Grillin’ with My Grandchild: Blending Educational Topics for Greater Impact
James S. Bates, PhD,* Tammy Jones, MEd** and Michelle Treber, LD, MA,***

INTRODUCTION
Being an involved grandfather means participating in various activities with grandchildren. Not only do grandfathers benefit from meaningful interaction with their grandchildren in the area of well-being (Bates & Taylor, 2012; Carpenter, 2015), but potential impacts on grandchildren include developing a deeper sense of family identity and being the focal point of love and nurturance.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION
Grillin’ with My Grandchild (GWMG) is a 3-session program. A different theme is woven throughout the educational discussions and activities of each session. Session themes are: The Present, The Past, and The Future. Each session is about 2 hours. It brings grandfathers and grandchildren together to learn about healthy relationships and lifestyle habits.

Family members participate in activities that involve the creation of an electronic memory book using tablet computers and grilling food.

During the first half of the session, a family relations specialist leads a brief instructional discussion about building strong grandfather-grandchild relationships.

During the second half of the session, a nutrition specialist provides educational instruction in healthy food grilling, nutrition, and food safety topics. The culminating activity occurs when grandfathers and grandchildren work together to prepare their nutritious meals over a grill.

PROGRAM GOALS
1. enhance grandfather-grandchild relationships
2. encourage communication and understanding across the generations
3. increase feelings of positivity and care for the other
4. increase youth’s and elder’s knowledge of healthy food grilling and food safety

LESSONS LEARNED
Improving Partnerships: GWMG provided an opportunity for educators to work with community partners to offer the program. Partners provided resources such as, site location, program promotion, and accessibility to new participants. The program allowed us to network among Educators who are offering the program throughout the state to expand impact and improve the program. GWMG teaches across two of the three “Healthies,” Healthy People and Healthy Relationships, making for a well-rounded program.

Improving Practices: GWMG improves effective technology use among youth and adults by incorporating tablet technology. It also models appropriate uses of technology.

REFERENCES
