Community Partnerships for Healthy Mothers and Children
San Juan Basin Public Health – Durango, Colorado
Coalition: Healthy Living Task Force

San Juan Basin Public Health’s (SJBPH) grant work focused on increased access to healthy foods and building a strong referral network. Efforts to increase access to healthy foods were very collaborative and included: introduction of free farm stands during the local growing season and on-site placement and promotion strategies for healthy foods at the local Head Start centers through facilitation of their implementation of the CATCH curriculum, monthly taste test lessons, and new preschool gardens. SJBPH also worked to build a strong referral network and used media and outreach to promote the WIC program and other chronic-disease prevention community resources.

Grant Objectives:

- **Increase the number of people with improved access to environments with healthy food and beverage options**
  - *Increased mobile grocers*: Through collaboration with community partners and our Healthy Living Task Force, we implemented two free farm stands geared towards low-income community members in La Plata County during the local growing season. One stand was hosted at the local soup kitchen, and the other was hosted at a local Head Start that meets year-round.
  - *Increased on-site placement and promotion strategies for healthy foods*: SJBPH was able to develop a strong partnership with the local Head Start organization, Tri-County Head Start. SJBPH facilitated the teacher training and implementation of the CATCH Early Childhood curriculum. CATCH (Coordinated Approach to Child Health) Early Childhood is designed to nurture a love of physical activity, provide introduction to classroom-based gardening and nutrition, and encourage healthy eating in children. The curriculum was developed in a way that meets federal Head Start academic guidelines.
  - *Increased on-site placement and promotion strategies for healthy foods*: To introduce healthy foods in the classroom, we were able to partner with a local registered dietician to provide each Head Start center with a laminated, bound booklet of twelve “food of the month” lessons. The lessons include images of the fruit or vegetable, the plant it comes from, and prompt teachers to run through tasting and fun Q & A with the kids.

- **Increase the number of new community gardens**
  - *Increased preschool gardens at Head Starts*: SJBPH is working with three local Head Start centers to implement new preschool gardens. This work will compliment other efforts implemented in partnership with Head Start and provide teachers, families, and kiddos with time to interact with the garden, learn about how healthy foods are grown, and try new foods.

- **Increase the number of people with improved access to opportunities for chronic disease prevention through community and clinical linkages**
  - *WIC 101 presentations*: SJBPH did many WIC 101 presentations at community coalition meetings, OB/GYN and pediatrician providers, and other community partners.
  - *Strong referral network*: SJBPH created and implemented tailored referral processes, and updated internal processes for receiving and tracking referrals.

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