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Fun, Fit, Fabulous Fitness Plan: A Service Project Fostering Interactive and Fun Learning of Middle School Health and Wellness Topics

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**Fun, Fit, Fabulous Fitness Plan:
A Service Project Fostering Interactive and Fun Learning of
Middle School Health and Wellness Topics**

Honors Thesis

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of Bachelor of Science in Biology
In the School of Arts and Sciences
at Salem State University

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Fun, Fit, and Fabulous Fitness Plan

BACKGROUND

For several decades, society has become more and more focused on immediate satisfaction. Instead of growing their own food, it is faster to grow more of one thing with the use of steroids. Instead of taking the time to steam vegetables, the world has turned to fast food to solve their problems. This way of living has led to more outbreaks in diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, and even obesity. Ironically, this lifestyle has also managed to glorify the thin woman as the most beautiful. Not only is this new idealized body image very difficult to maintain, but with the new sedentary and fast-food-eating lifestyles of today, this body image has become near impossible to maintain safely. Women have turned to eating disorders such as anorexia or bulimia. Malnourishment of any kind is becoming more apparent, and that is making it more and more difficult to gain the 'desired' body type. That being said, the target audience of this body image, those children of the middle or high school age group, has begun to have raised levels of eating disorders. This is a fragile time for any girl, going through her own body changes, wanting to be desired by the opposite sex, and wanting to feel accepted. They compare themselves to this impossibly thin body image of a woman and thus go about being thin in the wrong way. They should be worried about getting the right nutrients in themselves by the food they eat to develop strongly, getting enough exercise to remain healthy and active, and enough knowledge of proper living habits to develop into happy and confident women with the proper body image. That image being one of healthy and happy women who care more about her own body's well-being instead of comparing oneself to the impossible standard the media projects. My project is meant to open the eyes of young women in this age group, and teach them about the easy alternatives they can make in

their own lives in order to foster the little victories that help build their healthy diet, strong bodies, and happy confident minds.

Because the issue of body image is so apparent in children, eating disorders are occurring in younger and younger age groups. When a little girl sees her father- figure fawn over a thin women, it is only natural to take away the message that in order to feel wanted they must look like that. That ideal follows people as they grow, but when children are just growing into themselves, this is when they begin to experiment with their own appearance and its reactions. It has actually been discovered that one out of every 10 girls entering high school, enters with an eating disorder¹. Whether it is overeating or undereating that is the issue, this is considered an eating disorder and in order to fight this growing epidemic, children, especially young women, need to learn about the safe way to be healthy. Idealizing an impossible body image does nothing but destroy self esteem and even lead to far worse alternatives such as alcohol or drug abuse². Nevertheless, it is quite obvious that this issue is only getting worse.

What most young girls do not know is that the food they eat consume has the ability to make them feel better about themselves, more so than starving oneself in an effort to be accepted. Physiologists have discovered, in fact that nine certain vitamins work together with the brain to release chemicals that induce happiness; these nine vitamins include calcium, chromium, folate, iron, magnesium, omega-3 fatty acids, vitamin B6, vitamin B12, vitamin D, and zinc³. By eating food which contain these vitamins a person can feel happier with themselves. The power of this is extraordinary considering the amount of time girls spend feeling unhappy when they do not compare to the 'ideal' body image. Eating healthy does not only help the body function better but also the way a person feels; both elements are important to point out to young girls eating little to nothing to be skinny. Foods high

¹ <http://www.rehabs.com/explore/dying-to-be-barbie/#.VUK1-SFViko>

² <http://www.rehabs.com/explore/dying-to-be-barbie/#.VUK1-SFViko>

³ http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2738337/#__ffn_sectitle

in sugar and fructose have been proven to create a feeling of constant unsatisfactory hunger, which also increases sedentary activity and a lowered metabolism⁴. While it is key of any diet to balance the nutrients being eaten, this concept makes eating certain healthy foods more appealing, especially considering the way eating purely sugary foods with empty calories can have the opposite effect. Food is a very strong factor in keeping the body strong but also keeping a person's mentality optimistic.

Especially with low income households, it may be easier to grab McDonalds or eat Ramen noodles instead of cooking a balanced meal, but the element that is missed with this way of thinking is the big impact those small sacrifices are making. Where a child can get chicken nuggets and fries, employ the healthy McDonalds options of apple slices and yogurt. Where a child can get a soda, they may choose to drink water instead. Where a family may eat Ramen noodles for dinner, add a can of vegetables to relieve some of those empty calories. Making these minor adjustments to these everyday activities may seem small, but they do help in the end. I aim to make these instances where a healthy alternative is available apparent to the girls in this program.

Activeness is a contradictory topic in society today. While some people are obsessed with exercising and active living, others have become accustomed to the technological advancements in a negative way. Some people, children especially, are spending days after days on the computer or watching television without so much as venturing outside their front door. Participating in an active lifestyle as a young girl incredibly benefits overall health in such a way that "improves strength and endurance, helps build healthy bones and muscles, helps control weight, reduces anxiety and stress, increases self-esteem, and may improve blood pressure and cholesterol levels."⁵ Though the temptation of hitting 'next episode' on Netflix has the population glued to their couches for hours at a time, the ideal of spending the CDC's recommended 60 minutes daily doing physical activity should reign

⁴ <http://lifehacker.com/5809331/what-sugar-actually-does-to-your-brain-and-body>

⁵ <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/physicalactivity/facts.htm>

supreme. The lack of this activity is causing such outbreaks in obesity and heart disease in the population. However, most children can be influenced to be physically active in new ways other than traditional games of kickball and four square. Exercising via Yoga, dance, obstacle courses, and other interactive activities can work the body and mind simultaneous to leave a lasting impression on its partakers. Michelle Obama's Let's Move! Foundation has made great strides with the idea of a new generation of healthy kids, and her website serves as a great resource for both planning and joining in physical activity with a group of children.⁶

PROJECT ABSTRACT

These elements of eating healthy and encouraging physical activity are obviously a growing problem in preteen young girls. Because this ideal is something in need of an amendment, I have come up with a project to do my part in trying to invoke change. I will be developing an educational program at Girls Incorporated in Lynn, Ma. This program is called Fun, Fit, and Fabulous Healthy Living. It focuses on educating girls on the basics of good nutrition and steady exercise in relation to body image and self-confidence.

During the 10 weeks in the fall of 2015, I will be teaching a one hour biweekly program for middle school girls, mostly between the ages of 11 and 13 years old. The program will focus on easy alternative ways to become a little healthier. Because most of the girls at Girls Incorporated in Lynn, Ma come from homes that are not exceptionally wealthy, these healthy alternatives for eating and physical activity will be easy to employ and practice. Over the course of the 10 weeks, the girls will participate in fun and interactive activities that directly and indirectly teach the girls ways to foster their own healthy

⁶ <http://www.letsmove.gov/>

living choices, whether that choice is choosing water over soda or the stairs over the elevator. It is the small changes that add up to cause a big impact.

In addition to these fun activities, there will also be surveys where we will ask the participants the same series of questions sporadically over the course of the program to gauge the differences in answers. Additionally, we will have discussion sessions where the girls will talk about their food choices, their physical activity, the way they feel, their body image, and how all of these things relate. The hypothesis for this project is that after 10 weeks of my program, the girls will have a better foundational knowledge of how to live life in a healthy manner and are willing and able to choose to employ healthy alternatives in their everyday life. An additional benefit of the program would ideally be that the girls notice a positive change in their own attitude toward their own body image. They will know how to use these new healthy living methods to create confidence in their own physique, developing into educated healthy young women.

PURPOSE

Because this is a service project, the overall purpose is to service the students at Girls Incorporated by teaching. I am educating them on how they can become knowledgeable about their own health and thus develop into young ladies who make choices based on their own definition of healthy body image and not the media's definition of healthy body image. Schools have had Gym and Health Classes for decades but because society's view of women has become more and more skewed over the years, now is more important than ever to make sure girls are educated on the subject. They need to know that doing whatever it takes to be a size double-zero in jeans may seem trendy, but it is not healthy. Proper body image is one of a healthy woman who eats balanced meals, stays active, and is happy because of those choices. My project is important because it offers that learning resource. If

only for one group of girls in one city in Massachusetts, it will make a difference. Knowledge is healthy. Healthy is happy. Happy is beautiful.

SUCCESS RATE

For all intents and purposes, this project will be considered a success no matter what the outcome. Ideally, I would love to see this program continue to some degree even after the 10-week period is over; that would be a great success being that Girls Incorporated has never done a program of this nature before. However, even if it does not continue, I would have spent 10 weeks with a group of young girls teaching them about being healthy. They may employ these ideals and they may not, but at the end of the day, they learned something about themselves and about health and wellness. The survey I will be giving the girls will be given sporadically over the duration of the program, and the questions will be the same every time. One question is the main emotionally-relative question: "How happy are you today?" I would love to see every participants' happiness improve not only because it would prove that this change of lifestyle has a biological/chemical effect on mood elevation, but also that they have fun. That is the most important part of this project, to educate and entertain.

My hypothesis is that after 10 weeks of my program, the girls will have a better foundational knowledge of how to live life in a healthy manner and are willing and able to choose to employ healthy alternatives in their everyday life. Through surveys and interview procedures I will be observing the happiness of the girls throughout the program, and from there I will speculate as to which part of the project was most impressionable, the biology behind the activities or just the fun of the activities themselves. Because science has proven that both certain foods and physical activity can trigger mood elevation, happiness is an expected outcome.

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General Program Information

1. Name of the Program
 - a. Fabulous Food, Fun Fitness Program
2. What core essential service does this program provide?
 - a. Healthy Living
 - i. This program offers an educational outlet for healthy living. Its focus lies in the ideals of eating healthily, exercising, and promoting mental health. The focus of this program is to encourage the foundational education regarding healthy living, not the behavior change of employing the ideals learned through this program.
 - b. Academic Support/Enrichment
 - i. The basis of this program is to teach the basics of healthy living, specifically eating right, exercise, and mental health. The learning outcomes revolve around learning which foods are healthy to eat, how to read a nutritioin label, defining a Calorie, exploring alternative exercise methods, relieving stress, staying hydrated, community service (in relation to mental health), and methods of building self-confidence.
 - c. Life Skill Instructions
 - i. The skills taught in this program are skills to be employed in everyday healthy living. Whether the girls choose to employ them is entirely up to them, but if they do choose to engage in these elements, they will better their lives. Learning how to properly take care of one's body is a lesson in self-preservation and personal care.
3. Overall Goal: Why are you offering this program?
 - a. I am very passionate about being aware of one's own health. Having the knowledge of how to care for your body and mind in the most basic ways is something simple that can be done daily to better quality of life. At this fragile age between adolescence and adulthood, girls are now embracing the ability to make their own choices. This ability can allow them to choose healthy choices or poor choices, which will affecting their next stage in life. Having healthy life practices also builds confidence in one's self, which also can affect a child's reaction to peer pressure. Being mentally healthy has to do with confidence, which could be the difference between eating disorders/unhealthy

lifestyle/physical illness and a long and healthy life. These girls deserve a chance to better their understanding of overall health and thus their own future.

4. How is it compensatory and intentional?
 - a. This program is compensatory in that it aims to give the girls more knowledge on the subject of health than they may have had before.
5. Outcomes: What do you want the girls to get out of this program? Skills, Knowledge, or a change in attitude?
 - a. I want the girls to leave this program in 10 weeks having gained knowledge. I want to teach them all of the basics of eating right, exercise, and mental health/confidence. The knowledge they learn in each lesson will work towards a big picture of healthy living. They will learn the benefits of good healthy decision making, the skills to practice those healthy choices if they so choose, and the negative effects of bad decision making. This may not change their attitude or behavior of the subject of healthy living, but they will no longer make ignorant choices that may harm their future without warning.
6. Evaluation: Based on the outcomes for this program how, when, and what tools will you use to evaluate the outcomes?
 - a. Because the main outcome of the program is knowledge and the program overall encourages personal wellness, the evaluation is minimal. However, I will be giving a pre and post survey to the girls at the beginning and end of the program. The survey contains questions based on basic health information to gauge if they have learned the knowledge of the program or not. There are also several lessons throughout the program where I will evaluate the girl's preliminary knowledge on a certain topic before the main activity or evaluate the girls feelings before or after an activity to see the mood-elevating effect of the main activity.
7. Enhancements: Are you going to include any videos, guest speakers, books to reinforce and support the goal of this program?
 - a. I will be using a video in the 5th week of lessons because the video describes an experiment done with fast food and we will be talking about the negative qualities fast food has over a long period of time. The video is validation of this long-term effect. The video is *Super-Size Me* and we will be watching clips at the 51.18-57.54; 107.30-110.28; and 130.31-134.24 timing marks.
 - b. I will be using a guest speaker this day as well. She is an employee at Dunkin Donuts and she will be talking about the amount of sugar and sugary components of Dunkin food/drink items. She will also be helping to choose

healthy alternatives that are available at Dunkin that the girls may not have been aware of beforehand.

- c. I will be using a guest Yoga Instructor on the 7th week of lessons. She is a professional licensed yoga instructor who teaches classes at the Gasset Fitness Center of Salem State University in Salem, Ma. She will be coming in to teach a beginner's yoga class. I asked her to come in to better demonstrate yoga poses in a safe and organized manner.
8. Is a specific room, set-up, or equipment required?
- a. I have planned this program to be done in a room that has access to a form of projection. Other than that, we are able to perform in any room big enough for the girls to be able to do physical activity as well as seated table work.

Individual Session Information

Week 1, October 6th and 7th: What does healthy mean?

Background: According to the World Health Organization, health is “a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being,” (who.int). That being said, it is important to demonstrate to young girls that an overall healthy life is not only not being sick but also taking care of your own body by eating right and exercising and in turn becoming mentally content and socially compatible. At this age, children become more independent in their own choices of activities and foods, and showing how some choices are more beneficial than others can be the difference between illness and health.

Main Points: Overall Healthiness; good versus bad health choices.

Warm up Activity: We will begin by writing “healthy” and “unhealthy” on a board and I will ask the girls all the words associated with this word. I will use the associations that the girls make to create word clouds, one for each word. These clouds will be printed and left up as a reminder of how broad these words can be defined. I will also give the girls a survey on their overall healthiness, one that I will use to evaluate the overall program. The survey will introduce the theme of the program.

Main Activity: For the main activity of this lesson, we will be playing Yes To This and No To That! In this game, we will have ‘agree’, ‘disagree’, and ‘I’m not sure’ written on signs and put on different walls of the room. I will read a list of statements that can be healthy or unhealthy to the girls and they will have to decide whether they agree, disagree, or are not sure by running to the wall that corresponds with their answer. I will be randomly asking girls at each wall why they chose that answer throughout the game.

Debriefing: The discussion will help the girls understand the point of the activity. The point is to first gain a foundation/starting baseline as to their primitive understanding of what is considered healthy, and to introduce the subject of the entire program. Because we are continuously asking the girls to justify their answers throughout the game, the debriefing is minimal. However, we will finish the game and still ask the girls their reaction to it. We will be asking if they were surprised by any of the answers, or maybe if they were able to move from the ‘I’m not sure’ wall after hearing why others chose their decisive walls. Before we end the lesson for the day we will ask the girls to express one thing they are excited for in this program, as well as one thing they want to learn in regards to healthy living.

Room Set-up: The room will need to have open spaces for the girls to move around in due to the physical nature of the lesson.

Preparation: I will read aloud the different statements, pausing after each one to allow the girls time to choose wall they agree with and explaining their choice. See Handout #1

Materials: We will need pencils and a board to write on largely enough for the entire class to be able to see.

Procedure/ Directions: First, as a warm up, the class will list the words that they associate with the word healthy and unhealthy. I will write all of their associations on the board, and once they have listed all of their associations we will discuss how many different words can be associated with one idea, which shows the diversity of the word/subject. This will be shown via the Word Cloud poems, and displayed to the class as a creative reminder (due to printing, the display poems may be ready for the next class). Next, we will begin the activity. I will read the statements aloud pausing after each one to allow the girls time to move to a wall. During the activity, I will be randomly selecting girls and asking them to justify their choice. This discussion will allow the girls to think about choices that they make instinctively, as well as think about the idea that there are several right answers, some more beneficial than others.

Week 2, October 14th and 15th: Water

Background: It is clinically proven that water has endless benefits to the body. Drinking the proper amounts of it can improve mood, prevent headaches, relieve fatigue, balance regularity, clear skin, strengthen hair and nail growth, flush out kidneys, improve brain function, and overall hydrate you, to name a few benefits. Most children drink soda and other drinks high in sugar when they should be drinking water instead to benefit their body as opposed to helping slow it. The activity we will be playing will point out the health benefits of water in a way that allows the girls to problem solve using only water.

Main Points: Drinking water is the best and easiest thing you can do to benefit yourself.

Warm-up Activity: I will begin today's activity by providing several types of beverages, cans of ginger ale, small containers of orange juice, and water, and putting them at the front of the room. I will then tell the girls they can go up and grab one. After the girls have chosen their drink, I will call out some girls asking why they chose what they chose, whether that is water, juice, or soda. Their answers will prompt the lesson for today, how water should have been everyone's choice.

Main Activity: The main activity will be acting. The girls will go in small groups and act out a problem, one that can be solved using water in one form or another. Small prompts will be provided to each group that gives them a problem to act out. Each scene will end at the climax when the "what will we do next to help?" question comes about. The girls of the audience will shout out what they can do to help solve the problem. The solution to every problem will revolve around water.

Debriefing: After the scenes that each group has performed is over, we will discuss the point of the activity. Because the solution to every scene's problem will be water in some form, the girls will ideally realize just how big of a role water plays in our everyday lives. We will go through each scene explaining where the problem began, most of which will begin with some form of dehydration making lack of water the evident problem and gain of water the evident solution. By the end, ideally the girls will be able to tell how big of a role water plays in their body and how easily they can help themselves by drinking more of it. In addition, I will provide a snack of watermelon for the girls to eat, demonstrating as they snack how water can be obtained through food as well as drink.

Room Set-up: The room will be set up with tables and several girls at each table. The front of the room will have space for the scenes to be acted out.

Preparation: In preparation for this lesson, I will write the prompts for each scene as well as buy the beverages for the warm-up activity. See Handout #2.

Materials: I will need beverages for the girls and the prompts. I can also provide watermelon.

Directions: First, the girls will be asked to grab a choice of beverage that I will provide for them, and I will ask them why they have chosen the drink they have chosen. This will introduce the idea of how water is important. Then they will split up into groups of two or three and will be given a prompt for a scene they must then act out. They will act out the scene, which introduces a problem, at which point the girls in the audience will shout out possible solutions to the problem. They will then realize that the simplest solution to these problems will be water, in one form or another. Then, we will discuss each problem and how they may not have realized it but the water their body needs can cause problems when absent and can fix problems when gained. As we are discussing the activity after, we will eat watermelon to demonstrate how food can contain water as well.

Week 3, October 21st and 22nd: Plant day!

Background: Plants are what makes the entire world inhabitable from donating the oxygen that we breathe to providing the people of Earth with the food to nourish themselves efficiently. A lot of people in today's society have begun to grow their own vegetables and herbs because of the economical and health benefit of having organic foods provided plentifully and continuously just for them. Because many children may not eat healthily because of money issues not providing opportunity to eat vegetables, growing their own may be the key to their health. Small plants such as green beans and herbs are able to grow successfully in a small pot indoors with the right amount of sun and water.

Main Points: Gardening with foods can be an easy and rewarding way to get vegetables to eat.

Warm-up Activity: We will introduce the topic by asking discussion questions like "How many of you have ever planted something?", "Who has a green thumb?", and "What does having a green thumb mean?" This tactic will get the girls focused on the overall activity, planting a vegetable and herbs.

Main Activity: The main activity will be having each girl select a seed, plant them into a small pot, and set them aside to grow.

Debriefing: After the seeds are planted for each student, the girls will be asked to explain why they are planting the seeds in the first place. This will open the discussion for the importance of plants in our everyday lives. We will prompt them with several questions that will relate the activity to the science background that planting has. Those questions could include such like, "Why are plants so important to our health?", "Does anyone know how plants help us breathe cleaner?", and "Without plants what do you think would happen to the world?" All of this discussion will get the girls thinking, both outwardly in discussion as well as personally, about how plants will affect their everyday lives

Room Set-up: Because most of the activity is personal to each student, each girl having planted their own seed, the room will be set up in tables. Those tables will hold several students so that the students can share resources such as dirt, seeds, water, etc.

Preparation: In order to perform this activity, I will have the discussion questions and objectives for the day clearly outlined to facilitate the discussions before and after the activity. I will also need to prepare the materials needed for the planting process.

Materials: I will provide the students with planting pots, small plates to put the plants on to make sure they keep the sunny area they will be in clean, and seeds for several plantable items

such as vegetables and herbs, dirt, water. The students will also need markers to then label their plant.

Directions: First, the students will settle into the activity by starting with several discussion questions about planting in general. These questions will introduce the process of planting and express who has experience in the activity or not. Then they will be asked to select a seed to plant, a vegetable or an herb. The students will obtain the necessary materials for planting including the seed, the pot, and a small cup of water. In the center of each table will be a small container of dirt to be shared among the girls sharing the table. They will plant their seeds, and write their names on their pot to be able to tell which one is theirs. After the planting is over and the girls have cleaned up the room, we will discuss plants. Instead of focusing on the planting aspect of the activity, we will now focus on the scientific implication that plants have in our lives, such as providing clean oxygen to breath and the foods that we eat. The girls will overall take away not only a new skill that may be employed later but also the benefits of that new skill.

Week 4, October 28th and 29th: Rainbow Eating

Background: Every fruit and vegetable that we eat does something specific for our body. Each has a certain vitamin or mineral that is necessary for a balanced diet. While some people just focus on eating a balanced meal of a vegetable, fruit, grains, and protein, a new living plan will illuminate the idea that ‘eating the rainbow’ can be equally if not more beneficial while allowing more variety in diet. Eating the rainbow refers to the idea of having every color (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple, and white) in every meal we eat in order to get the balance of vitamin and minerals necessary for each day. Red foods such as apples and tomatoes have flavonoids, lycopene, Vitamin C, and folate, which support memory and heart health. Orange and yellow foods such as carrots, pineapples, and sweet potatoes have beta-carotene, and vitamins A and C, which supports healthy eyes and heart as well as boosts immunity. Green foods like broccoli, kale, and spinach have chlorophyll, vitamin K, carotenoids, isothiocyanates, and omega-3 fatty acids, which promotes healthy bones, eyes, and teeth. Blue and purple foods like blueberries and beans have anthocyanin, which promotes memory and healthy aging, as well as boosting antioxidants, which benefit the overall health of the body. White foods like onions and mushrooms have flavonoids, which elevate good cholesterol levels and heart health.

Main Points: The main point of this exercise is to highlight the benefit of eating foods in a variety of colors to maintain a balanced diet, and utilize this knowledge via cooking a meal.

Warm up activity: We will begin the lesson by introducing the idea of eating a range of colors by coloring a rainbow. We will have a giant rainbow outline onto which the entire class will contribute. Using markers, the girls will color fruit and vegetables corresponding to each color of the rainbow. When the warm up has finished we will have a large rainbow with red fruits and vegetables colored into the red rainbow stripe, orange/yellow fruits and vegetables colored into the orange/yellow stripe, ect.

Main Activity: The main activity of this lesson is allowing the girls to make their own pasta salad. Pasta is a universal food item, which is why I thought this was a good meal to prepare together that shows the girls’ creativity. (Gluten free pasta will be provided for anyone who needs it; the finalized food preparation will be prepared after I know the allergies of the girls.) The base will be a type of fortified pasta that is whole wheat, high in fiber and high in protein. Each girl will get a bowl with one serving. Then, they will have several bowls of a variety of vegetables to choose from in the center of their table. These vegetables will vary in color and vitamin content but will contain such vegetables as broccoli, cucumber, tomatoes, olives, peppers, carrots, and onions. There will also be choices of dressing such as mayo, Italian dressing, and ranch dressing. Now that the girls have all of these ingredients, they will be free

to create their own pasta salad. After it is prepared, they will have time to eat it in a relaxed atmosphere.

Debriefing: After the girls have cleaned up the activity, we will talk about how easy it was to be their own chef. We will discuss whether or not this activity has opened their minds to, perhaps, a new hobby that they enjoy or a way to further their personal independence. Because the process of cooking is something the girls can control, it is a positive activity that builds both creativity and confidence/independence. They will recognize that all of their meals, though similar, were unique and balanced because they used different colored vegetables of their own choosing.

Room Set-up: For the warm-up activity, the room should be set up pushing all the tables together to hold the banner with the rainbow picture on it to be colored. Once the warm-up activity is over, the tables should be moved back to hold a few girls at each table for the main activity.

Preparation: To prepare for this lesson, I will create the outline for the rainbow for the warm up activity as well as having the prepared ingredients for easy access during the main activity.

Materials: For this lesson, I will need the rainbow outline, markers, bowls, utensils, napkins, beverages (water), and the cut up food.

Directions: First, the girls will begin with the warm-up activity where they will all color fruits and vegetables in the rainbow outline together as a class. Once that has finished, they will return to their seats at their own tables to participate in the main activity. The main activity will begin with each girl getting their own bowl of a serving of pasta and shared bowls of vegetables/ingredients to prepare their own personal pasta salad dishes. After preparing them, the girls will have time to eat and clean up. The conclusions section of the lesson will be used to discuss the activity and their feelings about it. They will be asked about how they enjoyed being a chef, how easy it was to prepare a healthy dish, how they chose foods of all different colors, and how this process will help them in the future as a way of expression, confidence building, and independence. (In preparation for the lesson for the next class, I will also be asking the girls to write down their favorite thing to get from Dunkin Donuts on a piece of paper and crumble it and throw it in a basket to be collected by me.)

Week 5, November 4th and 5th: Good choice or Bad Choice?

Background: Kids are surrounded by the temptation of bad food choices. Restaurants that cater to kid friendly food thrive on fried food, processed ingredients, and high levels of sugar and salt. And the most prominent of these temptations are Dunkin Donuts and McDonalds. These chains seem to be on every street corner and on everyone's mind for quick and easy meals. However, what parents might realize is the dangerous addictive quality of this food. The high levels of negative nutritional elements like salt, high fructose corn syrup, LDL Cholesterols, etc. are causing people to not only make bad choices but also feel badly physically and cause an addictive response for this behavior. High levels of sugar can cause intense rise and fall of blood sugar levels, and long-term abuse of this can lead eaters to feel best during the eating and worse after, causing addiction. These fast foods are cost efficient and tasty, implying that no one will stop going there anytime soon. Due to this reality, it is important that the girls understand how to swap out terrible choices for better alternatives.

Main Points: To demonstrate the importance of moderation and healthy choices in fast food eating.

Warm-up Activity: For the warm up activity, we will start by asking the girls about fast food. I will ask them how often they eat it, where they usually go, what they usually get, etc. Then we will talk about how bad eating it all the time can be for you. We will talk about the effects of excess sugar and how it cannot only be bad for you in the long run, but also how it effect ambition and mental availability. Then we will show a few clips from *Super-Size Me*. Before we show the clips, I will introduce the movie and the experiment. The clips we will be showing are 51.18-57.54; 107.30-110.28; and 130.31-134.24.

Main Activity: For the main activity, we will be using the knowledge of a guest speaker, Ella the Dunkin worker. I will use the information that I had asked the girls to write down and give to me from the last class in this activity. I had asked the girls to write down their favorite Dunkin food or drink item. Before the start of class today, I myself will go with our Dunkin expert Ella and look at their favorite food/drink. We will find a healthy alternative for them, and that is what we will bring to class. Each girl will be asked what their favorite food or drink is and then we will talk about it as a class how we can make it a better choice. Then we will give them the revised more healthy alternate item as a treat for the class. This will test whether to not the alternative we suggest is realistic for them to actually order next time they go to Dunkin Donuts.

Debriefing: After the main activity is over, we will have a small discussion. We will talk about their comments or reactions to seeing Super-Size Me and the effects of fast food abuse. Then we will discuss how they can order healthier options when they are out to eat. After that, we

will be talking about their alternate Dunkin orders. Because I and Ella have taken it upon ourselves to order the girls something they may not normally choose, it would be interesting to get their feedback of the healthier alternative food or drink items.

Room Set-up: The girls can sit in their normal seats at tables as long as all of them can see the front of the room where the movie will be projected.

Preparation: The preparation for this lesson will be for me to obtain the movie and a method of projection. The movie can be viewed on this site:

http://www.snagfilms.com/films/title/super_size_me

I will also need to obtain the healthy food/drink items from Dunkin Donuts.

Materials: To proceed with this lesson, I will have to obtain the movie, a computer, or mode of projection, as well as the Dunkin snacks for them to eat/drink.

Directions: First, we will introduce the topic by asking the girls how they feel about McDonalds. We will discuss how often they visit, their choice on the menu, the healthy choices they can make. We will also introduce the background for the movie such as background on the overall experiment, the filmmaker, and the scenario, and then we will watch the clips from the movie. Once the movie has ended, we will begin our talk about Dunkin Donuts. We will talk as a class about what their favorites are and how those can be altered to be healthier. Then I will pass out the healthy alternative food/drink items to the girls for them to try. Then, we will have an open discussion about any comment they have on the movie, how they may think differently about their fast food choices, and how they liked the alternative Dunkin snacks.

Week 6, November 12th: Grocery Store Games

Background: According to the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, a girl between the ages of eleven and thirteen should be eating between 1800 and 2200 Calories per day. This range allows room to fluctuate depending on the child's activeness. This level however, holds without saying, a multiplicity of vitamins and minerals. It is important to get the proper macronutrients, micronutrients, vitamins, and minerals in a day while also staying within this Calorie limit. It has become very difficult for preteen girls to be able to abide by this because fast foods and drinks have extremely high Calories, and lack vitamins and minerals. This exercise places the task of budgeting Calories and nutrients in a real world setting.

Main Points: Learning how to budget Calories whilst still maintaining a balanced meal.

Warm-Up Activity: As a warm-up for this activity, we will be talking about nutrition labels. We will go over a class how to read a nutrition label efficiently. We will have either a handout of a sample label or a picture being projected but overall we will discuss how to tell if a food is actually a healthy choice or not. We will talk extensively about Calories. We will touch upon how many calories the U.S. thinks a preteen girl should intake and how to balance calories and get the proper balanced meal when monitoring Calories.

Main Activity: The main activity is a competitive game. The girls will split into teams of two or three girls. They will have the task of creating a balanced meal that stays under 600 Calories. They will have twenty minutes to browse the food available in our grocery store (printout pictures of foods and their nutrition labels placed around the room in produce, dairy, grains, etc.). They will work as a team to select foods to make a balanced meal and have to budget how much of each food they will use in this meal to stay under the limit of Calories. The team with the most balanced meal that stays around the Calorie limit will win a prize.

Debriefing: After the winner has been selected, they will return to their seats. We will discuss as a group how hard it may or may not have been for the girls to come up with a recipe. The girls will also be asked to comment on the difficulty they had with using the nutrition label as a reference tool when constructing this healthy and balanced meal. Any questions or struggles that they may have had, we can discuss them at this time.

Room Set-Up: For the warm-up activity, the girls need to be seated at tables, with several girls per table. For the main activity, the room will be set up like a grocery store, with food items around the room. The tables will be pushed together to make several main sections, where the teams can go to finish their recipes. For the debriefing portion of the lesson, the girls will again be seated at their tables with several girls at each table.

Preparation: For the preparation for this lesson, I will need to obtain a picture of a nutrition label for the warm-up activity. See Handout #3. Then, I will create the food items with nutrition labels on them. See Handout #4.

Materials: The materials needed are the food items and nutrition labels (fake groceries will be made using print outs). A main activity prize will also be provided to the winning team, most likely a small plastic trophy.

Directions: First, the girls will begin the warm up activity by having a small lesson on how to read a nutrition label properly. We will also be discussing the definition of a Calorie, and how it relates to the body and a balanced diet. Next, for the main activity we will be playing the Grocery Games. The girls will be separated into teams, each getting a budget of 600 Calories. They will have twenty minutes to use those Calories to shop around the room for ingredients to make a healthy meal within that Calorie limit. They will be asked to make the healthiest, most balanced meal they can make whilst also being within a certain Calorie budget. They will then take the ingredients and figure out exactly how to prepare that meal. The team with the healthier meal that responds best to the budget will win a prize. After the main activity is over, the girls and I will have a group discussion about the meals that they chose to make. I will ask questions like “why did you choose that?” and “can you explain how you budgeted Calories”. The girls will end the lesson having taken away the experience with working within a Calorie limit to prepare a healthy meal.

Week 7, November 18th and 19th: Yoga Day

Background: Yoga is becoming a very popular exercise trend. It combines the healing effects of meditation with the strengthening exercises of stretching and resistance. Though the ideals go back as far as Gandhi, the practice of yoga is popular now because of our stagnant lifestyle. The amount of time, on average, that people spend sitting instead of being active has caused the spine to have excess lactic acid, which is released via stretching. Thus, yoga has become a popular exercise method to treat this stiffness because of its focus of stretching, resistance, and meditation. The meditation portion of yoga is also a focus for newcomers because with high levels of stress, they are more likely to have hypertension, anxiety, depression, and lack of sleep, eating disorders, irregularity, acne, and countless others. By learning to meditate, the levels of stress decrease and thus so do these related problems. Because this program has a focus on keeping kids from being sedentary and having the problems that follow, yoga is a focus exercise. In addition to be a great form of exercise, yoga can aid in sleeping issues. Meditation is very similar to sleep in its relaxation properties. It is important to display this to the girls who may not be getting the necessary amount of sleep; meditating may be the destressor they need to get more sound sleep.

Main Points: To demonstrate how to do yoga safely. To discuss how meditation aids sleep and yoga can be considered exercise.

Warm-Up Activity: To introduce this topic we are going to first mention sleeping. We will discuss the importance of sleep to the body in addition to exercise and eating right. Then we will talk about how at this time in the girls' lives, they require more sound sleep while their obligations may be hindering that sleep. We will talk about how meditation is a great way to relax before sleep to get deeper sleep and also how meditation or 'zoning out' can be used as a form of additional rest when getting more sleep may not be an option.

Main Activity: The discussion of sleep in relation to meditation will allow the lesson to segway into yoga. Yoga, while also being a great relaxation and sleeping outlet, is also considered a new-age form of exercise. For today's main activity of today is we, as a class, will have a yoga class for beginners. I have asked a professional yoga instructor from the Gasset Fitness Center at Salem State University to donate their time to developing and teaching a yoga class for beginners.

Debriefing: After the class is over, we will discuss how the girls feel. Do they feel different or even better than when we started? Do the moves of yoga remind them of the moves they may already do subconsciously? Would they want to continue this practice? How can they safely incorporate these movement and ideals into their everyday life to improve their body and mind? I will be handing out handouts for easy at home yoga movements to the girls to ensure

that anything they take away from the class to practice will be done in a safe manner. See Handout #7.

Room Set-Up: Because of the physical nature of the activity, the room will need a cleared space to exercise. The tables and chairs will be moved to the side, out of the way.

Preparation: In preparation for this lesson, I will create a playlist of relaxing music to play in the background. I will also prepare their handout to take home with them if they choose to continue these exercises after the lesson concludes.

Materials: I will need music for the girls, yoga mats (or a blanket; anything stable to place between the girls and the floor), our astute instructor (assuming people can be considered a material), water, and a handout for safe practice.

Directions: First, we will talk about relaxation and sleep in terms of the body. We will discuss the benefits of distressing and sleeping and the harm that not sleeping can do. Then, we will introduce the girls to the idea of yoga and meditation by discussing their previous exposure to it and any new information about it. We will highlight the physical and mental benefits of yoga, and prepare the girls for the practice of it. Then, we will proceed with the yoga class for beginners. After the class has concluded, we will discuss their reactions for the class. We will talk about how they feel, if they enjoyed it, and how they may want to use these principles in their everyday lives. The girls will be offered water for rehydration and a handout if they chose to continue the practice of yoga safely on their own at home.

Week 8, December 2nd and 3rd: Dance Party Relay!

Background: One of the main points of this program is the importance of physical activity. Dancing is a fun and easy way to raise heartrate and exercise. A lot of the time children will not even realize this is benefitting their body because it is so fun. For this lesson, the girls will be participating in a dance party. For the majority of the hour long program they will be dancing and monitoring their own heartrate.

Main Points: To learn about monitoring heart rate and the fun and importance of physical activity.

Warm-up Activity: Because we are also focusing on heartrate, we must begin in the introduction discussing the main points of heart rate when exercising. The girls will learn the differences between resting heartrate and active heart rate. They will also learn how to take their pulse. After the instructions for finding heart rate have been given and understood by the girls, we will stretch. Because of the physical nature of the activity, stretching is important for their muscles to remain strong and hydrated.

Main Activity: Before we begin, the girls will take their resting heart rates. They will record them on one sheet of paper to be kept as a record of all their recorded heart rates of the lesson. We will start playing the music and the dancing. Ideally, we will have several volunteers from Phi Sigma Sigma sorority at Salem State to encourage the dancing to some of the girls who are shy. Once everyone is moving, we will incorporate some iconic dances like the Cotton-Eyed Joe, the Cha Cha Slide, and the Hustle. Then we will shout out some more modern dances like the Dougie and the Stanky Leg. However, we can keep the girls engaged in the dances we will do that. Midway through the dance party, we will stop and take heart rate again (it should be higher because of the activity). When there is about 10 minutes left of the lesson, the dancing will stop and the girls can grab water and relax.

Debriefing: After the dancing part of the lesson has ended, we will take heart rate one more time. The girls should notice that their heart rates in the beginning and the end are lower than the one they measured in the middle. We will graph them together to visualize the heartbeats and the relation of heart rates to physical activity. We will talk about how getting your heartrate high releases endorphins in the body that activates muscle growth and mood elevation. Good things happen when people work out and that is ideally, what we will show.

Room Set-up: Because of the physical nature of the activity, the tables and chairs will be pushed aside so the girls have room to dance.

Preparation: I will prepare for this lesson by creating an appropriate playlist and providing water to remain hydrated.

Materials: I will need to bring a speaker for the music, a playlist of songs, a timer, water, and paper and pencils for the girls.

Directions: First, the girls will learn the basics of heartrate. They will learn that resting heartrate is lower than active heartrate, and how a healthy heart must be exercised regularly to remain strong. They will also learn how to take their own pulse/heartrate. Before they begin dancing the girls will take their initial heart rate and record it. The dance party will start and the girls will all dance to the music playing, both line dances and just regular radio songs. Midway through the dance, the girls will pause and take their heart beat and record it. At the end of the dancing period, the girls will take heart rate one more time and record it. Their resting heartrate should be lower than the active heartrates that was recorded. The levels of heartrate will parallel with the amount of physical activity being done by the girls, and ideally they will recognize the activity their organs to in relation to the activity they participate it daily. We will demonstrate the connection between heart rate and physical activity in a graph.

Week 9, Wednesday December 9th: Toilet Paper Pageant

Background: Beauty pageants have long been notorious for only favoring ‘pretty’ girls and promoting sexist views, however, I disagree. I think the basis of a beauty pageant is respecting the confidence and both inner and outer beauty of other women. The women in beauty pageants have learned to be confident in themselves and to project their inner beauty for the world to see via their actions. They are role models. This is the message I am attempting to embellish through this lesson.

Main Points: To demonstrate self-confidence through expressive theater.

Warm-Up Activity: As an introduction to this lesson, we are going to show the girls some images. They will be of Miss America, Taylor Swift in sweatpants, and a model with down syndrome (Madeline Stuart), Serena Williams, and Ronda Rousey. All these images have one thing in common: these women are beautiful and confident. I will ask the girls that question and tell them the answer to introduce the topic. Then, I will ask them when they feel most confident, if their confidence depends on what they are wearing, and how they react to people with high self-confidence. A confident person is going to be beautiful no matter what they are wearing which is the point in this exercise.

Main Activity: Toilet Paper Princess. Each of the girls will work together and help each girl with her toilet paper gown. We will have several volunteers helping the girls with their dresses. Once they have made their dresses we will have a little fashion show. Each girl will have a little bio read by me as they walk across the room, working their toilet paper dress. After their fashion show is over, they will take a group picture of everyone holding a banner that says the famous quote from Audrey Hepburn, “Happy girls are the prettiest.”

Debriefing: After the fashion show is over, we will throw our dresses in the trash and clean up. Then, we will have a small discussion about our fashion show. I will ask if the girls enjoyed it, if they understand that being confident has to do with their own self happiness and not any one else’s, and if they thought this exercise was a good showcase of their confidence.

Room Set-up: This activity requires space so I will move the tables and chairs off to the side once the main activity has begun.

Preparation: For this lesson, I will have the banner prepared as well as a supply of toilet paper and tape.

Materials: I will need to obtain toilet paper, tape, three photos, and a banner.

Directions: Before the girls even know the subject of the lesson, I will show them three pictures of Taylor Swift in sweatpants, Miss America, and Madeline Stuart, and I will ask them what all of these women have in common. The answer is that they are all confident and all beautiful because of that confidence. Then the girls will work together getting everyone dressed in a beautiful dress made of toilet paper and tape. Once they are all dressed, each girl will walk the runway in their dress, and they will sign a banner. After all our models have walked the line, we will take a group photo holding a signed banner that says, "Happy girls are the prettiest." Once everything is all cleaned up, we will discuss our activity and get their feedback. Ideally, they will leave with the confirmation of their own personal beauty and the knowledge that their own confidence level depends on themselves.

Week 9, Thursday December 10th: Random Act of Kindness Day

Background: It is a researched fact that helping others helps oneself. It makes a person feel good about themselves, which in turn has positive effects on the body. Mentally can influence physicality so when you think positively, your body will respond positively. It is called a “helper’s high.” This high comes from the increased release of a specific hormone in the brain, which decreases stress. Stress has incredible effects on the body, both good and bad. While stress can cause the increase of the ‘fight or flight’ response to activate muscles and adrenalin in a threatening situation, stress levels can also cause hypertension, insomnia, intestinal distress, headaches, chest pains, and worsened symptoms of diseases or illness. Because stress can have so many negative effects on the body, monitoring its levels is very important. Helping others is an easy way of lessening stress.

Main Points: To show the girls that helping others can also help themselves.

Warm-up Activity: Before we begin any preliminary discussion, I will ask the girls to write down how they feel on a scale of 1-10 (10 being the best) on a piece of paper, crumple it and throw it in a basket for me. I will be using these later for comparison. As an introduction of this activity to the girls, we will start by asking the girls if they have ever volunteered or done something for someone else. Then we will talk about how they felt after that activity. Then we will talk about the science behind that activity, the ‘helper’s high.’ This will get the girls ready for the main activity.

Main Activity: For the main activity of this lesson, I will be asking the girls to do a good deed. The good deed in question is writing letters to army soldiers. Because they work so hard to protect us on a daily basis, we should do our part and tell them how important they are. Girls will take this class period to tell a soldier just how important and appreciated he/she is. They can draw pictures, write poems, letters, anything they think the soldiers would enjoy opening and reading when they are away from their families protecting us. I will have template samples available if the girls are struggling with letter writing.

Debriefing: After the girls have finished writing the letters, we will put them in envelopes and address them. Then I will ask them to write down how they feel again on a piece of paper on a scale of 1-10, crumple it, and throw it in a basket (I will use these to compare to the rating they did in the warm-up activity, to evaluate their reaction to the activity). We will talk about how much these soldiers will appreciate these letters. Then we will discuss how they feel after doing that good deed. What they are feeling is a specific hormone levels rising and their stress levels reducing because they have spent their time making someone else happy. That feeling is beneficial, good both the sender and receiver of the letter, and this is just one small thing that

they can do to make some else happy. They have made a difference, and that gives them a feeling of importance, self-worth, and confidence.

Room Set-up: The room will be set up normally with the girls seated at tables.

Preparation: To prepare for this lesson, I will have to research the address for the letters once they are written. I will also find templates of letters for the girls to work off of.

Materials: I will need to obtain paper, pens, markers, sample templates, envelopes, stamps, and the sending address for the letters.

Directions: First, I will ask the girls to write down how they feel on a scale of 1-10 on a piece of paper and throw it in a basket for me. Then, the girls will participate in a discussion about the good deeds or volunteering that they have done in the past. We will also talk about the science behind a good deed that makes them feel good after doing it. Then we will begin the main activity of writing letters to soldiers. The girls will be able to write letters, color pictures, write poems, etc, and these letters will be placed in envelopes and addressed to be sent out. After they are done writing the letters, we will discuss their feelings after writing the letters. I will also be asking them to again rate how they feel on a scale of 1-10 on a piece of paper for me to compare their reaction to the activity. We will also discuss how they feel the soldiers will feel after having read these letters. We will discuss the activity overall, highlighting how beneficial doing good deeds can be for the person doing them. It benefits them emotionally and physically, which makes it a key element in healthy living.

Week 10, December 16th and 17th: Final Party!

Background: Over the course of the program, the girls have learned the health correlation of foods, exercise, and self-confidence. This correlation has, hopefully, led their thought process to automatically relate the food they consume to the activity they participate in to the mentality they have about themselves upon finishing these actions. Living a healthy life is a lifestyle full of coherent choices and deliberate moves. This fact is not evident to the many preteen children who enter the troublesome time of puberty lacking this knowledge and that fact is putting them at risk for health (mental and physical) suffering. Now that these girls have this knowledge, they will ideally notice the difference between good healthy choices and unhealthy ones.

Main Points: Combining the ideals of the entire program into everyday life.

Warm-up Activity: To introduce the main activity of today's lesson, we will be reminiscing about the program. I will ask the girls to talk about their favorite or their least favorite parts. We will also be taking a survey, the same survey done on the first day of the program. Their answers from both will be compared to evaluate the overall success or failure of the program.

Main Activity: As a relaxing celebration of the end of the program, the main activity will be a party. However, for this party, we will be employing all of the healthy lessons we have learned throughout the entire program. Therefore, we will be offering active games, dancing, healthy snacks, and water to drink. The girls have earned a celebration of the end of the program, and what better way to celebrate than by employing all of the healthy living ideals we have discussed over the last 10 weeks. The girls will be free to mingle, play games, and eat/drink whatever they chose. As a bonus, we will be having a prize table with enough prizes for each girl. Over the course of the program, I have kept a tally of the "MVP of the day" which just praised the girl who participated the most each lesson by giving them a star sticker. The girls were competing the entire program for stickers, and the person with the most stickers gets the first pick from the prizes. The person with the second highest amount of stickers gets the next pick, and so on. The point of the prize table is to give the girls something to work towards, a reason to participate, and a prize overall for completing the program. They have earned it.

Debriefing: As a great end of the program debriefing, I will be asking the girls to write down one motto or one thing that they will have taken away from this program on a piece of paper and hand it to me at the end of the class.

Room Set-up: The tables will be moved out of the way to allow room for the girls to dance/play games, and they will hold the food and drink.

Preparation: The preparation I will need to do for this lesson will be to bring the games, music, and food for the party. I will also need to shop for the prizes.

Materials: I will need to bring games, music, food, drink, and writing utensils/paper for the girls.

Directions: First, the girls will be introduced to the party by having a small discussion about what they enjoyed and disliked about the program. Then, they will take a small quiz that they had previously taken on the first day of the program to see if there is a difference in their answers. Then, the main activity of the party will commence and they will be free to 'party' as they please. During the party, they will be able to choose a prize from the prize table depending on where they ranked on the "MVP of the day" chart. After the party has concluded, the girls will be asked to write a motto they have taken away from this class on a sheet of paper and hand it to me. I will then bid them farewell for this is the last time we will be formally meeting.

Handouts

Handout #1

Yes to This and No to That

- Eating breakfast makes you more alert.
- Chocolate is bad for you.
- Juices are just as good as water.
- You should exercise at least 150 minutes a week.
- Playing sports is the only way for a kid to exercise.
- Playing on a team only exercising the body, not the mind.
- All teenagers need the same amount of Calorie intake in a day.
- Chicken is the only way to get protein and beef is the only way to get iron.
- Everyone needs are least 8 hours of sleep per night.
- If you eat fried food, you are unhealthy.
- Drinking water makes your hair less frizzy.
- Eating marshmallows can help a sore throat.
- You are all beautiful.

HANDOUT #2 Water Necessity Acting Prompts

You have just gotten to your best friend's birthday party! You were so excited about the party all day that you rushed through basketball practice to make it. You didn't even stop for water breaks you just kept moving to get to the party faster! When you finally got there, everyone was playing Truth or Dare and eating Doritos. You picked dare and they dared you to chug the whole can of soda you just opened. You are no coward so you did it! And washed it down with a few chips and grabbed another soda. About an hour later, you have a terrible headache and a bit of a sour stomach. What should you do?

1 person: the sick girl

1 person: the girl with the birthday

You are a star soccer player! After a whole day of game after game, you finally have a break to relax with your teammates. You feel a little lightheaded but you shake it off because it's probably just the rush of winning games all day that is making your head spin. "Come over here and take it easy before the next game!" says your mother from the sidelines. But, instead of taking a break in the shade with your family, you race after a soccer ball with one of your teammates. Uh no! All of a sudden, you feel so dizzy that you trip over the ball and fall! Your ankle is swollen and it really really hurts! What happened? What should you do now?

1 person: the star soccer player

1 person: the teammate

1 person: the mom

You and your best friend are by the lockers before class starts. You see the cutest boy in school! You have a huge crush on him, but you are so self-conscious because you have a huge pimple on your forehead and your frizzy hair will not behave today. Oh my gosh, he is coming over to you! “Hey, how are you?” he asks. You avoid eye contact and say fine but you have to go and you run away. What should you have done instead to feel more confident?

1 person: the girl with the pimple

1 person: the friend

1 person: the boy

It is a super hot day on the beach in the summer. You are there with your family having so much fun! Unfortunately, you realize that everyone has drunken all the drinks that you brought with you. The only thing left is watermelon, and some cut up vegetables like cucumber and celery. It is getting so hot that you are not having as much fun. You used to play in the sand but now you sat on a blanket and do not want to move. Even the younger kids are starting to feel lazy and whiney because they are hot. This is your favorite place to be so you don't want to listen to your mom when she sees all the kids stop playing and thinks it is time to go What should you do?

1 person: the girl on the beach

1 person: the mom

1-2 people: the younger whiney hot kids

Handout #4: Fake Food items for the Grocery Games (need pictures for each with nutrition labels)

Food items:

Spinach

Wheat bread

Plain wraps

Rotisserie Chicken

Cucumber

Smartfood popcorn

Baked plain Layes

Tomato cluster

Red onion

Red green and yellow peppers

Fresh broccoli

Celery

Deli roast beef

Mayo

Mustard

Italian dressing

Deli ham

Deli Turkey

Deli Cheese

Package salad

Steamable broccoli or corn

Instant potatoes

Kraft Mac n Cheese

Sweet potato

Apples/oranges

Peaches

Strawberries

Rice Pilaf

Hamburgers

Hamburger buns

Steaks

Milk

Frozen meatballs

Handout #3: Nutrition labels



Ingredients: Corn, Vegetable Oil (Sunflower, Canola, and/or Corn Oil), Maltodextrin (Made From Corn), Salt, Cheddar Cheese (Milk, Cheese Cultures, Salt, Enzymes), Whey, Monosodium Glutamate, Buttermilk, Romano Cheese (Part-Skim Cow's Milk, Cheese Cultures, Salt, Enzymes), Whey Protein Concentrate, Onion Powder, Corn Flour, Natural and Artificial Flavor, Dextrose, Tomato Powder, Lactose, Spices, Artificial Color (Including Yellow 6, Yellow 5, and Red 40), Lactic Acid, Citric Acid, Sugar, Garlic Powder, Skim Milk, Red and Green Bell Pepper Powder, Disodium Inosinate, and Disodium Guanylate.

CONTAINS MILK INGREDIENTS.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 oz (28g/About 11 chips)

Amount Per Serving

Calories 140 Calories from Fat 70

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 8g **12%**

Saturated Fat 1g **5%**

Trans Fat 0g

Cholesterol 0mg **0%**

Sodium 210mg **9%**

Total Carbohydrate 16g **5%**

Dietary Fiber 1g **4%**

Sugars 0g

Protein 2g

Vitamin A 2% • Vitamin C 0%

Calcium 0% • Iron 0%

Thiamin 2% • Vitamin B₆ 2%

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:

		Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g	
Sat Fat	Less than	20g	25g	
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg	
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg	
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g	
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g	

Calories per gram:

Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4

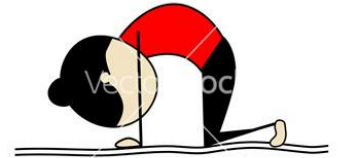
Yoga Poses



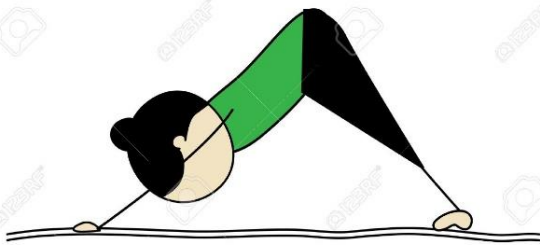
Tree Pose



Cat and Cow
Pose



Downward Facing Dog



Forward Fold



These poses are simple and can help a lot! Tell a parent or guardian about them and do them together! Use caution when doing the poses and consult a doctor before practicing them regularly to ensure you are physically able.

Evaluation

To measure the effectiveness of the program on the group I will be using:

- Pre/post survey administered on day one of the program and the last day
 - This survey will be given on the first and last day of the program. It has six questions on it that are asking informational question to gage what they have gained in terms of knowledge. The main goal of the program is for the girls to gain a better knowledge of healthy life practices and these questions will gage whether or not they have retained that information. One question on the survey asks their attitude after exercising. This may seem as though I am evaluating a change in attitude when in actuality the question is there as an informational question because an element of the program they will learn is that biologically exercise releases mood elevators that will elevate their attitude after exercising. It seems like a personal question, when it is actually information. Though a change in attitude would be above and beyond what I am aiming for, the informational answer is all that will be evaluated.
- Pre/post survey administered before and after each individual session
 - Because each lesson has its own smaller objective, which contributes to the overall goal of gaining knowledge, each lesson has a pre and post survey. In the warm-up activity of each lesson, we will be introducing the topic gaging what the girls already know on the topic. We will then begin an activity which highlights an element of the topic that the girls will either not be exposed to or build upon that exposure. In the debriefing portion of the lesson, we will be asking the girls their reaction to the activity. This discussion will gage what they have learned/ gotten out of the lesson. This oral survey will then allow me to evaluate how effective that particular activity was for the girls.
 - One particular activity asks the girls to rate their mood before and after the main activity on a scale of 1 to 10 with 10 being the best. This will be done during the lesson where we are writing letters to soldiers, which is meant to teach how helping others can also help oneself be happier. The purpose of this evaluation is to gage whether or not he girls have had a chemical release of oxytocin in their brains, which will cause their mood to elevate after having done something nice for someone else. This is called a ‘helper’s high’ and is a proven chemical reaction. I will be surveying the girls to see how much this service activity reacted with their mood to see how much they felt like they were helping others through the activity. It is so I can evaluate whether this act of random kindness resonated enough with the girls or if this “helper’s high” can better be demonstrated in a more direct way for the future.

Name: _____

Date: _____

BEFORE/AFTER THE PROGRAM

1.) What is the first thing that comes to mind when you hear the word, “healthy”?

2.) Why is it important to eat healthy foods?

3.) How happy do you feel after exercising? Select one of these pictures.

(Pictures show emotions ranging from happy to neutral to confused to angry.)

4.) List as many benefits of drinking water as you can.

5.) List as many exercising activities as you can.

6.) What is one way you can be healthy without exercising or eating healthy foods?

Results

Overall:

The results of this service project are very subjective. Because each participant's reaction to the program is individual, the results are all dependent on the specific participant's feelings, reactions, and outside influence. The aim, however, of the overall program is to teach the students more about health and wellness and provide a fun outlet that fosters this learning while also fostering the positive connotation of the term health. With each week of the program, the goals and objectives are specific. Each class begins with a goal of what is to be accomplished by the end of that class period. This proves that the small goals of each class period are meant to accomplish the overall goal of fostering fun and knowledge within the class.

Specifics:

WEEK 1: What does healthy mean?

Wednesday: The girls were very enthusiastic about the class upon beginning. The warm-up activity of the word clouds were a success in that every girl participated and contributed words that were true to the activity (No nonsense words/joking around). The main activity was also a success in that the girls were actively participating, and when I asked why they had chosen the wall that they had chosen, they gave clear and correct explanations to their thinking. They also participated in the survey with open-ended answers that demonstrated their focused minds and effort.

Thursday: The Thursday group was a little less focused. While they were enthusiastic about the material, they were very focused on the cooking aspect of the course. This prompted more activities with rewards to drive motivation as opposed to simply participating in the fun. Regardless, the girls positively participated in the warm-up activity with clear and logical answers. They also included more drawings as opposed to just words indicating that they are a more creative group, which explains the need for reward and the unfocused excitement. The main activity and survey were cut short by a Fire Drill, which also hindered focus to an already unfocused group. They enjoyed the activity but were less logical in their answers. They have the understanding of the subject, but may need more structure in the program to ensure the objectives of each class be met. Several girls speak better Spanish than they do English, which proposes a problem for me because I do not speak Spanish. However, I have gotten

Spanish note cards to aid in direction, translations of activities, as well as the aid of other teachers who are fluent in Spanish. This obstacle requires additional attention, but ideally, it will not hinder the success of the program.

Week 2: The Coolness of Water!

Wednesday: The class had a very positive response to this week's activity. To begin I gave the girls the option of a beverage to choose, either water, Ginger Ale, or juice (apple or orange). I expected variety in their choices, though I should have assumed that the girls would all flock to the soda. I learned this was a rare option in Girls' Incorporated as it is a more expensive choice. They all chose soda and the only girls who chose water were the ones who went up after the soda's had already been taken. When I asked why they chose soda instead of juice answers ranged from 'I like this better' to 'juice had a lot of sugar in it so I chose soda.' Though this is true, water would have been a better choice than both of the other choices, and that is what I told them to conclude the warm up activity. The main activity, acting out scenes where water was the solution to a variety of different ailments, was also a little difficult. Though the girls had fun with the activity, the focus on the effect of water was less obvious to them. They offered solutions to the problems, which highlighted their problem solving skills, however they overlooked that water was the easiest and fastest cure. After a small post-activity discussion, they understood the role water should have played in their scenes. Having finished with roughly 15 extra minutes, we had a small dance party, where the girls were able to become more comfortable around each other and raise their heart rates with a little physical activity (dancing).

Thursday: The Thursday class responded more to the point of the lesson, the role of water. They realized with the warm up exercise that this was a 'test' and I wanted them to choose the water. Most of the girls did choose either water or juice, while a few chose the soda. To prevent what had happened on Wednesday where every girl chose the soda without even looking at the other options, I offered half as many small soda cans, which forced the girls who did not get the soda to get something else. When I asked why they chose water, they responded saying they were thirsty and juice would not satisfy that. When I asked why they chose juice, they responded saying they liked that there was vitamins in the drink as well as water. Both of their answers were true, and we discussed it more as a class. The main activity was also more responsive to the overall point of water playing a large role. The girls' first solution to the scenes' problems were water, which was exactly what the objective of the activity was. The language barrier that was apparent in this class last week was dealt with this week by asking one of

the bilingual students to act as a translator. That girl was awarded the daily MVP award because of the participation and helpfulness.

Week 3: Planting Day!

Wednesday: This week began a little roughly. The supplies were an issue because I did not realize that small potting pots were not in season and had several home depot workers looking for them. When they found none, because it is not planting season, I had to improvise. Instead of using potting plants, the activity became more creative and we used old milk cartons from their snack time the week before. This alteration ended up being a happy accident because in using the recycled cartons we discussed with the girls the value of recycling in reality of being green and helping the planet be healthy as well as helping the custodial staff at Girls Incorporated because the half drunken milk cartons were beginning to stink up the trash cans. They now recycle the cartons from every snack time for different uses around the building, ours being the first. Using the cartons also provided a creative preliminary activity that was unexpected. In order to tell the cartons of each girl apart, I had them first cover the cartons with masking tape to create a blank surface on the carton and then gave them markers to color on them pictures and their name to tell which plant is whose. They enjoyed this aspect making the quick planting process more exciting. The main activity went very well. Most of the girls have had experience planting whether in Girls Inc or at home, so many of them knew what to do and helped the girls who were not as familiar. The activity went smoothly and the MVP was awarded at the end of class with no issues. However, the class ended with 10 minutes extra, so we, as a class, did the Cotton Eyed Joe. This dance highlighted the idea that this is a form of exercise, it is fun, and can be done anywhere at any time.

Thursday: This class was a little quieter because we were missing several girls. The warm up discussions let me know how many girls were familiar with the process of planting and its benefits, and most of the girls had experience with it. They decorated their cartons and even had some volunteers who made the cartons for the girls who were absent. They then planted the basil, cilantro, oregano, and bean seeds without an issue. We all discussed the planting as it was happening. Because the group was smaller and the girls were well versed in the process of planting, the main activity ended with 20 minutes to spare. To fill that time after a post discussion about the planting benefits and experience, we played musical chairs. After one round of musical chairs, we had just enough time to award the MVP prize to the girl who helped me the most with the organization of this activity (because I had no members of Phi Sigma Sigma Sorority to aid me in the teaching this class).

Week 4: Rainbow Eating!

Wednesday: The Wednesday class began with excitement because it was the first day we were cooking/making something. For the warm up activity, I had the girls draw fruits and vegetables of corresponding colors within the colored outline of a rainbow. They did this for roughly 15 minutes, trying to get as many foods as they could think of in each color. They drew the foods and labeled them, and we hung up the picture on the wall. Then, for the main activity, I had the girls making pasta salad. The pasta that was used was fortified and whole wheat making it high in protein fiber, and vitamins, which made it a healthy carb for the girls to be eating. The veggies that I provided were a variety of colors including red (tomatoes), orange (carrots), yellow (bell peppers), green (broccoli), and cucumbers (green and white). I also, offered the girls Italian dressing as a dressing for the pasta. I chose this meal because it was simple to make because everything was premade and because it had a lot of color options to choose to add to it which connected this activity to the activity of eating all different vegetables in different colors. Surprisingly, I had a lot of girls who did not like the food; they were not asked to eat it, just to try the veggies they have never tried before. After that they were allowed to throw out anything they did not want. To gather the girls after the food was cleaned up we started a conga line in the class and when there were no more girls sitting down, I knew everyone was ready to move onto the next activity. As a cooldown we did the cha cha slide dance, and we awarded the daily MVP award to the girl who was the most willing to participate.

Thursday: The Thursday girls were more willing to participate. They loved the warm up activity, and built off of the vegetables and fruits from the Wednesday class (their rainbow was hanging up so they could reference it if they chose to). They spent more time doing the warm up because they were so excited about the foods they could think of. Where Wednesday kind of lost interest and that is how I could tell the activity was over, Thursday kept excitement. They thus had a little bit less time than the other girls did with creating their individual pasta salads. However, they needed less time because they were more excited and willing to participate with that as well. They took less time making it, ate it quickly, and even went back for seconds. They all cleaned up without me having to ask, and we moved the tables because they asked me to play musical chairs. Being that I was going to have them dance the cha cha slide, musical chairs was another physical activity alternative for them that I approved of. After the game of musical chairs, I awarded the MVP award to a girl who was very excited about the activities. I wish I could have awarded more than one daily MVP because this class was so willing and excited to participate.

Week 5: Good choice or a bad choice?

Wednesday: The class got off to a rough start because we had technical difficulties with the projector. It took about 15 minutes to get the clips of Super-Size me up and running for the girls to watch. Once it was finally working, we were about 15-20 minutes behind schedule, and I knew the girls would enjoy watching the That's So Raven episode more than the clips from Super Size Me so I cut that a little short only showing the beginning and end result. The girls made me verbally aware of how much they disliked the video. They enjoyed That's So Raven though, which had similar messages in a more age-friendly medium. The girls gave me a list of their favorite food/drink from Dunkin Donuts the day before, and I sent my volunteer aid to get the healthier version of those foods. The chocolate glazed turned into chocolate frosted to avoid deep frying the donut, and strawberry coolatas turned into strawberry coolata lights with less sugar and less whip cream. The subtle changes in their Dunkin orders were meant to show them that little changes in their choices make a big difference and a lot of the time tastes the same. This week's lesson was meant to show the extreme of unhealthy eating through the videos and the ease of healthier alternatives in fast foods.

Thursday: Thursday's class went slightly smoother. Though we still had technical difficulties with the projector, I eliminated the Super Size Me clips. Because yesterday the girls did not get much out of watching the little bit that they did get to see, and the fact that That's So Raven had similar messages, I thought it was better for the flow of the lesson to eliminate it. That being said, we took a moment at the beginning of class to talk about the messages of eating bad foods all the time. We mentioned what they eat now when they go to fast foods, what they feel like after eating them, and how they can make changes to their diets that will make a big difference. Then we watched the episode. After the show ended, we talked about the evidence in the show that supported the theory that the food was doing bad things, effecting mood, energy, schoolwork, acne, weight, etc. They responded intelligently, picking up all of those elements. To end the class I gave them their Dunkin Donuts treats, turning their coolatas into coolata lights, their fried donuts into baked donuts and their muffins into reduced fat blueberry muffins. They said the treats tasted the same if not better than their old ones.

Week 6: Grocery Games!:

Wednesday: We did not have class this day because it was Veteran's Day.

Thursday: We played a game this class about Calories. To start, we had a discussion about Calories. The girls knew already that those are the things that make you fat when you eat a lot of them, which is true. However, they did not understand that the body needs calories to survive and while we

shouldn't eat a lot of them, we do need a balanced amount of them to survive strongly and healthily. Then we played the grocery games. The girls were split into groups of three, and asked to work as a team to choose from roughly 15 different food items from the 'grocery store' (tables off to the side) which had been labeled with their calorie count. The trick was that their meals had to be less than or equal to 500 calories. One group made a lean red meat burger with a strawberry smoothie. The second group made chicken breast, rice pilaf, and steamed broccoli and spinach, with a piece of bread on the side. The last group made a fruit salad and a spinach salad with chicken on top. All of the meals that the girls made stayed under the 500 calorie cap and the girls actively avoided the trick food choices such as box mac and cheese and instant potatoes that were high in salt and calories. The girls were competing for a prize, but because all of the girls created healthy meals according to the rules, all of the girls got a prize. To end the class we played freezedance in the classroom to end on an active and fun note.

Week 7: Yoga class for beginners:

Wednesday: The Wednesday class was a little rambunctious this week. I had Victoria, a licensed Yoga instructor who normally works for the Gasset Fitness Center at Salem State University, come in for the hour-long program. She had experience teaching young children's' yoga classes in her past so she came in with several games. She had the girls set up the mats in a big circle around the room. She began by stretching and talking about the basis of yoga so the younger girls would understand. Once everyone was stretched out, she began showing/demonstrating the poses to the girls giving their common name and then their Sanscript name (The girls really liked the funny sounding words). The next part of the class was a game called 'Duck Duck Pose.' It is similar to Duck Duck Goose except when the tagger tags a girl in the girl instead of saying 'goose' she would say a pose and then girl would race around the circle back to the mat and strike that pose. The girls really enjoyed that, especially because they had so much energy this week. Lastly, she shut the lights off and asked the girls to lay on the mat and relax in a sleeplike trance to relax and end class.

Thursday: The Thursday class had a different instructor, Maggie. Maggie also teaches at the Fitness Center, but she had less experience teaching children's yoga. Because of that, she set up a class that was more adult in nature. The girls set up the mats facing her in the front of the class and went through the stretches as anyone in a yoga class would. This class seemed to enjoy the basis of yoga more than Wednesday because even without the slightly juvenile structure of the class, they were more willing to participate fully and pay attention. The class ended like Wednesday with a sleep-like relaxation time. The girls enjoyed this so much, they asked me to do more yoga at the end of the class

every week. I handed out a handout with picture instructions of some poses for safe practice at home for the girls.

Week 8, Dance Party Relay

Wednesday: This class is doing a Dance contest today. What began as a relay went more into a team dance contest to make it more fun for the girls, they love a little competition. Before they even split into teams, I taught the girls how to take their heart rate and they took their resting heart rate to be compared later to the active one. There were 9 girls in class today and I had two volunteers from my sorority to help out. So, both of my volunteers and one girl from class chose to be the judges. The girls were split into two teams of 4, each girl choosing one song to be their competitive dance. The dances we did were Hit the Quan, the Chicken Dance, Whip and Nae Nae, and the Cha Cha Slide. After each round there was a winner, and the team with the highest points won. After the winning team was chosen, the teammates did a free style dance off for the one winner. The dance winner got a prize, the daily MVP got a prize, and the one girl who volunteered to be a judge also got a small prize for forfeiting her ability to win in the contest. The girls ended the class by taking their heart rate one more time to observe that it rose after physical activity.

Thursday: The plan for Thursday was to do the same as Wednesday, however we only had 7 girls in class and no volunteers. So, two/three girls were judges and there were two teams of two. They competed for the 4 songs, but the judges wanted to dance too, so the contest turned more into a dance party. We ended with just doing a lot of dances as a class like the Cotton Eyed Joe and the Macarena. Because of this there was no dance winner, but there was a daily MVP for the girl who was both a judge and a dancer and participated with no hesitation in any position. This class was a little less organized in the contest portion of the day, but they seemed to enjoy the physical nature of the class. And, they began by taking their resting heart rate and ended with their active heart rate noticing a change, which was the overall point of the active class.

Week 9: Toilet Paper Princess Pageant/Random Acts of Kindness

The intent for this week was for the Wednesday class to do the Toilet Paper Princess Pageant and for Thursday to do the Random act of Kindness activity. These activities were for the same week because both evoke positive self-image, whether that is through inner beauty or feeling good about oneself by doing good things for others. However, both sets of girls wanted to do both activities and it

seemed unfair to have them do one and not the other. Therefore, I modified the activities so there was enough time in the one-hour program to do both.

Wednesday: For the first half an hour, we did the Random act of Kindness activity. Originally, I intended them to write Christmas/holiday cards to soldiers overseas. However, they expressed that they did this activity during Veterans Day. So, Instead, they wrote Christmas Cards to a girl named Safyre Terry in New York. Her story was on the news; she is an 8-year-old girl who was orphaned from her father and three siblings in a fatal fire three years before. For Christmas she got a cardholder and expressed that for Christmas, she wanted to get as many cards as she could. So, the girls wrote her Christmas cards. Then, for the second half of class, we made dresses out of toilet paper for each of the girls. They loved the game of being designers and when I asked how they felt halfway through their fashion show they all responded with 'like princesses' which was exactly the feeling this activity was supposed to evoke. The MVP of the day was one girl who has been present for every lesson since the beginning and consistently participates positively in class.

Thursday: Thursday was the same as the Wednesday Class. They began by making Christmas Cards for Safyre Terry. They really enjoyed it and told me that they did this activity in school as well. Because they knew of the story already, I think that made them more interested in making the cards for her. They spent more than half of the class making cards because of that. When we reached the second part of the class, the girls immediately split into partners without me having to ask them to do so. They made their own dresses out of toilet paper. I let them use their phones to take pictures of their creations because they were designers now. The initial plan was to have them pose with a poster that had a quote from Aubrey Hepburn, but some of the girls wanted to be a designer instead of a model and some did not return the permission slip for pictures to be taken, so we opted out of that portion of the lesson. The class ended with a cleanup of the toilet paper and the MVP was given to one of the girls who had happily participated with each part of the lesson.

Week 10: Final Party

Wednesday and Thursday: On the last day of this class, we had a party. There was games, Dance Dance Revolution, dancing, food, drink, and a prize table. The Prize table was an incentive throughout the program, the girl with the most MVP awards gets first dibs. The girls were allowed to mingle, eat, and play for the hour. Before this began, I asked them to retake the initial survey that was given on the first day of classes to see if their answers differ. I also asked them to write on a piece of paper their favorite part of the class. This is for evaluation purposes. Once these were done, the girls were allowed

to enjoy their last day of the program leisurely, subtly exercising and eating the provided healthy food without even realizing they are employing the objectives of the program overall.

Discussion

Table 1: Overall Progression of Answers between Pre/Post Survey

Students	Question1	Question2	Question3	Question4	Question5	Question6
#1	↑	~	~	↑	~	↑
#2	~	↑	↓	↓	↑	~
#3	↑	↑	~	↑	↑	↑
#4	↓	↓	~	↓	↓	↓
#5	↓	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑
#6	~	~	↓	↑	↓	↑
#7	↑	↑	~	↑	↑	~
#8	↑	↑	↑	~	↓	↓
#9	~	~	~	↑	↑	↓
#10	~	~	~	↑	~	~
#11	↑	↑	~	↑	↓	~
#12	↑	↑	~	~	↑	↑
#13	↑	↑	↑	↑	~	~

Legend:

↑ = This upwards arrow represents the answers of the Post Survey being more knowledgeable, containing more examples, and/or using more sophisticated and learned vocabulary than the answers of the Pre Survey. Essentially, demonstrating a positive correlation between knowledge acquired and time/exposure to new material to be learned in a classroom setting over the 10 week class duration.

↓ = The downwards arrow represents the answers of the Post Survey being less knowledgeable, containing less examples, and/or using less sophisticated or learned vocabulary than the answers of the Pre survey. Essentially, demonstrating a negative correlation between knowledge acquired and time/exposure to new material to be learned in a classroom setting over the 10 week class duration.

~ = The tilde represents that the answers of both the Pre and Post Survey were either the same answer or were of the same academic caliber. Essentially, demonstrating that no knowledge was neither gained nor lost over the course of the 10 week class.

The table above is the generalized presentation of the information of the class/study. The goal was that the girls would have learned something from the 10 week-course that they did not know before (pertaining to the field of personal health and wellness, both mentally and physically). The table separates the six questions on the Pre/Post-Survey survey by each student. Because the survey was given at the beginning of the class and the last day of the class with the same questions, the point was to see if the answers that the girls provided demonstrated a larger knowledge of the question topics. This would be evident by any of the following characteristics of answers: more knowledgeable answers, use of specific vocabulary learned throughout the course, more critical thinking related to a topic, more examples provided to support an idea, and more learned topic foundation of their answers. This is measured in the table above by upwards arrows, downwards arrows, and the tilde.

The upward arrow is referring to the idea that the student's answers to the same question improved academically in the Post-Survey as compared to the Pre-Survey. For example, Student #1 showed improvement and thus an "↑" for question #4 because her initial answer for listing as many benefit of drinking water as possible was "makes you pee and is refreshing" while her second answer is "everything around you is made of water." Her answer shows improvement because instead of just understanding that when you drink water you then have to urinate, she understood that water is in your drinks but also in your food, in your body, and in your environment. Therefore, she shows her knowledge that the benefits of water are vast and thus her answer is vague.

The downward arrow refers to the idea that the student's answers to the same question decreased in academic quality in the Post-Survey as compared to the Pre-Survey. For example, Student #5 showed a decrease in answer quality for question #1 and thus received a "↓" in the table. She

initially answered the question of “the first words that comes to mind when you hear the word ‘healthy’” by saying “vegetables and fruit and milk,” and her second answer was “vegetables.” She was able to list two more associations the first time around than she did the second, which shows a decrease in answer quality. Though this does not prove that the 10-week class caused her to lose that knowledge, it does not support that the class aided her in learning of additional information.

The tilde represents the answers of students who were given the same question and answered it in either the same way or in a way of equal quality. Basically, this is when the child answers the same question the same way without being effected by anything that was taught over the course of the class. This does not support the idea that the class taught them something because of the stability of their answers being unchanged throughout both surveys. For example, Student #2 remained unchanged and thus received a tilde for question #1. They were asked “what the first words that come to mind when they hear the word ‘healthy’ and she responded initially with “fruits” and responded secondly with “vegetables.” Because the answers were not increasing or decreasing in number of examples and because the one word answer can be put on the same level of academic knowledge, this student’s answers proved of equal caliber of answer and thus unchanging. This variable is a sort of buffer for the study because it allows the student to be placed in an intermediate grouping of learners as opposed to being placed inappropriately in either of the extremist alternative categories.

Table 2: Statistics and Interpretations of Question Response

	% ↑	Interpretation	% ↓	Interpretation	% ~	Interpretation
Question1	54%	54% of the students who answered question 1 had an increased quality of an answer	15%	15% of the students who answered question 1 had a decrease in the quality of answer	30%	30% of students had the same or academically equivalent answers
Question2	62%	62% of the students who answers question 1 an increased quality of an answer	8%	8% of the students who answered question 1 had a decrease in the quality of answer	30%	30% of students had the same or academically equivalent answers
Question3	15%	15% of the students who answers question 1 an increased quality of an answer	23%	23% of the students who answered question 1 had a decrease in the quality of answer	62%	62% of students had the same or academically equivalent answers
Question4	69%	69% of the students who answers question 1 an increased quality of an answer	15%	15% of the students who answered question 1 had a decrease in the quality of answer	15%	15% of students had the same or academically equivalent answers
Question5	46%	46% of the students who answers question 1 an increased quality of an answer	30%	30% of the students who answered question 1 had a decrease in the quality of answer	23%	23% of students had the same or academically equivalent answers
Question6	38%	38% of the students who answers question 1 an increased quality of an answer	23%	23% of the students who answered question 1 had a decrease in the quality of answer	38%	38% of students had the same or academically equivalent answers

The table above is a further description and analysis of Table 1. This particular specification is focused on each question of the survey. Because it is possible that the survey progression was based off the linguistics of the questions, as they were not changed or clarified between pre and post testing, this table was necessary. It outlines the improvement, deterioration, or neutrality of answers from each question. For example, question 6 showed 38% improved answers, 23% decreasing answer quality, and 38% neutral answers. In non-technical language, these statistics can be inferred as describing the

strength of the question. Because only 23% of all of the students had a decrease in answer quality while 76% of the students answered with neutral or improved answers, it can be said that this question did not hinder learning as much as it fostered it. This type of analysis on each question is how the researcher can tell which questions made the biggest impact on the learning of the students/participants, i.e. which questions to keep and which to rewrite for next time with the aim of getting higher neutral/improvement percentages and less deterioration. Looking at this table overall, it can be said that because all questions had a 30% or lower rate of decreasing answer quality, the quality of questions is suitable and not hindering. However, because the improvement percentages compete with the neutral percentages throughout (4 out of 6 being higher, one being the same, and one being less than neutral), the specificity of the questions may need to be strengthened. It is possible the questions, while not confusing, did not foster critical and thus improving cognitive processes. Perhaps when revamping the questions multiple-choice options could foster more of a thinking process or offering less open ended questions as opposed to fill in the blank or other options that allow critical thinking but not completely self-motivating thought.

Table 3: Statistics and interpretation of individual student progression for all survey questions

	% ↑	Interpretation	% ↓	Interpretation	% ~	interpretation
Student #1	3/6 = 50%	Student showed improvement in 33% of her answers	0	Student showed 17% decline in quality of answers	3/6 = 50%	Student showed 50% equivalent quality of answer throughout
Student #2	2/6 = 33%	Student showed improvement in 33% of her answers	2/6 = 33%	Student showed 33% decline in quality of answers	2/6 = 33%	Student showed 33% equivalent quality of answer throughout
Student #3	5/6 = 83%	Student showed improvement in 83% of her answers	0	Student did not show any decline in answer quality	1/6 = 17%	Student showed 17% equivalent quality of answer throughout
Student #4	0%	Student did not show improvement in any answer	5/6 = 83%	Student showed 83% decline in quality of answers	1/6 = 17%	Student showed 17% equivalent quality of answer throughout
Student #5	4/6 = 67%	Student showed improvement in 67% of her answers	2/6 = 33%	Student showed 33% decline in quality of answers	0%	Student did not show any answers of equal quality throughout pre-post testing
Student #6	2/6 = 33%	Student showed improvement in 33% of her answers	2/6 = 33%	Student showed 33% decline in quality of answers	2/6 = 33%	Student showed 33% equivalent quality of answer throughout
Student #7	4/6 = 67%	Student showed improvement in 67% of her answers	0%	Student did not show any decline in quality of answer	2/6 = 33%	Student showed 33% equivalent quality of answer throughout
Student #8	3/6 = 50%	Student showed improvement in 50% of her answers	2/6 = 33%	Student showed 33% decline in quality of answers	1/6 = 17%	Student showed 17% equivalent quality of answer throughout
Student #9	2/6 = 33%	Student showed improvement in 33% of her answers	1/6 = 17%	Student showed 17% decline in quality of answers	3/6 = 50%	Student showed 50% equivalent quality of answer throughout
Student #10	1/6 = 17%	Student showed improvement in 17% of her answers	0%	Student did not show any decline in answer quality	5/6 = 83%	Student showed 83% equivalent quality of answer throughout
Student #11	3/6 = 50%	Student showed improvement in 50% of her answers	1/6 = 17%	Student showed 17% decline in quality of answers	2/6 = 33%	Student showed 33% equivalent quality of answer throughout
Student #12	4/6 = 67%	Student showed improvement in 67% of her answers	0%	Student did not show any decline in quality of answers	2/6 = 33%	Student showed 33% equivalent quality of answer throughout
Student #13	4/6 = 67%	Student showed improvement in 67% of her answers	0%	Student did not show any decline in answer quality	2/6 = 33%	Student showed 33% equivalent quality of answer throughout

Table 3 is another derivative table spawning from Table 1. This table is describing the individual student progression for each question. This table is made to specify if a certain student or situation may cause an unforeseen alteration in results, which can account for a certain outlier in overall statistics. It is

possible that one student is more inclined mentally to do well on the surveys and thus yields an overall improved result for every question of the survey. Or vice versa, a student may have an individual circumstance in which she is not as inclined to focus and give effort and thus received poor survey improvement. Both of these extremes would cause a spike in one direction or another in the overall statistics, so having a better comparison specifically for each student allows further exploration into the mentality of a student participating in the study. For example, Student #4 can be considered an outlier participant because she was the only student to not show any improvement in any answers, and show higher levels of deteriorating intellectual answers than neutrality. This is unusual considering this negative correlation between time spent in class and learned material is not consistent throughout the participants. Thus, there must be something outside of class which is hindering her positive progression. Reversely, Student #3 showed zero levels of deteriorating answer quality. In fact, she showed an 83% improved answer rating and 17% neutrality, which can be interpreted as all of her answers being of equal caliber or improved. She has shown through this statistic to have definitely benefitted intellectually from the class over the course of the semester for some unknown reason. Whatever drives the motivation or lack thereof in a student is not known but outliers skew the overall data shown in Table 1 which makes individual analysis necessary for data regulation.

Conclusion

The hypothesis for this service project was very simple: That by teaching a fun and interactive health and wellness class, preteen girls will have fun and retain knowledge about their well being both mentally, physically, and socially. This was accomplished.

The girls were so enthusiastic to be learning the material. Each class period was filled to capacity with new knowledge, activities, social interaction, self-examination, and teamwork. When I asked the girls at the end of the class to write their favorite part of the class, most of them responded positively for the entire class. I took this superficially as simply admitting that the class as a whole was fun. I had several girls throughout the semester tell me that they enjoyed coming to class because it wasn't boring and they were allowed to be crazy. While I will not admit that my class was crazy, I did allow them to do the activities while socializing, having music playing, and relaxing. I did this for several reasons. One was because this was a health and wellness class, and while knowledge was enforced throughout, the class foundation is physical activity; so letting the girls walk around, dance, and be a little crazy supported an objective the class had. A second reason was because playing music and allowing socializing allowed the girls to relax, which released a lot of the stress they were learning to deal with. They were learning how to prosper in that relaxed setting because the best learning is done with others when the mind is at ease, which then fosters cognitive growth.

Their growth in knowledge was also impressive. It was unrealistic to expect the girls to retain all the new information I gave them since this was an after school program and not a required 6th grade class for them. A part of them was not interested in learning new things simply because this was not

school and the separation of setting employed a separation of cognitive readiness. This is why most of the learning and thinking they did in my class was more individual and indirectly encouraged as opposed to directly taught. I allowed the girls to opt out of any activity they did not feel comfortable with because of their physical condition on that day, confidence level, personal reasons, etc. Because of this the participation in the class was solely taking place from girls who were excited to participate, which then influenced those who were not as enthusiastic to join in. Activities done that were fun did not seem to have an academic point until a few days later when a student would say something that they just realized they learned from that class. For example, for one class about relaxation and stress I brought in a yoga instructor to teach a yoga class for the girls. The class was about meditating and handling stress in an aerobic way to benefit your mind, body, and spirit. While they participated in the yoga games and the poses, they did not realize they were learning anything. Then, a few days later, one of the girls told me she was nervous about a math test so when she was sitting at her desk waiting to take it she sat up straight, adjusted her posture, closed her eyes, and took several deep breaths in order to feel more relaxed. She was doing yoga and controlling her inner adrenaline and cortisol levels, something she took away from my class without even realizing she learned it.

This, in addition to the survey results, demonstrated that the girls did take something away from the class, whether that was new knowledge of something, exposure to new practices, fun facts, or simply a fun after school program that got them active an extra 60 minutes per week. The hypothesis was supported. They did have fun and retain knowledge about health and wellness during a fun and interactive after school program. Their relaxed and enthusiastic attitudes, made their learning that much easier to nurture.

Reflection

This project was really rewarding for me as the instructor. This was my first experience as a teacher, especially for girls this age. I grew up babysitting and my first job was at a day care working with toddlers, but preteen girls were a completely new experience for me. When I was designing the program, I did not realize the age of the girls in regard to life experience. I think of preteen and my initial connotation was someone who can't drive yet, has limited freedom, and has a lot of hormonal activity making them very temperamental. That was probably the most textbook description of an age group that I could have had.

After just one class, I realized how wrong I was. Each of the girls was a tiny adult, and I realized a better connotation for them. They were girls old enough to have crushes, old enough to start working as babysitters, be left alone at the mall for a night of shopping, be able to make their own choices and are more tech savvy with an iPhone than I think I will ever be. They were very easy to talk to as peers as opposed to students because of their impressive insight. One experience I remember through the semester was closer to the end. We as a class were spending time doing good deeds for others and decided to make Christmas cards for a young girl who had lost her family in a house fire and asked for Christmas cards to put on her Christmas tree. While we all sat around and colored pictures of trees and presents, I realized this was the quietest and most focused I had ever seen them. I had 10 girls all diligently working on gifts for a girl they had never met. When I was walking by one student asked me if I could wait a week to send the cards out so she could take it home and finish it. When I told her I would, she responded with, "I really want to do my best drawing of Santa and the reindeer for her. We

haven't met but I want her to love it so much, she deserves that for being so brave." Honestly, I had tears welling up in my eyes. That was the kind of spirit, empathy, and intellect that I was surprised to be exposed to in a simple after school program. Every day something happened where I laughed with the girls, had fun, and helped them learn something. Having that much impact on their everyday lives was a big responsibility for me, especially never having been that important there before.

When I told them I would not be able to return for the next semester regularly because of the workload of my last semester of undergraduate college, they all flocked to me, hugged me, and told me that I would be missed. This experience at Girls Incorporated was one of the most rewarding in my life. I may have taught them about their personal health and wellness, but I think they taught me more about myself and who I am than they will ever know.

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