



# HEALTHY YOUTH PROGRAM

## The Lincoln Project Recap

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## Project Summary

The Healthy Youth Program will create a fun and engaging learning environment for 20 to 30 high school students per school year, to learn the benefits of how a healthier diet will significantly impact their overall mental and physical health. Students will participate in an interactive curriculum that will educate them on food, healthy cooking, and consuming foods for optimum health and wellness.

## Healthy Youth Program Mission Statement

The mission of the Healthy Youth Program is to instruct, inspire, promote and provide resources that will encourage better physical and mental health. The Healthy Youth Project will expose African American and Hispanic students to practical and healthier lifestyle solutions. Successful completion of this program should result in the reduction and prevention of obesity, heart disease and many other preventable conditions, for students within inner city schools in underserved communities.

## Problem Statement

Many inner-city students meet the USDA guidelines of living in a Food Desert. Numerous research has shown the strong correlation between youth and children who are negatively impacted by food deserts, and a lack for proper nutrition and access to processed foods. The pilot program has shed light on areas of need and where the program can adjust to meet the need of students suffering from lack of nutrition.

## Pilot Project

The Healthy Youth Project Pilot started during the 2018-2019 school year as The Lincoln High School Healthy Youth Project. The inaugural class fluctuated between 22 to 30 Junior and Senior students in a 6-week program during the Fall Semester of 2018. Students met twice weekly for 90 minutes during normal school hours. The second semester class met during the Spring semester of 2019, with 15 freshman students.

Objective	Outcome
Interaction and instruction with Health Advocate	6 weeks, twice weekly, 90 minutes each session
Instruct Students in an Underserved Community	Over 45 Inner-City Dallas Students participated
Interactive lectures	12 weeks of interactive lectures by led by nutrition advocate, fitness experts and dentist

Cooking Demonstrations	24 demonstrations using healthy recipes and fresh organic produce
Group and Individual Exercise demonstration and plans	37 food journals and diaries started and completed by students
Urban/ Community Gardening Development	Over 40 hours of experiential education with organic farmer consultant Lincoln has expanded their urban garden under this program and students received organic seeds for home use. Students are preparing to use the produce for the Fall lunches for sale and sell in a community market
Field Trips	Student visits for food purchases at Whole Foods, and Urban Garden located outside of their food desert.

## Implementation

Students were selected by classroom teachers in consultation with Project Lead. All students were given an initial test to measure food knowledge, current habits, and interests in food selection and eating. Each student in the pilot program was given a workbook developed specifically for the course, and the book, *The Simplified Guide to Healthy Living*. The workbook tracked food consumption each week, and students journaled how their body and mind felt each day. As an introduction to healthy living, each student was also given healthy snacks at the beginning of each 90-minute class. The classes included lectures, guest speakers, food demonstrations, and class participation. Several students worked with the organic farming consultant to cultivate the school's urban garden. Weekly checkpoint evaluation meetings were held so that students could share progress and challenges.

## Evaluation

The program was reviewed monthly using the stated objectives as guidelines. The project lead held monthly meetings with advisory board, consultants, and students for ongoing feedback and refinement. A pre-survey was given to students at the beginning of each course, and a post-survey was given to measure objectives. Positive feedback was provided by both students and teachers. Majority of the students that participated reported that they have changed the eating habits. They have also requested that the program continue. An added benefit of the program is the impact it had on the instructors.

## Testimonials

*Thank you very much for inspiring my students to make healthy food options. The little things count, I saw a few of my students making better food choices, for example two of the students brought some frozen fruit and apple juice to school so that I could show them how to make smoothies. I was so amazed by their determination to make better choices. These students would come to class eating hot chips and sugary drinks for breakfast. All thanks to Mrs. Haynes, these students are making better choices for a healthier life. As a personal confession I have made changes in my home for family and myself. I have made a few recipes from Mrs. Haynes cookbook and my family had no idea that they had eaten meatless tacos and chili. Thank you Mrs. Haynes for the inspiration that you have given my students and myself to live a healthier life.*

*~ Lincoln Culinary Program Instructor*

*It was good having you come and teach us to be healthy. I start doing what you told me to do, which was go to sleep earlier and stay off the games and get a good night's sleep. I did well on the STAAR test and I was focused. I drank some of that tea you gave us. I was up the whole test and I think I did good. Thanks for coming and taking your time out of your life to come. HOPE YOU COME BACK!!"*

*~ Brandon, High School Freshman*

*Thank you, Mrs. Haynes, for the great food you cooked for us. You helped us very much with our health. From now on, I'm going to eat healthy and build up my protein. This summer I'm going to work out a lot and eat more vegetables. I'm very grateful for your speeches and health guidance. I hope to see you again.*

*~ Kyshon, High School Junior*

*Mrs. Haynes, thank you for coming in and trying to help change our life. You really taught me that the way I eat has an impact on my life. Thank you for the gift card to a healthy food store and teaching us how to do stuff. I learned that snacks have a lot of white sugar and hot cheetos cause people to have heart issues. I stopped eating snacks with white sugar and stuff. I want to be healthy. I don't want to get sick trying to eat all those sweets and stuff.*

*~ Sheliah, High School Junior*

## Vision

Based on the overwhelming response from students and the instructors, including an interest in developing a healthier lifestyle, we would like to continue the program at Lincoln High to further measure the program's success. A strategic plan is being developed to scale the program to reach more students in the current school system and beyond in the following areas: Technology, Staff, Curriculum, Organic Farming, Training, and Research. These areas and positions will allow us to expand in additional areas, train interns, and give movement to healthy living across the country.