

2015 Healthy Helper Award Summary

fitUnited Healthy Helper Awards provided up to \$1,500 to partner agencies to help them meet best practices in the areas of physical activity and nutrition. To be eligible, fitUnited partner agencies served children aged 0 to 12, completed the best practices Customized Menu, and planned to implement programming around increasing physical activity and healthy eating.

Twenty-three partner agencies applied, and three were selected: PLEA, The Brashear Association, and Oak Hill Resident Council of Housing Opportunities Unlimited.

PLEA

Program: Implemented a ten week health and wellness program focused on physical activity and nutrition.

Note: Ten week program will be completed mid-November.

Number of Youth Impacted: All 35 children enrolled at PLEA.

Program Highlights:

- Nick Fischer of Fischer Nutrition assisted with development of nutrition education and healthy cooking demonstrations sessions. PLEA connected with Nick Fischer at the Kids of STEEL Lunch and Learn.
- Sent healthy stir fry kits home with all children to make with their parents.
- Planning future healthy cooking demonstrations with whole family due to success of cooking demonstrations done with children.
- Shared nutrition and physical activity information with parents.
 - *Purchased pedometers to track physical activity and was able to let one mother know that son did 4,000 steps during a 45 minute physical activity session. Mother was concerned about son's physical activity level because of weight gain.*
 - *Parents received weekly letter explaining food children tried and whether or not they enjoyed it*
 - Purchased scooter basketball which leveled the playing field and got more children involved in physical activity.



The Brashear Association

Program: Planted vegetable and herb garden to provide healthy snacks, ingredients for cooking classes, and produce for the neighborhood.

Number of Youth Impacted: Over 100 youth and numerous family and community members.

Program Highlights:

- Attended the Grow Pittsburgh Lunch and Learn to learn about starting a community garden
- Garden exposed children to new vegetables and got them to try new things.
 - *Recently Na'Shai asked what the leafy green plant was in the garden after explaining that it was spinach she then asked what we could do with it. This provided a great opportunity to discuss many ways she could incorporate it into meals and the helpful things it does for our bodies. We pulled off a couple leaves and tried it together straight from the garden bed. Having never had spinach in this form before she eagerly tried and soon pleaded for more spinach and other items from the garden.*
 - *Edwin, an extremely picky eater is our current extreme case of healthy food aversion. If it is green he won't touch it, if it smells different he won't touch it. I recently had him assist me in harvesting the greens for a snack. He warned that he would help but he would not eat. I made quesadillas with large amounts of greens, he was skeptical but tried. He loved it! When his mother was told this story she was shocked and wanted to know how we were able to do that with her picky eater.*
- Garden helped students develop a better understanding of where their food is coming from and how they can use it.
- The garden is located on Warrington Ave, a high traffic street in the neighborhood, which has gotten community members involved as well.
- Planning ahead to Spring 2016 planting season.



Oak Hill Resident Council



Program: Youth participated in Growing Through Gardening and physical activity programs.

Number of Youth Impacted: 33 youth

Program Highlights:

- Provided enrichment activities to at-risk youth who would not normally have access to opportunities like African dance and drum, kayaking, gardening, cooking class, healthy snacks, and soccer.
 - *One of our youth made the statement that celery was his favorite vegetable, but at home he rarely gets to eat them!*
- Growing Through Gardening brought the community closer together and promoted intergenerational learning.
- Many of the youth had never gardened before, and being in the program taught them responsibility, and how to plan and maintain a garden.
 - Youth commented their favorite part of gardening was weed pulling because it relived stress and they could be playfully destructive



