Fit Kids 2020 Implementation Grant Reporting Template

Quarter 4-FINAL

January 1-April 30, 2012

Name of Grant Recipient: Institute for Collaboration of Aurora University

Name and contact information of person completing report:

   Dr. Sherry R. Eagle, Ed.D
   Aurora University
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   Aurora, IL 60506
   seagle@aurora.edu

Please include a narrative description of how the grant has affected the target community, highlighting at least 2 stories of how the grant affected individuals.

Strategic Action Principle(s) supported by the grant:

Providing parents and children with reliable, up-to-date information in multiple settings, regarding healthy physical activity and eating habits.

Supporting a culture of wellness and health promotion in our workplaces, schools and other institutions.

Assure that fresh fruits and vegetables are affordable and accessible to all families in our community.

Schools and Education Strategy #3 – Increase opportunities for health education

Schools and Education Strategy #7 – Partnership with higher education

Express Yourself – The overall goal of Express Yourself: A Body Image Program for Girls was to teach middle age girls how to feel good about their own bodies as they mature, despite the barrage of the media’s unhealthy messages and role models. After participating in this program, girls should be able to (a) identify the influences on a person’s body image and self-esteem; (b) understand the role of the media and the purpose of advertising; (c) reflect on their own body image and determine if they have a positive or
negative image; and (d) use skills that will continually improve self-esteem. The program was taught to the Middle school student participants by Aurora University student leaders under the “train the trainer model.” 120 girls participated during the eight week sessions held at six middle schools in Aurora: Waldo, Simmons, Jefferson, Herget, Cowherd and Washington.

The participants in the program gained insight about the impact of the media on their view of themselves. They now think more critically about what the truth really is behind the media messages in their environment. The students can identify personal qualities that make them unique and can use proactive behaviors to improve their self-esteem including adequate sleep, nutrition, and exercise. Students understand the benefits of positive thinking, respect (including self-respect), challenging themselves, goal setting, and positive self-expression.

Throughout the Express Yourself! Program sessions, the girls were surprised by how much the media skews the perception of beauty and how unrealistic the images of women are in the mass media. During the media exercise, the girls voiced their disappointment that there were no plus-sized women featured in magazine ads. Many expressed their desire to become leaders’ later in life and that it was discouraging not to see women leaders portrayed in magazines. As a result of the program, the students now demonstrate an understanding of the media’s goals and tactics and the effect on their self-image and self-esteem.

The students participated in program activities that helped each one of them discover their own uniqueness and identify characteristics that are more than superficially “beautiful.” As a result, the girls began to look more positively at themselves, to stop comparing themselves to others and to embrace strategies to develop a positive sense of self. One wrote in her Express Yourself journal; “Stop trying to always be perfect. I’m great as I can be.”

**Website Development** – Through the work of David Parro, Director of Communications, Aurora University developed a website which focuses on the components that were offered as part of the Fit for Kids Grant. These include pictures as well as a video from Bob Lisberg, owner of Pockets Restaurants, which highlighted the Top Chef Salad Competition. Pictures highlight the students as well as one of the judges, Senator Linda Holmes, and Mayor Tom Weisner, who attended the event.

In addition, Emma Hill, an Aurora University Senior, created a booklet focused on healthy eating. The Glossary identified vegetables, fruits and, meats that would be considered healthy in creating a salad. This booklet was published and made available for the students in the MYTIME program as a guide for their work prior to entering the competition.

The link of this website is http://news.aurora.edu/au-institute-for-collaboration-programs-promoting-fitness-for-kane-county-kids/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=au-institute-for-collaboration-programs-promoting-fitness-for-kane-county-kids

**Schools and Education Strategy #2 – Increase opportunities for healthy eating**

**Top Chef Competition** – The final competitions occurred during the third quarter of the grant cycle on Tuesday, December 6th at the Pockets on 2933 Kirk Road in Aurora and on Thursday, December 8th at the Pockets restaurant located at 1330 N. Orchard Road in Aurora. Middle-school children participants, their parents, community leaders, who served as judges for the competition, saw firsthand how fresh fruits and vegetables can inspire healthy meal choices and creativity when children are given access and opportunity to design a meal. The strategic partnerships of Pockets restaurant, Aurora University, the MyTime
Communities and Schools after school program demonstrated how a community can come together and provide its children with imaginative and creative experiences in healthy food choices.

**Schools and Education Strategy #1 – Increase opportunities for physical activity during the day**

**Recreation and Lifestyle Strategy #4 – Engage underserved populations in active living opportunities**

**The Park District after-school workout program** – during the 4th quarter of the grant cycle, three middle schools were involved in the after school workout program Jewel Middle School students attended the sessions on Mondays from 5:10 to 5:55 pm. 15 to 25 students both boys and girls attended the workouts weekly. At the Jefferson Middle School the workouts were held on Tuesdays from 4:50 pm to 6:20 pm. From 50 to 58 students participated on a weekly basis. To accommodate the large number of children, sessions were broken down into four different groups of about 15 to 20 children for 20 minute duration. This breakdown allowed for a better experience for each child and more of a “hands-on” approach with the trainers. The Herget Middle School students and trainers met on Wednesdays from 5:10 pm to 5:55 pm. Approximately 5 to 10 students participated weekly.

The participating students were able to complete their fitness performance testing and were continuing to work in developing their skills and knowledge on how to enhance their ability to better their results each week. Examples the activities the children were able to achieve points for were:

**Proper form:** Quality of exercise as opposed to quantity.

**Explanation on the dynamics associated with exercise and health:** Trainers focused heavily on teaching participants why certain exercise benefits them and the physics associated with their bodies while exercising.

**Fundamentals of Functional Training:** Participants learned how to exercise utilizing very little to no equipment. The simplicity of the exercises was meant to be easily replicated so that students could perform them at home by themselves or with their parents.

**Coordination and Agility:** Fun obstacle courses were created which used both coordination and agility.

**Upper Body Strength Exercising:** Different forms of push-ups and dips were shown to students. Many of them were introduced to band training, which is recommended for young pre-teens and teen muscle development, with effecting bone development.

**What are the long term benefits of the grant? How will the actions of the grant continue after the funding period?**

**Express Yourself** - The most critical developmental period to provide learning opportunities to build positive self-esteem and self-image is during childhood. When proactive program are not available, children may develop a poor self image, lack of confidence and ensuing social problems that can serve as precursors to eating disorders, drug abuse, early sex, teenage pregnancy, alcohol and tobacco abuse and violence. The girls involved in Express Yourself: A Body Image Program for Girls have developed an understanding of the importance of self-care and the unfortunate side effects of negative self-talk. The students are able to work in a group to develop their team work skills, make new friends, improve their communication and decision making skills, understand the needs of others, and the importance of respecting each other’s differences. This program has provided girls the opportunity to build their confidence, pride, self-respect and emotional
resiliency. They have also begun thinking about where they see themselves in the future and setting goals and developing plans that will help them realize their dreams.

At the end of the program, students received an Express Yourself journal that they can complete at home either on their own or with family members. The journal provides a vehicle for the girls to continue to use what they have learned during the program and to maintain a positive sense of self. The journal encourages goal setting and activities to express themselves creatively. The booklets also include resources for them to use to communicate with their families and to develop a positive body image.

Communities In Schools

The program designed activities to strengthen partnerships between the partners, students and schools by encouraging participation in a variety of activities. Programs include developmentally appropriate academic, emotional and healthy content supporting classroom instruction and in linked to the Illinois State Learning Standards. Assessments are used and regularly reviewed. Programs are designed to meet the needs of students who are most at risk of academic and social failure. Our goal is to continue similar programs in the upcoming school year by incorporating many of these activities to be provided by our Aurora University students and our adult staff in our afterschool program. The students in the programs really enjoyed activities and we will incorporate the evaluation component into our future design of these programs.

CIS maintained communication and collaboration with all stakeholders throughout the grant. CIS has arranged trainings between the AU student leaders and our community partners and maintained the scheduling of the AU students and the community partners weekly into our program.

Communities In Schools has continued to schedule the Fox Valley Park District and Robert Crown into our middle school program as well as the Aurora University Student Leaders. CIS has made site visits to the participating schools and found the middle school students to be engaged in the activities and the AU student leaders participating as program leaders.

The middle school students participating in the FVPD program were competitive and actively engaged in the various exercises. Students had relays, group and team work building skills as well as individual skills. Most of the trainings are also routines and exercise students could continue to work on at home. Both girls and boys participated.

The middle school girls participating in the Robert Crown “Express Yourself” were also actively engaged and participated and shared experiences about being a teen age middle school student and some of the issues they encounter during school and out of school hours. Topic included stressing positive body image and how to choose healthy food and snacks. The AU student leaders also participated in the group sessions, conducted “Express Yourself” and shared their experiences as a middle school student as well as their high school and college experiences.
Schools and Education Strategy #7 – Partnership with higher education

**Top Chef Competition** – During the fall 2011, the Aurora University Senior Nursing students, during their Community Health clinical rotation, were able to develop a *Healthy Food Choices* interactive program for the participating Middle school students. Bob Lisberg, the owner of the two Pockets restaurants in Aurora also made two presentations at each middle school site during the month of October. The first session focused on nutrition, healthy eating and portion control. The second presentation covered Pockets ingredients, healthy foods, contest rules and guidelines and a review of the required application form. Mr. Lisberg recently spoke of the successful outcomes of the competition at the April Community Leadership meeting. Each final winning student had their Top Salad named after their school on the menu of their local Pockets restaurant for three months. The competition can be replicated and continued in the *MyTime* after school program.

**The Park District after school workout program** – the middle school students who participated in the fitness program were competitive and actively engaged in the various exercises. For example, students had relays, group and team work building skills as well as individual skills. The trainers provided exercises for the participating students that can easily be replicated at home and with their parents. The exercises do not require any equipment, are safe for young growing bodies.

**What policy or environmental changes occurred as a result of the grant?**

**Express Yourself** - the grant results show that a proactive program designed to impact how girls feel about their own bodies can help middle school aged girls:

1. Learn strategies to develop and maintain a positive self of self

2. Develop critical-thinking skills to address media messages and other influences that can impact decision-making, eating habits and social behavior.

3. Use self-expression and communication skills that will support positive self-image and self-esteem.

Aurora University student facilitators worked with the participating middle school aged girls in this program in order to help them learn about the importance of self-image and self-esteem and the consequences of a negative image of themselves. The girls who participated in the program were actively engaged and willingly shared experiences about being a teenage middle school student and some of the issues they encounter during school and after school hours. Topics included stressing a positive body image and also how to choose healthy food and snacks.

The AU student leaders participated in the group sessions and shared their personal experiences as a middle school student as well as their high school and college experiences. The girls acquired skills to handle social pressures and negative influences that will lead to more success in their academic and social environments, from working together with others in the program, the girls are also able to build and maintain healthier relationships and communication with their families and peers. The program is sustainable under the guidance of the trained Aurora University student leaders.
The Top Chef Competition – replication is feasible

The Park District after school workout program - According to Karen Harkness, Director of After School Programs, “Communities In Schools has continued to schedule the Fox Valley Park District and Robert Crown into our middle school program as well as the Aurora University Student Leaders. CIS has made site visits to the participating schools and found the middle school students to be engaged in the activities and the AU student leaders participating as program leaders.”

☐ Describe and report data collected

See attached evaluation report.

☐ Upload pictures of events and participants and materials- Please email me if you would like access to Drop box to upload your pictures. Please do not send pictures imbedded in the report. Send electronically as separate files. Please include materials published for the purpose of the grant.

☐ Attach pictures, flyers, etc. that show the Fit for Kids logo.

Budget and Request for Reimbursement

☐ Updated budget with line item expenditures

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<tr>
<th>Date of Expense</th>
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(Insert more lines into the table if necessary)

Current request for reimbursement (funding for completed expenditures only) $4,143.00

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