

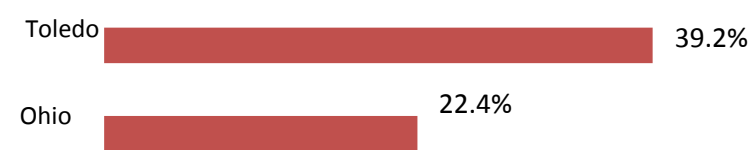
OSU Extension Lucas County-Helping to Break Community Silos to Empower Homeless Youth

Felicia Lonas, Alberto Hernandez-Pedroza, Patrice Powers-Barker, Amy Stone, Friendly Center, Toledo Public Schools (TPS), BeInstrumental

INTRODUCTION

According to US Census Bureau statistics, 435,393 residents live in Lucas County and 111,016 are family households. An estimated 33.2% of children live in poverty and 25.5% are food insecure. Studies established a link between poverty, hunger and homelessness. Toledo, a city in Lucas County, is home to an estimated 282,313 residents where poverty among children is a concern.

Children living in poverty in the City of Toledo*



Founded in 1923, the Friendly Center, a non-profit faith based agency was established to provide a source of hope for residents in North Toledo. Friendly Center's Executive Director, Amelia Gibbons, saw a need to empower homeless youth with basic nutrition education and additional enrichment activities.

At a community function, Amelia shared her thoughts with Felicia Lonas, Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) Specialist on reducing organizational silos to assist homeless youth and a partnership was created. Friendly Center worked closely with Toledo Public Schools (TPS) and received a grant to implement Sound Knowledge a project designed to address needs specific to homeless 3rd to 5th grade students. Activities would address topics such as education, hunger and enrichment opportunities. Sherman Elementary, Pickett Elementary and Birmingham Elementary in the TPS district were identified to have the greatest percentage of homeless youth and ideal to pilot Sound Knowledge.

Sound Knowledge Objectives:

- Participants increase willingness to try new healthier foods
- Participants have improved attitudes about education
- Participants demonstrate their musical knowledge

OSU Extension's EFNEP, a free grant funded program, would provide the nutrition education component and report findings on the following: Increase knowledge or skill(s) on diet/nutrition, increase knowledge or skill(s) on keeping food safe and increase knowledge or skill(s) on the benefits of increasing physical activity.



Serving North Toledo since 1923, the Friendly Center provides a major source of hope for the community. This is best conveyed in their purpose statement- No neighbor will go hungry, feel alienated, alone or powerless.

* www.City.data.com

METHODS

EFNEP Program Assistant, Alberto Hernandez-Pedroza taught six nutrition lessons, and distributed pre and post surveys. In addition, recipe samples and educational tools were given to participants. Felicia shared information about Amelia's Sound Knowledge project with the County Director Amy Stone who has a background in Agriculture and Natural Sciences and Family Consumer Science Educator Patrice Powers -Barker. The collaborative momentum continued by inviting them to participate. EFNEP would deliver nutrition lessons and program evaluations during the first eight weeks of the twelve week project and Amy and Patrice would teach a series of lessons the remaining 4 weeks.

Amy and Patrice submitted to Amelia a Program Budget for Educator expenses and received cost recovery dollars. In Amy and Patrice's lessons, participant's learn lessons on Vegetable Plant Investigation, From the Garden to the Kitchen, Garden Insects Can Be Good for Our Food, A Rainbow of Fruits and Vegetables and Healthy Celebration.

In addition to OSU Extension, Friendly Center's Healthy by Choice Chef and Be Instrumental instructors delivered fun and engaging activities for the youth. A seasoned, well respected adult from the community, Joe Austin, served as a volunteer and classroom monitor.

Sound Knowledge Project Implementation:

- OSU Extension's EFNEP Youth Program Assistant, FCS Educator and Agriculture and Natural Science Educator taught nutrition education lessons.
- Friendly Center's Healthy By Choice Chef served a freshly prepared nutritious meal.
- Be Instrumental Instructors taught guitar lessons.
- A senior citizen from the community served at each class as a volunteer room monitor

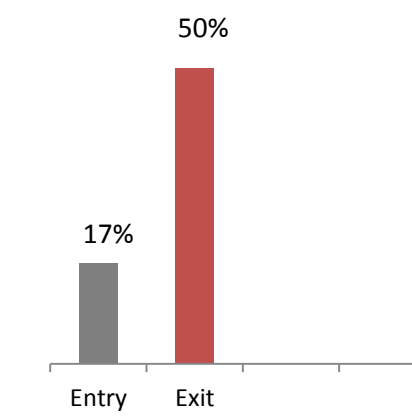
Youth learn how to use MyPlate and Key Messages from Dietary Guidelines for Americans



Students were excited to review MyPlate while performing the Food Group Exercises!

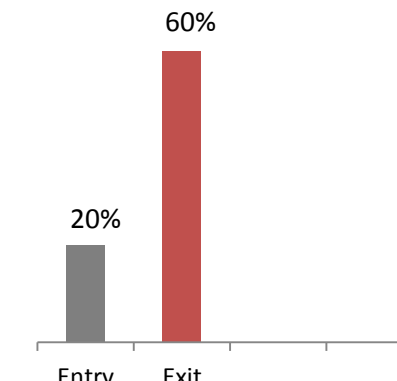
- Grains= Jumping Jacks
- Fruits= Lunges
- Dairy= Fast Feet
- Vegetables=Squats
- Protein=High Knees

% Reported eating more Fruits (n=6)



Pickett Elementary School

% Reported increased Physical Activity (n=5)



Sherman Elementary School

RESULTS

EFNEP administered during weeks one and eight pre and post age appropriate surveys to measure behavior changes. We reached (8) youth at Pickett Elementary and (6) were surveyed. At Sherman Elementary a total of (5) youth were reached and (5) surveyed. Birmingham data outcomes were unobtainable, however an estimated (5) youth participants were reached.

Attitude and Behavior Changes:

Summary of the Number of Practices Improved Within Clusters of Questions for 3rd -5th Grade students at Pickett Elementary

- 83% (5 of 6) youth reported improvement in diet quality practices with 1 or more knowledge or skill(s) necessary to choose foods consistent with Federal Dietary Guideline recommendations.
- 50% (3 of 6) youth reported they ate more fruits.

Summary of the Number of Practices Improved Within Clusters of Questions for 3rd - 5th Grade Students at Sherman Elementary

- 80% (4 of 5) youth reported improvement in diet quality practices with 1 or more knowledge or skill(s) necessary to choose foods consistent with Federal Dietary Guideline recommendations
- 60% (3 of 5) youth reported choosing healthier snacks more often.
- 60% (3 of 5) youth showed improvement in 1 or more knowledge, skill(s), or behavior necessary to improve their physical activity practices.

Youth chose healthier snacks



CONCLUSIONS

It was amazing to have the opportunity to sit in the classes and listen to our youth. What an array of reactions. The majority in spite of their circumstances were inquisitive and excited to be in the after school workshops!

Friendly Center's HBC Coordinator Anne Victoria when seeing EFNEP's group summary report was so shocked and impressed she emailed the following:

"This is AWESOME! Thank you for sharing. I can't believe the improvements being made with the youth, way more than anticipated."

What a powerful multi-agency team! Talk about reducing silos to make a difference to help our most vulnerable population. The Friendly Center just recently submitted their Toledo Community Foundation Grant proposal to replicate programming in the upcoming year.

Thank you Amelia for including OSU Extension in your vision! Thank you to Alberto Hernandez,-Pedroza, EFNEP Youth PA for teaching. In addition, thanks to Amy Stone, Extension Educator AgNR, County Director and Patrice Powers-Barker, Extension Educator, FCS for joining the team. Our community partners were able to witness the array of expertise and skills made available through the OSU Extension office in Lucas County. Sound Knowledge was a success!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- Amelia Gibbons, Executive Director, Anne Victoria Smith, HBC Coordinator and Chef V., Antonio Belcher, Youth Coordinator and Joe Austin, volunteer.
- Heather Baker, M. E.D.'s, Director of Pupil Placement and Child Adjustment Services
- Carol McElfresh, Executive Director, John Cleveland, Instructor

* Photograph of actual Sound Knowledge students was not permissible