Staff members were weighed every pay day from the start to the end of the summer break. The weight loss of the top three was posted. In between each pay day, a fitness challenge was offered. Fitness challenges included completing an activity log that was verified by Club members or bringing in a healthy recipe to share with other staff. Staff members competing in the fitness challenges won smaller prizes such as cookbooks or exercise equipment.

HEALTHY HABITS ALPHABET

Area:	Healthy Habits throughout the Club
Ages:	All ages
Materials:	Magazines, newspapers, scissors, glue, poster board and markers
Preparation Time:	15 minutes
Delivery Time:	30 minutes
Club Name:	Carl and Alleen L.V. Williamson Boys & Girls Club (Russellville)
Organization:	Boys & Girls Clubs of the Arkansas River Valley, Ark.
Contact:	Cartha Canada, 479-968-7819, ccanada@suddenlink.net

The Russellville Club wanted an activity that would help participating members decide which activities were healthy and which foods were nutritious. The large group was divided up into smaller, equal-size groups. Each team was given a stack of magazines, newspapers, scissors, glue, a marker and a piece of poster board. Leaders challenged them to create a “Healthy Habits Alphabet” using the materials provided. The alphabet was represented with pictures and labels, and could include foods, activities or attitudes that are healthy. For example, “A” could be illustrated with an apple, “B” could be bicycling, “S” could be smiling, etc. When teams were finished, each poster was presented and displayed in the Club so that other members and parents could be inspired to choose healthy foods or activities.

HONOLULU SHUFFLE WALKING PROGRAM

Area:	Other
Ages:	All ages
Materials:	Pedometers, laptop computer for calculations, ethnic food, decorations (leis, grass skirts, pictures, etc.), water games, information on Hawaii, volunteers for food preparation, decorating and cooking
Preparation Time:	For the day of event, about 20 hours of cook, prep and decoration time (with 10 to 15 volunteers and summer-camp staff)

Delivery Time: The walking lasted the entire eight weeks of camp (with one hour a day for collecting and calculating the number of miles walked)

Club Name: Herbert Hoover Boys & Girls Club

Organization: Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater St. Louis, Inc., Mo.

Contact: Renee J. Bell, 314-335-8201, reneeb@bgcstl.org

Herbert Hoover Boys & Girls Club is in its second year of a summer-camp walking program. Last year's program, featuring a Hawaii theme and called "The Honolulu Shuffle," was a successful first-time endeavor. Over the course of seven weeks, approximately 300 children (with some assistance from staff), walked a total of 4,286 miles — equal to the journey from St. Louis, Mo. to the shores of Hawaii. The miles per week walked were:

Week 1: 685
Week 2: 740
Week 3: 662
Week 4: 795 (staff included)
Week 5: 410
Week 6: 559 (staff included)
Week 7: 435
Total: 4,286

Weekly calculations were done by two college senior interns, who collected data from the pedometers. (Over the course of the summer, the Club did misplace a few miles each week and relied at times on mileage collected by the counselor's pedometers.)

Tuesdays and Thursdays were designated walking-outside days (unless it rained). When this occurred, youth walked in the gym or danced for the 30 minutes of lunch period. After walking the 4,000-plus miles, campers were given a true Luau experience along with carnival fun. They were also treated to a Luau meal: Huli Huli chicken, pineapple rice, poppy-seed coleslaw (prepared by a teen cooking team), macaroni salad and juice. Dessert was a combination of selected fresh tropical fruits — mangos, papayas, bananas, coconuts and pineapple (including grilled pineapple). The Snak Shak offered a soda made in Hawaii that is not made with corn syrup, but with actual sugar cane instead. Youth also had fruit, assorted breads, sugar cane for seeing and tasting and a Hawaiian dessert called "Haupia."

MAKING CONNECTIONS FOR HEALTH

Area: Food Program Partnerships

Ages: All ages

Materials: Local town map, oven, stove, food, recipes, etc.

Preparation Time: One to three days

Delivery Time: One to two hours

Club Name: Boys & Girls Clubs of Chaffee County

Organization: Boys & Girls Clubs of Chaffee County, Colo.

Contact: Tara Skubella, 719-539-9500, ts.bgccc@yahoo.com

Boys & Girls Clubs of Chaffee County partnered with the community's Livewell Coalition, an organization focused on educating and bringing awareness of healthy living lifestyles to Colorado communities. Through the partnership, Livewell helped support the Club's Healthy Habits program by providing funding, materials and resources. As a result, the Club has committed to offering at least one fresh fruit or vegetable choice a day during snack time, helping local children increase their daily fresh-fruit or vegetable intake.

Both Clubs also included a special Healthy Habits session in the summer that concentrated on mapping food supplies. Participants began by pre-mapping local food supplies in the community. Then, during the 10- to 12-week session, members learned about new food sources — such as the local farmers market, community farms, health-food stores, etc. — in order to expand their awareness of buying local healthy produce. Participants also prepared recipes from produce and local food sources to be used as program and/or Club snacks. At the end of the session, participants re-mapped any new community food sources they learned about. Each session ended with a Healthy Habits graduation ceremony.

The program was a great way to expand awareness that food does not just come from a can at the local Walmart or grocery store. It also was a good way to introduce local fruits and vegetables into youth's daily diet.

MARVELOUS MEALS

Area:	Games and Activities, Parent Involvement, Healthy Habits throughout the Club, Food Program Partnerships, Easy Snack and Meal Ideas
Ages:	All ages
Materials:	Food
Preparation Time:	Varies
Delivery Time:	Varies
Club Name:	Bellingham Club
Organization:	Boys & Girls Clubs of Whatcom County, Wash.
Contact:	Christine Destry, 360-738-3808, cdestry@whatcomclubs.org

The Bellingham Club's Marvelous Meal Program offered Club members a nutrition-balanced meal, not just a snack, every day the Club was open. The program was made possible by significant community partnerships as well as through developed programs within the Club. The bulk of the Club's food resources came from a local food bank, which offered something different every month. Club staff members were creative in improvising recipes in order to use whatever provisions the local food bank provides. The Club had a few other related programs.

Dirty Onion Garden Club. A garden club, called "The Dirty Onion" Garden Club, offered members a chance to play a role in the growth of a garden — a process that takes a little but gives a lot in life lessons and knowledge. The majority of what the Club grew was donated to the food bank that provided food for the meal program. To best prepare Club-wide meals, Club staff encouraged all members to come and "at least try a small serving" and sit down, relax and visit with staff. Virtually everyone gathered together and staff members modeled attention to manners, appreciation for what we have and learning how and why food is so critically important to all of us.

Family Fun Nights/Sunny-side Up Club! Once a month, the Club invited families to come to the Club for play. Youth proudly shared the Club with their families, and a meal was provided for all. On Family Fun Nights, members had a chance to feel pride in the Club, to teach and show their parents “how we do it here.” During the summer months, the Club extended the food program to include breakfast (the Sunny-side Up Club!) and two additional snacks during the day.

FEEDING AMERICA

Through the continued partnership between BGCA and Feeding America, many Clubs across the country have connected with local food banks to provide meals and snacks to hundreds of members and their families. Find the food bank that serves your local community by using the food locator at [Feeding America](#).

PARTNERSHIP FOR HEALTH

Area:	Healthy Habits throughout the Club, Easy Snack and Meal Ideas
Ages:	All ages
Materials:	Access to a kitchen, Healthy Habits curriculum, food and recipes
Preparation Time:	Two to three days
Delivery Time:	Six weeks
Club Name:	Thomas H. Lutsey Boys & Girls Club
Organization:	Boys & Girls Club of Green Bay, Wis.
Contact:	Johanna Wicklund, 920-494-7090 x 1012, jwicklund@bgcgb.org

The Green Bay Club partnered with the local university’s Community Nutrition Class. College students studying to become registered dietitians volunteered their time in the Club’s snack program and weekly Teen Cooking Club. The course instructor gave students credit for volunteering in the Club setting, and students gained a depth of experience by developing nutritious snack menus, designing and implementing cooking-club lesson plans for older youth, and facilitating Healthy Habits lessons. Club members enjoyed having opportunities to interact with college students and developed an awareness of college and career opportunities through the partnership.

TASTES LIKE CHICKEN-RATS SLAMWICH

Area:	Games and Activities
Ages:	All ages
Materials:	“Tastes Like Chicken,” “Rats,” “Slamwich” card games; food and ingredients for chicken-stir fry; various cheeses and grapes; ingredients for turkey sandwiches
Preparation Time:	Games — five minutes; food rewards — 30 minutes
Delivery Time:	Games — one hour; food rewards — one hour
Club Name:	Fauver-Martin Club
Organization:	Boys & Girls Clubs of Southeastern Michigan
Contact:	Jeanette Kwiatkowski, 313-868-8450, jkwiatkowski@bgcsm.org

The Fauver-Martin Club created a Healthy Habits Card Game League. In the gamesroom, members played card games with food themes:

- “Tastes Like Chicken” — an Uno matching game
- “Rats” — a counting game
- “Slamwich” — a matching, collecting game

Members played in a league setting and earned points to attend a Healthy Habits food party. The parties were designed to offer a healthy reward opportunity. Winners of the “Tastes Like Chicken” participated in a chicken-stir-fry party. “Rats” winners participated in a cheese-and-grapes-tasting party. “Slamwich” winners participated in a turkey-sandwich-making party. Members of the Teen Healthy Habits Program assisted with food preparation and serving.

TASTES OF THE WORLD

Area:	Easy Snack and Meal Ideas
Ages:	All ages
Materials:	Microwave, measuring cups/spoons, cutting board, prep knives (to be used only by staff and/or parent volunteer), mixing bowls (three sizes), member folders for recipes and activity sheets, paper products (plates, bowls, cups), plastic utensils, hand mixer or blender, whisk, serving spoon, grater, serving bowl and platter, file folders, crayons, pencils, markers, paper and basic ingredients such as oil, vinegar, salt, pepper and flour
Preparation Time:	Three days
Delivery Time:	One to 1½ hours
Club Name:	Mystic-Healey Unit
Organization:	Boys & Girls Clubs of Middlesex County, Mass.
Contact:	Jennifer T. Pascual, 978-944-6101, JPascual@kidsclubs.org

Tastes of the World was a bi-weekly, 20-week program for members aged 6 to 9 that exposed them to different recipes and foods from members’ and staffs’ diverse ethnic and/or cultural backgrounds. Staff members worked with youth and their families to create easy-to-make (and nutritious) versions of their families’ favorite meals. These recipes were designed to be easy for members to make (either on their own or with the supervision of an adult), with little or no actual cook time. Any actual cooking was done with a microwave. Members also learned about the nutritional value of all the ingredients through age-appropriate activity sheets. In addition to preparing food, staff worked with each member to create a craft or activity that represented their ethnic and/or cultural backgrounds.

The concept of this program was for members to gain a sense of independence, learn healthier eating habits and explore different cultures through taste and traditions. It provided members an opportunity to share their pride and their customs with peers. At the end of the 20 weeks, members received recipe and activity books and had a food-tasting party with all the recipes for their families.

Prep Week. Club staff and one program participant (who rotated throughout the program) completed basic preparations during prep week:

- Each member met one-on-one with Club staff to pick a dish from his or her culture.
- Club staff members worked with youth to research dish.
- Staff and youth reviewed recipe ingredients and researched nutritional values.
- A day or two before the program day, staff and youth did a test-run of the recipe.

Program Week. Staff and youth of the week led the program for all participants:

- Staff and youth for that week introduced the country and culture of their dish.
- They chose a craft or activity from the culture.
- There was a discussion/explanation of that day's recipe and its nutritional values.
- Youth created the recipe.
- Everyone enjoyed the meal together!

TRIPLE PLAY 5K

Area:	Games and Activities
Ages:	All ages
Materials:	Triple Play 5K posters and record-keeping charts, staff training materials (for health/fitness/safety), a track or measured route, invitations, flyer, press release, medals and participation certificates
Preparation Time:	One initial staff training, weekly staff update meetings (15 to 30 minutes each), plus 11 weeks fitness training (½ to one hour daily)
Delivery Time:	One half to one hour daily for fitness training and education plus four hours for the 5K event (one hour for set up, two hours for the event and one hour for clean up)
Club Name:	J.A.M.S. Clubhouse
Organization:	Boys & Girls Clubs of Santa Monica, Calif.
Contact:	Janis Morse, 310-394-2582 (ext. 233), Janis@smbgc.org Nadia Fellows, 310-496-8800, nadia@smbgc.org

During the summer months, the J.A.M.S. branch of the Boys and Girls Club of Santa Monica conducted a Triple Play 5K program as a way to promote a healthy outlook and daily physical activity throughout the Club. The Club designed a program that allowed everyone to participate regardless of their individual physical condition. The program included fitness, nutrition and healthy-living education and a daily physical activity that culminated in a 5K Walk/Run event at the end of the summer. The physical activity component built participants' abilities throughout the summer as they worked toward being able to circle the running track many times over, increasing their strength, enhancing their endurance and stretching their abilities. By gradually increasing the distance over an 11-week period, each participant was encouraged to develop and build their stride at their own pace.

- Week one of the training began by working toward completing one lap around a one-quarter mile track every day and an overview of fitness and nutrition tips that included the importance of stretching, hydration and fitness safety.
- During week two, the distance was increased to two laps.
- This pattern continued for 12 weeks and culminated in a 5K Walk/Run event at the end of summer.
- All members and staff were especially encouraged to participate in the daily training sessions led by the playing field coordinator.

What made the program strong was the fact that members, staff, other Clubs, families and friends were able to participate in the daily training sessions and final event. This helped foster a strong sense of community. The Club also participated in a Relay for Life event in the community, which provided an opportunity to help raise money for the American Cancer Society, while gaining additional training on the track.

RELAY FOR LIFE

The American Cancer Society Relay for Life® is a 24-hour relay event that gives everyone individuals and communities a chance to celebrate the lives of people who have battled cancer, remember loved ones lost and raise awareness about the disease. Teams camp out at a local high school, park or fairground and take turns walking or running around a track or path for 24 hours. For more information, visit [American Cancer Society Relay for Life®](#).

Members tracked their progress and maintained momentum through the use of a Triple Play 5K poster that kept a tally of the total laps completed. Weekly email blasts were sent out and helped build excitement at other Club branches. Club staff invited the community, board members, administrative staff and other Club branches to participate in the 5K Walk/Run event. Members' parents were especially invited to participate or cheer on their children as they tried to reach the goals set for the summer. Each participant received a medal and certificate of completion at the event. Music, refreshments and a big celebration were all part of the 5K Walk/Run event.

In addition to the Triple Play 5K Walk/Run project, the Boys and Girls Club of Santa Monica partnered with the Los Angeles Food Bank to provide healthy meals to members free of charge. Through the food vendor, [Revolution Foods](#), kids received a daily healthy meal and snacks that consisted of whole grains, vegetables, protein, fruit and milk. There was even a vegetarian option available.

YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT

Area:	Other
Ages:	All ages
Materials:	Paper and pencils
Preparation Time:	Five minutes
Delivery Time:	15 to 30 minutes
Club Name:	McKinney Unit
Organization:	Boys & Girls Clubs of Benton County
Contact:	Kari Fletcher, 479-273-7187, kfletcher@bgcbentoncounty.org

The McKinney Unit used a pre- and post-food log for the Healthy Habits program (in conjunction with the program's pre-test and post-test.) Food logs encouraged Club members to write down what they ate for breakfast, lunch, dinner and snack over the period of time they were participating in the program. At the end of the session, they compared the pre-food log to the post-food log to see if their eating habits had improved.

ZUMBA® RHYTHM DANCING

Area:	Games and Activities
Ages:	All ages
Materials:	None
Preparation Time:	One hour
Delivery Time:	One hour
Club Name:	Boys & Girls Club of Vernon
Organization:	Boys & Girls Club of Vernon, Texas
Contact:	Veronica Medina, 940-923-8785, soldier781@yahoo.com

The Boys & Girls Club of Vernon created a rhythm-dancing fitness program, which was held for one hour three times a week. A local Zumba® instructor came to the Club to teach approximately 15 to 20 participants in each class. Members learned easy-to-follow moves and multi-cultural rhythms. Youth received an exciting, rewarding and beneficial workout — and they had fun dancing. Participants were excited every day to come in and dance. The program was a great success for the fitness program at Boys & Girls Club of Vernon and for the whole community. (For more information, visit [Zumba® Fitness](#).)

NOTES

Implementation Manual

1. *Five Key Elements for Positive Youth Development*: BGCA worked with the nationally recognized Search Institute to review relevant research and to study highly effective Clubs. Through Club visits and interviews with managers, program staff, teens and community leaders, we identified the five key elements that determine the level of impact a Club makes on the development of young people. *High-yield activities*: The research of Dr. Reginald Clark has demonstrated that high-achieving students spend more time engaged in activities that reinforce the skills and knowledge they learn in school. "Enhancing the Educational Achievement of At-Risk Youth," an evaluation of BGCA's national education strategy, Project Learn, confirms the effectiveness of using such high-yield activities in Boys & Girls Clubs. (See Schinke, S. P., Cole, K.C. & Poulin, S.R. "Enhancing the Educational Achievement of At-Risk Youth," *Prevention Science*, Vol. 1, No. 1 [2000].) *Targeted programs*: BGCA offers many national programs that are designed to help young people achieve our priority outcomes of Academic Success, Good Character and Citizenship and Healthy Lifestyles. Many of BGCA's targeted programs have been evaluated for their effectiveness. See the [Proving Impact](#) section of bgca.net for a complete list of program evaluations. Some of BGCA's targeted programs also have been deemed "evidence based" by the federal government.
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Lesson 2: Stamp Out Portion Distortion

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