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Promoting Health, Fitness and Nutrition in North Philadelphia's Youth

Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania, St. James School Camp

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Community Preceptors: Victoria Hoppes, Andrew Kellner, M.A., Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania

Bridging the Gaps

Focus Areas

Adopted from HP 2010 & HP 2020

- Heart Disease & Stroke
- Health Communication
- Nutrition & Weight Status
- Oral Health
- Physical Activity & Fitness

The Community Site

The St. James Camp, located on the St. James School campus, is open to all Allegheny West community children entering Grades 2 to 5, emphasizes reading, math, music, arts/crafts, and outdoor activities, and teaches the value of living in a healthy and hopeful community, as well as encouraging friendship and personal growth. The school is a faith-based middle school in the Episcopal tradition, committed to educating traditionally under-resourced students and developing their moral and spiritual identities, as well as their intellectual, physical, and creative gifts.



Project Summary

The BTG interns collaborated with the staff at St. James School Camp to incorporate health, fitness, nutrition, and oral hygiene into the curriculum to educate children aged 7 to 12.



Strategies

- Lectures, group activities, and interactive discussions on a wide range of health topics, emphasizing the importance of:
 - Proper diet and nutrition
 - Oral hygiene
 - Physical fitness
- “Health Tip of the Week” and “Healthy Food of the Week” participative morning meeting presentations
- Weekly cooking classes of easy heart-healthy recipes to make at home.

Project Results

The youth were engaged and hopefully gained a deeper appreciation and understanding of health and well-being. Most of the campers were very receptive to the health lessons and were excited to live a healthier lifestyle.

Personal Statements

“Serving as a BTG intern has been a very rewarding and inspiring experience, both a privilege and a challenge to work with children in an “underserved” community but I have never met such an energetic and confident crew of kids in my life. While they may face many challenges in their home life, it is apparent that this school is a safe haven providing a nurturing environment that the youth need to create the foundation for a healthy and bright future.”--Meghan



“I had the idea I wanted to give back to my community, but little did I know I would gain so much more. I was aware of the troubles in the city, but I never truly knew what poverty, violence, and crime were like. BTG gave me the opportunity to be upfront and personal with the community allowed me to make some kind of change within it. All the campers have the capability of doing amazing things; they just need the support from others to reach for the stars.”—Eliz