

Agent Program Planning Information

Learn, Grow, Eat & Go!

Texas Grow! Eat! Go! is a five-year study designed to determine the effect of interventions such as gardening, nutrition education, and physical activities on children's behaviors related to childhood obesity. LGEG is the resulting curriculum from the research study.

Relevance

The high prevalence of childhood obesity in Texas is cause for concern because it is linked to negative health consequences for children and their families. Schools are uniquely positioned to have a positive impact on children's knowledge and behaviors associated with obesity. For example, vegetable exposure plus school gardening has been shown to improve consumption of fruits and vegetables. Adding more frequent and more vigorous physical activities during school has been shown to improve student fitness and weight. The home environment is also an important influence on a child's eating and activity behaviors. The greater the frequency of vegetable consumption and physical activity by parents, the greater the consumption of these foods and exercise by their children. With child obesity rates among low-income children in Texas ranging from 10% to over 20%, engaging schools and families in prevention efforts is critical.

Response

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service has tools and programs to address reducing childhood obesity already in place. Learn, Grow, Eat & GO! seeks to combine those interdisciplinary programs in order to make an impact on children's behaviors related to childhood obesity. The program combines the efforts of the Learn, Grow, Eat & GO! curriculum (LGEG - a modification/revision of the Junior Master Gardener "Nutrition in the Garden"), Walk Across Texas, and the Coordinated Approach to Child Health program.

Program Structure

The Learn, Grow, Eat & GO! curriculum emphasizes science, math, language art/reading, social studies and health through effective learning activities with both the LGEG and WAT programs. The LGEG curriculum was designed to engage children and their families in school gardens, vegetable recipe tastings, classroom activities and take home family stories; therefore, the curriculum includes:

- 10 weeks of in-class, TEKS aligned, activities with 2 concepts per week (taught by the teacher)
- Classroom raised bed or container garden

- Classroom vegetable tastings and food demonstrations
- Family stories for students to take home
- Option for the students to become LGEG certified through the JMG program
- Opportunities for "Growing Strong" section
 - o Walk Across Texas online team enrollment
 - o Family physical activity newsletters
 - o Family physical activity bonus miles
 - o Physical activity walking BINGO
 - o Classroom "physical activity breaks" related to school subjects

Train-the-Trainer

Local county agents partner with school districts, SHAC's, elementary schools, afterschool centers, or summer programs to train teachers, school staff, and center staff on how-to implement three programs - Coordinated Approach to Child Health (CATCH), Junior Master Gardener's (JMG) revised curriculum – Learn, Grow, Eat & GO! and Walk Across Texas (WAT).

Utilizing Volunteers

Volunteers and program partners may be recruited and utilized to help implement the Learn, Grow, Eat & GO! program. Partners may help provide incentives or educational programs, and volunteers may be utilized to assist with programming and implementation. Extension volunteer groups, like Master Gardeners and Master Wellness Volunteers, as well as school volunteers, can be trained and utilized for assisting with school gardens, food demonstrations, and curriculum activities.

Program Costs

Sites choosing to implement the LGEG program should note that due to the highly engaging food demonstrations and garden activities there are costs associated with program. Examples of costs and estimates are shown below. These costs can vary based on available resources in each county.

Estimated costs for 1 classroom with 25 students	
Garden for 1 Fall or Spring Season	\$150
Supplies for 6 food demonstrations and tastings	\$100
Cost for providing a kit of supplies for LGEG and WAT	\$200

There are a variety of options for funding the program:

- Local grants and sponsors
- School curriculum budgets
- PTA or PTO
- Etc.

Agent Training

LGEG training webinars will be offered and recorded. Agents are also able to view a series of videos highlighting the 10 concepts, how the curriculum supports TEKS and STAAR, how the project is applicable for BLT match, utilizing volunteers, and using Walk Across Texas. In addition the website has access to resources and curriculum copies. Please contact the point of contact for

more information on accessing the website, including the updated link.

Agent Planning and Reporting

A TExAS program template is available for agents.

Agent Evaluation

Learn, Grow, Eat & GO! has an evaluation to support agent efforts as either an outcome or output program. In addition to the evaluation, an outcome summary shell is available.

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