



CENTER FOR COLLABORATIVE SOLUTIONS

Unleashing the Power of People Working Together

Healthy Behaviors for Children and Families: Strengthening Afterschool Programs through Exemplary Nutrition, Physical Activity and Food Security Practices

NUTRITION EDUCATION LEADERSHIP LEARNING COMMUNITY

PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

After-School All-Stars, Los Angeles

200 N. Spring Street, Room M-125

Los Angeles, CA 90012

(213) 305-9725

After-School All-Stars Los Angeles (ASALA) is a comprehensive program that serves middle school students in Los Angeles in partnership with the Office of the Mayor and the Los Angeles Unified School District. Currently in four schools designated as low-performing with low API indices and a high population of students who participate in the free and reduced lunch program, ASALA is committed to developing youth leadership. ASALA believes that it is imperative to address fitness and nutrition as not only a major health concern, but as a foundation to developing youth leaders in our communities and intentionally ties its youth leadership model to physical fitness.

After-School All-Stars offers a variety of innovative physical fitness and nutrition education programs that support youth development and strengthen students' commitment to taking responsibility for their health and well-being. Using the popular art of *Breakdancing*, eight-week classes challenge beginners and advanced dancers in resistance training, balance and coordination, strength building, cardio-training and stamina. The class provides a great environment for co-ed participation and attracts middle school students with weight problems – giving them an opportunity to become creative and confident while enjoying a high level of acceptance and support by their peers. Culminating performances attract sell-out crowds of their peers, families, staff and corporate and community sponsors.

In *Cheerleading – Raising the Energy Bar*, students learn jazz choreography, tumbling, hip-hop dancing, gymnastics and teamwork. Highly motivated instructors challenge students to become physically fit and energetic. Students gain the confidence that comes from feeling great mentally and physically. Energy levels are raised by increasing stamina through cardiovascular exercises and dance choreography. Students learn the value of a healthy attitude and a health body as they encourage one another to be their personal best.

Skateboarding – Wellness on Wheels provides students with a great outlet for physical activity and skill development. Sites are outfitted with professional skate park equipment that include rails, ramps, half-pipes and obstacle courses designed to improve balance, timing, goal setting and self-discipline. As an individual sport, skateboarding helps students to break barriers of fear and insecurity and provides a powerful alternative to all too common, sedentary video game

play. As an added bonus, students turn their skateboarding sessions into documentary films that are set to music and featured at end-of-session events.

As a way of integrating nutrition into its program, After-School All Stars collaborates with El Pollo Loco, the organization's food and corporate supporter, to create awareness of the risks of fast-food habits and to provide families with healthy alternatives. *Iron Chef* cooking competitions feature inter-school contests in preparing foods. Dieticians and nutrition experts provide quarterly workshops in the Iron-Chef Cooking School and encourage students to make good choices when preparing meals. Employees from El Pollo Loco serve as judges in the program's annual cook-off.

Club Y.E.S. (Youth Education and Enrichment at School) – Madera County Office of Education

28123 Avenue 14
Madera, CA 93538
(559) 673-6051

Club Y.E.S. has received the Golden Bell Award for an outstanding County Office of Education program, and Exemplary Program Award for direct service programs from the California County Boards of Education, and has become a highly sought after program that has school waiting for the opportunity to participate. The 13 program sites are dispersed throughout Madera County and serve approximately 1,300 students each day. On average, 88 percent of these young people participate in the free and reduced lunch program.

Physical activity and nutrition are important embedded components of Club YES's exciting afterschool program. Last year, students participating in *Run Across America* expanded their knowledge of history, social studies and geography and improved their physical well-being at the same time! Competing with students at other sites, they earned materials to build a model transcontinental railroad by running laps. The setting for this year's project is the Lewis and Clark Expedition, which includes opportunities for students to earn the President's Active Lifestyle Award. All students who complete the requirements will receive the badge in recognition of their efforts. Using the SPARK program model, 15 different recreation units are rotated monthly among sites and all students participate each day and their skills are showcased at Parent Nights. And even floor scrabble integrates developing sprinting skills with spelling challenges as students race against the clock to collect letter tiles off the floor and spell out words.

The importance of good nutrition has also been introduced into several of the program's enrichment activities. Middle school students participate in the *Power of Choice*, where they learn how to read labels and make healthy eating choices. In *The Pyramid Café*, students learn about the food pyramid and monitor their walking activity by using pedometers – which are provided to all participants in the program. Some sites have gardens and use the produce for snacks and cooking classes. And, project-based learning through Crime Solvers Investigation (CSI) integrates both physical activity and nutrition into its exciting semester-long activities. The impact on students is obvious. Many students are now choosing fruit over pizza and smoothies over soft drinks!

ExCEL After School Programs - San Francisco Unified School District

1515 Quintara Street
San Francisco, CA 94116
(415) 242-2615

San Francisco ExCEL is widely recognized for strengthening the futures of San Francisco youth and families. ExCEL coordinates programs throughout the city and county of San Francisco, targeting high-need neighborhoods. Housed in the District's School Health Programs Department, ExCEL coordinates nutrition and physical activity programs that are integrated with and go above and beyond the approaches offered to students during the school day. The research-validated physical education program, SPARK, and Planet Health offer choices of physical activities that accommodate individual interests and address student's unique developmental levels. The results are powerful. The number of students reporting exercising five days a week has increased from five percent to 60 percent and the number is growing!

Professional development opportunities are aligned with what's going on during the school day. ExCEL's site staff confidently and competently implement high-quality, structured nutrition programs and increase family awareness and participation in both physical and nutrition activities. Family Physical Activity/Nutrition Health Nights and school-wide Health Promotion events draw large crowds and increase their enthusiasm for developing healthy eating habits. Through the California Nutrition Network's funding, nutrition education and physical activity are promoted both during the school day and in the afterschool hours. Model comprehensive nutrition lessons incorporate California Challenge Health Standards and Nutrition Competencies and are linked to SFUSD academic standards. A mobile cooking cart makes it possible for students to learn more about fruits and vegetables and taste healthy foods. Field trips to farms, farmers' markets and gardens are included, as is a school/community marketing campaign featuring *5 a Day* materials and approaches.

Fitness for Life – Pajaro Valley School District

294 Green Valley Road
Watsonville, CA 95076
(831) 786-2100

Fitness for Life is an integral part of afterschool activities at 17 of the program's elementary and middle school sites. Close to 750 students participate, 85 percent of who are Hispanic, and with 82 percent of the students qualifying for free and reduced priced meals. The program's vision is to encourage students to become more physically fit and to adopt healthy eating patterns. A highlight is the annual triathlon, which includes biking, running and swimming events. Throughout the year, physical activities are integrated into program components to help students prepare for the triathlon experience and encourage them to adopt healthier lifestyles.

The impact is extremely positive. Students report greater confidence, improved physical abilities and more positive outlook on life. Their skills are also getting much stronger. Within four months, 90 percent of the participating students learned how to swim. High school student assistants who help coach elementary and middle school students have been positively impacted as well, and now choose to ride their bicycles to sites rather than to be transported by vans. Hip-hop and Samba dance choreography, and Chung-do-Kwan, a traditional Korean martial art related to Tae-kwondo, are also offered as key program components, and participating students

showcase their dances on opening day of the triathlon. Nutrition education has been integrated into an intensive eight-week staff development training course. A local non-profit specializing in nutrition education training that uses the *5 a Day Power Play!* curriculum, and Dr. B.J. Bonace, Chair of the Human Performance and Wellness Education Department (HPWE), author of *MyPyramid – Steps to a Healthier You*, provide the training.

FRESH (Fresno County’s Recreation Enrichment and Scholastic Help)

Fresno COE
1111 Van Ness Avenue
Fresno, CA 93721
(559) 265-3098

FRESH promotes youth development and personal enrichment in safe and healthy school environments. Opening its doors in 1999, the program now serves 100 sites and approximately 18,000 students each day. Approximately 70 percent of the students participate in the free and reduced lunch program. FRESH takes a comprehensive and exciting approach to strengthening the health and well-being of children and young people and their families. Students in *Classroom Awareness Through Animation* workshops design develop and produce 30-second animated nutrition and physical activity Public Service Announcements (PSA’s) that are aired during the school day. With support and guidance by Royer Studios, 40 of these have been produced through the combined efforts of 373 students at four school sites.

Student Nutrition Advisory Councils promote and advocate for nutrition education and physical activity and participate in a Mid-Year Youth Conference. In partnership with the *5 a Day Power Play!* and Blue Cross, physical activity promotion and nutrition education are offered at the annual Big Fresno Fair and during a four-week Afterschool/Day Camp. Adventure Island engages older students in exciting physical fitness activities ranging from rock climbing to canoeing and helps them learn the value of team building. Nutrition education is intentionally incorporated into most activities at each of the program’s sites and students are responding in very positive ways.

Greenfield Foundation for SUCCESS

400 Berkshire Road
Bakersfield, CA 93307
(661) 343-0809

In operation since 1999, the Greenfield SUCCESS afterschool program includes eight elementary and three middle school sites serving approximately 2,500 students each day that live in the largely rural areas in southeast Bakersfield. At least 80 percent of participating students receive free and reduced price lunches. The SUCCESS program has developed and committed to specific goals in both the nutrition and fitness areas. Working closely with the Family Resource Center (FRC) the SUCCESS program is bringing FITNUT to the youth and families of the district. The program focuses on encouraging young people to consume more fresh fruits, vegetables and water by providing opportunities for children to participate in the *5 a Day Power Play! Campaign*, *NACII Brain Power*, and *Harvest of the Month* curricula. Recent fast food surveys of program participants served as the basis for the year’s Family FITNUT Night where

children demonstrated the amount of fat in those easy-to-grab foods by placing chicken fat in plastic bags that equaled the fat in fast food.

All staff receive comprehensive training that includes the most current resources, curricula and technology available, and is designed to educate and support children and young people and their families in adopting healthier lifestyles and eating habits. In the area of fitness, the program provides students with a variety of opportunities to meet the minimum recommended requirements for weekly physical activity, increase the passing rate of yearly physical fitness tests, and offers nontraditional opportunities that encourage them to understand how fitness is central to their well-being. Hoop-Hop, Rhythm Sticks, jump rope and SPARK programming are supplemented with competitive sports programs, dance, fitness clubs, Tae-Bo and cheerleading. The FRC and SUCCESS programs are also working with community partners and California State University, Bakersfield to develop a five-acre district-owned parcel into a community garden set to debut in early 2007.

Mt. Diablo CARES (Collaborative for Academics, Recreation & Enrichment for Students)

1266 San Carlos Avenue, Room A6
Concord, CA 94518
(925) 691-0351

CARES is a well-established program with strong support from a host of community partners, anchored by the school district, Parks & Recreation, and the City of Concord. CARES is at 14 school sites and serves between 1,700-2,000 students each day. Of the district's student population, 66 percent participate in the free and reduced lunch program, 41 percent are English learners, and 20 percent are in special education. In one of the most exciting projects in the state, two afterschool community gardens host daily classes that integrate nutrition, youth development and community development. A Garden Teen Corps includes 20 Bay Point youth between the ages of 15-21 who participate in a six-week leadership class and internship where they learn valuable skills in gardening, youth development and community engagement. Participating students receive a \$500 stipend and work experience school credit. Produce from the gardens is used in afterschool cooking classes and each garden hosts at least two family and community events per year.

To strengthen their awareness and expand their knowledge of the importance of healthy eating habits, every student in the program participates in seven hours a week of nutrition education and physical activity. These structured components include nutrition lessons, fitness development, cooking classes, sports programs, SPARK activities and field trips to community gardens. The Nutrition Curriculum includes *Reading Up the Food Guide Pyramid*, *Eat Fit, 5 a Day*, Dairy Council, *Nutrition to Grow On* and Harvest of the Month – all of which are making a real difference in the attitudes and behavior of children and young people.

As part of their intramural sports program, middle school students in the CARES program participate in weekly games, which culminate at the end of the ten weeks with a tournament event where teams hold a Jamboree. Sports sessions rotate every ten weeks and include flag football, volleyball, basketball, soccer and softball. Volunteers from local high schools and colleges provide assistance in program activities and expert enrichment instructors hold assemblies and multiple-week classes to strengthen students' knowledge and develop students'

physical skills. African dance and drumming, ballet, and Taiko drumming are featured activities that have the added bonus of increasing students' international and intercultural awareness.

Sonoma SERVES COOL School

1801 E. Cotati Avenue
Rohnert Park, CA 94928
(707) 554-4232

A partnership between Sonoma State University and eight Southwest Santa Rosa elementary schools in three school districts, Sonoma SERVES provides strong academic support, enrichment, nutrition education and recreation activities for more than 1,000 high poverty students every day. Afterschool staff are trained in nutrition education and are having a positive impact on students' preferences for choosing healthy lifestyles. Harvest of the Month is increasing student awareness and healthy recipes are presented daily. Cooking classes focus on ways to incorporate fresh fruits and vegetables into everyday cooking and gardening clubs and the *Nutrition through Gardening/TWIGS* program expands on these. Physical education is also integrated into daily activities through clubs that feature the SPARK curriculum in each afterschool program.

Initiated and led by Sonoma SERVES, the remarkably successful Cesar Chavez Health Fair involves over 60 health care organizations that provide information and services to families that encourage healthy eating and active living; over 1,000 children and their families attend each year. Events include nutrition education and information booths with food demonstrations of fresh fruit and vegetables; a bike rodeo; dancing lessons and a hoola-hoop challenge. All events include healthy food demonstrations and tasting, nutrition education games, and nutrition incentives for participants. During the year, a variety of other events are held, including a Nutrition Decathlon, *5 a Day* Week and TV Turnoff Week – all of which are contributing in positive ways to creating healthier children and families.

Woodcraft Rangers

2111 Park Grove Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90007
(213) 749-3031

Los Angeles Woodcraft Rangers was founded in 1915. The program's mission is to promote healthy youth development, especially in impacted neighborhoods that offer limited opportunities. The Ranger's Nvision Afterschool program serves approximately 11,121 youth from 40 public schools located in Los Angeles County's most disadvantaged neighborhoods each day. This program includes a high percentage of children who are overweight and unfit. A small pilot assessment on fitness and nutrition conducted last spring revealed that 91 percent of the students enrolled increased their knowledge about healthy living and are now more engaged in greater physical activity. Eighty-seven percent reported eating healthier foods, including fruits and vegetables. The impact stems from the program's efforts to integrate nutrition and physical activity into its comprehensive approach to programming in general.

In Sports Clubs, experienced coaches teach not only the fundamentals of sports but also

important life skills such as decision-making, problem solving, communication and working together to reach their goals. Team sports include basketball, soccer, softball, volleyball and football. Golf, martial arts, and dance/drill clubs are also popular choices among students. Nutrition education is a natural part of each of the sports clubs. Cooking club members learn to plan, shop for and prepare nutritious meals and create healthy recipes to use at home. Students also regularly take field trips to grocery stores and local restaurants and hear presentations from professional chefs.

The 5 a Day Power Play! Campaign is used in cooking, gardening and science clubs. Its kid-friendly informational materials are widely distributed in local events that raise community awareness about the importance of making healthy food choices. Workshops for parents of participants also emphasized, focusing on importance of good nutrition and providing tips on preparing meals and snacks that are affordable and healthy. A new approach is now offered in conjunction with Infusion Yoga's Zenergy Program. It uses the concepts and principles of yoga in combination with a card-based interaction game in which children are taught breathing techniques, yoga movements, stress management and other positive life, nutrition and wellness skills. The Zenergy Club offers an hour of yoga-based curriculum and 30 minutes of nutrition and wellness including cooking and gardening.

A World Fit For Kids!

678 S. La Fayette Park Place
Los Angeles, CA 90057
(213) 387-7712

A World Fit For Kids! (AWFFK!) is a non-profit, community-based organization that provides afterschool programming focused on health and fitness. For the past 20 years, AWFFK! has worked to engage children and young people in participating in the program as a means to combat the health decline in California's young population, as evidenced by the decrease in standardized fitness testing and an increase in Type II diabetes. AWFFK! works with over 1,000 kids each day in economically challenged Title 1 schools in the Rampart district and the San Fernando Valley.

As an established leader in health, fitness and mentoring, A World Fit for Kids! has developed relationships with education institutions and community organizations to solidify its standing in the Los Angeles area. Their goal is to help students learn to make healthy lifestyle choices that will stay with them for a lifetime. Through physical activity leadership and an incredible amount of training and support, the program empowers high school and college students to mentor elementary school students. With sites located in low-income and often dangerous neighborhoods, an exceptional staff helps fill a void where opportunities for physical activity are missing. It is one of the very few afterschool programs that focus on fitness and health as a primary way to develop the whole child and young person. Their success has led to the permanent employment of many of their program's alumni and increasingly positive attitudes of young students toward the importance of physical fitness and health and well-being. All programming is aligned with academic standards and includes Sports for All, Salsa Sabor Y Salud, Sparks, *5 a Day*, Deal Me In and Sport Wall/Smart Wall.

YMCA of Santa Clara Valley and the Mid-Peninsula

1922 The Alameda, 3rd Floor
San Jose, CA 95126
(408) 351-6422

The mission of the YMCA is to build healthy spirit, mind and body for all. For the last 23 years, the YMCA's of Santa Clara Valley and the Mid-Peninsula have been operating afterschool programs that now serve over 4,300 children and young people daily.

A Carol M. White Physical Education grant supports physical activity and health components at 53 of the YMCA's sites. Partnerships with the Santa Clara Public Health Department and the Santa Clara County Office of Education allows the program to leverage over \$1.5 million in diversified funding enabled the program to redesign snack menus to be consistent with healthy nutrition. The *5 a Day Power Play! Campaign* and the *American Cancer Society Spring into Health* curriculum are the basis for the program's nutrition components. In collaboration with the Santa Clara County Office of Education, the *Fit for Learning Initiative* develops teacher-champions who strengthen physical fitness programming, improve school lunch menus, incorporate nutrition and fitness into daily lesson plans and engage families in powerful ways.

The program's philosophy is to surround children and young people with positive messages. This includes working with their families and the schools they attend to influence their attitudes about the importance of nutrition, physical activity and healthy lifestyles. Information is translated to Spanish and Vietnamese and sent home with students. The program holds a leadership position in the STEPS collaborative – a \$5 million CDC grant to specifically serve five school districts and the East San Jose community. As a major part of its work, the YMCA focuses on the needs of the largely low income, Latino and recent immigrant population by addressing issues of childhood obesity, diabetes, cancer and heart disease. The program also serves on the steering committees of the Healthy Silicon Valley Collaboration, Palo Alto Get Fit initiative and the Activate America project. In combination, the YMCA's efforts are mobilizing communalities around the issues of physical activity and nutrition education and making a real difference!