Junior Master Gardener Program

Cultivating Youth and Communities through Gardening!

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The sound academic standards of the JMG program coupled with a creative hands-on teaching delivery, capitalizes on the strengths of all youth. The program cultivates personal leadership, volunteerism and character education.
The JMG Curricula focuses on horticultural and environmental education through hands-on contextual activities. More specifically:

- Plant Growth and Development
- Soil and Water
- Ecology and Environmental Horticulture
- Insects and Diseases
- Landscape Horticulture
- Fruits and Nuts
- Vegetables and Herbs
- Life Skills and Career Exploration

Level 1: Grades 3-5
Level 2: Grades 6-8
JMG Curricula and Design

The JMG curricula has a variety of teaching concepts in each chapter. For youth to receive certification they must complete activities from each learning concept.

The JMG curricula was designed with the assistance of tenured teachers and horticulturalists. Utilizing a large number of individuals allowed us to create a curriculum that meets state standards and is fun for youth to learn.

The design incorporates:

- Math, Science, Social Studies, Language Arts
- Flexibility of use
- Alignment with state teaching standard
- Group and individual activities
- Service learning and leadership incorporated in all chapters
JMG curricula - Utilization

The JMG curricula allows you the flexibility to choose how to incorporate the curriculum into current youth programming efforts.

The curriculum can simply be used as program enrichment material or youth can work through the curriculum to obtain certification.
This JMG activity from Chapter 3 - Ecology and Environmental Horticulture is a favorite for youth and leaders! Youth can create a card utilizing recyclable materials and seeds. Each card can be planted and will grow.

Click on the Grow Card to learn how to make your own.
For More Information

The Hidalgo County JMG program can be contacted at:

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Visit the Junior Master Gardener Website

http://jmgkids.us/

JMG… Cultivating Youth and Communities through Gardening!
Improving the availability of healthy foods to SNAP and SNAP-eligible audiences: Growing and Nourishing Healthy Communities project

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Ashley Gregory, CEA- Horticulture, Hidalgo County
The situation........

1 in 6 Texans live below poverty; 1 in 5 Texas households face food insecurity

66% of adults and 29% of children are overweight or obese;

>56% of adults and >70% of children don’t meet physical activity recommendations.

40% of Texans eat fruits & vegetables less than once a day
Goals of SNAP-Ed

- Promote healthy eating habits
- Encourage a physically active lifestyle
- Help clients adopt food and physical activity behaviors that help prevent chronic diseases
Socioecological Framework for Nutrition and Physical Activity Decisions

Source: SNAP-Ed Guidance Plan, 2015
SNAP-Ed allows us to address environmental factors that impact diet and physical activity behaviors
Growing and Nourishing Healthy Communities

- Community garden project located in 3 south Texas counties
- Goal: increase access to vegetables and fruits through gardening
  - Community gardens **built and maintained by the participants**
  - Extension horticulturalist taught participants how to garden
  - Current Extension SNAP-Ed program (BLT) taught participants how to use the vegetables
Why South Texas?

- Very underserved part of Texas
- High rates of poverty and food insecurity
- SNAP and SNAP-eligible populations
- Food deserts are an issue
- Interest in community gardening
- Interest in learning about food and nutrition
- Available resources

Our team........ working locally

County Extension Agents for Family & Consumer Sciences
County Extension Agents – Horticulture
Program Assistants – Horticulture
Program Assistants, SNAP-Ed - Better Living for Texas
Master Gardeners
Volunteers
Participants
Site and Participant Selection

Sites/Location
- Within or close proximity to identified food deserts
- Easy access for participants
- Sustainable
- Buy-in from the community

Participants
- SNAP or SNAP-eligible
- Willing to build and tend the gardens
- Willing to attend gardening classes
- Willing to report produce grown

Locations of the gardens
- Housing Authorities
- Churches
- Community Centers
- Health Clinics (WIC)
- Schools
Location of Community Gardens

17 Gardens Developed the First Year!
Planting & Tending to the Garden
Harvesting
Learning to Prepare the Harvest
If you grow it..................