

Catholic Charities of Corpus Christi, Inc.
Community Wellness and Family Outreach

Community CARE

Project Summary

In 2015, the rate of **adult obesity** in Nueces County was 31% ranking higher than that of the State of Texas (25%) and the United States (29%), with a reported 24% of the people being **physical inactive**. The **diabetes rates** in Nueces County (10%) also ranked higher than that of State of Texas (9%).¹ With low literacy rates and high poverty rates, community based efforts to bring awareness to and educate people about how to make healthy lifestyle changes are a valuable tool in improving health. Continued funding through the generosity of the Nueces County Commissioner's Court provided support to the healthy living programming at Catholic Charities of Corpus Christi, Inc. (CCCC) under the Community Wellness and Family Outreach Department. These services are focused on creating pathways for people to live healthier and more productive lives and decreasing the rates of chronic disease. Specific to this project, efforts focused on bringing awareness to the community on the prevention of diabetes and obesity.

In August of 2015, as part of a community effort to increase access to diabetes prevention services, CCCC provided an education and outreach day at the HEB Park in Corpus Christi. The agenda included:

- Fun physical activities
- A demonstration on how to make healthy snacks
- Resource connections for community services

Parents and their children took part in activities such as hula-hooping contests and mini soccer while watching a demonstration on how to make healthy fruit kabobs. Information was shared on how families can interact together doing simple activities at home or at a local park. Families were educated on the benefits of healthy eating and active living and how diabetes and obesity can be prevented. Attendees were provided with healthy snacks and the opportunity to have fun with food and actually make the fruit kabobs. Students from Texas A&M University Corpus Christi Tennis Team were at the event to help motivate the families and be mentors to the children.

Attendees were given a binder of resources that included information on portion control, understanding diabetes and hypertension, healthy and fun recipes for families, and local health providers for the uninsured. All participants were given a journal for keeping

¹ <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/texas/2015/rankings/nueces/county>

track of eating and physical activity and a pedometer to promote walking as a diabetes prevention activity. Children were given incentives such as stickers, activity books, jump ropes and kick balls.

Project objectives would include:

- Increasing the understanding that diabetes and obesity can be prevented and controlled by making healthy food choices.
- Introducing ways parents and children can have fun together preparing healthy food.
- Reinforcing that active living can be a simple way for families to interact together at home or take advantage of a local park or beach.
- Promoting awareness of the local family-friendly events that are free and open to the public.
- Connecting people with the community resources that they need to be healthier.

Budgeting allowed for staffing, food and supplies.

A **total of 66 people** including **26 adults** and **40 children** attended the healthy living event that was purposely held at a local park as a way of promoting safe outdoor play. The highlight of the day was seeing all of the smiles from the parents and children while they were running around together on a hot and humid South Texas day.