Youth Farm & Market Project
Evaluation Findings from the 2009 Summer Program

Background
Youth Farm and Market Project (YFMP) started in 1995 and has since blossomed into a year-round program offered in 2 low resource neighborhoods in Minneapolis and 1 in St. Paul.

• YFMP focuses on building positive youth development.
• Participants gain knowledge, skills, and experience growing, cooking, eating and selling healthful food.
• Approximately 200 youth, ages 7-14, participate in YFMP classes & camps each year.

Evaluation collaboration with the University of Minnesota’s Health Youth Development • Prevention Research Center began in 2007

Evaluation Design
Evaluation project consisted of 3 studies:

• Quasi-experimental study evaluated outcomes over time among YFMP participants compared to non-participants.
• Non-experimental study evaluated outcomes over time among YFMP participants aged 7-11 and 12-14.
• Non-experimental study evaluated outcomes over time among YFMP participants that had been in the program 1, 2, and 3 or more years.

Program Evaluation Goals
Goal 1 – Use youth data to understand how YFMP summer program was effecting youth.
Goal 2 – Continue to build knowledge, interest and capacity of program staff to participate in and conduct program evaluation.

Findings
Demographic characteristics –
• 106 YFMP and 42 comparison youth are accounted for in these findings
• 46% boys, 54% girls
• Average age 10.39 years
• 44% White; 32% Hispanic; 20% Black
• 35% new to Youth Farm; 33% returned for second summer; 32% ‘veterans’ (3+ years)

YFMP youth showed significant increases in self reported –

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aged 7-11</th>
<th>Aged 12-14</th>
<th>One Summer</th>
<th>Two Summers</th>
<th>Three Summers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gardening Skills</td>
<td>Rating of Cooking Skills</td>
<td>Gardening Skills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(p&lt;0.05)</td>
<td>(p&lt;0.03)</td>
<td>(p&lt;0.05)</td>
<td>(p&lt;0.03)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Moderate Exercise</td>
<td>Cooking Skills</td>
<td>Moderate Exercise</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(p&lt;0.06)</td>
<td>(p&lt;0.06)</td>
<td>(p&lt;0.05)</td>
<td>(p&lt;0.06)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nutrition Knowledge</td>
<td>Gardening Skills</td>
<td>Nutrition Knowledge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(p&lt;0.05)</td>
<td>(p&lt;0.01)</td>
<td>(p&lt;0.01)</td>
<td>(p&lt;0.01)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td># of fruits, vegetables &amp; herbs tasted</td>
<td># of fruits, vegetables &amp; herbs tasted</td>
<td># of fruits, vegetables &amp; herbs tasted</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(p&lt;0.01)</td>
<td>(p&lt;0.05)</td>
<td>(p&lt;0.01)</td>
<td>(p&lt;0.01)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Compared to youth in other summer programs, YFMP participants had –

• Significantly larger gains in gardening skills (p<0.001)
• Increased nutrition knowledge (positive trend)
• Increased number of fruits, vegetables & herbs tasted (p<0.09)
• Increased amount of vegetables consumed (positive trend)

Conclusions & What’s Next?
Positive trends suggest that healthy youth development is taking place. YFMP is positively impacting participants.

Findings used to improve 2010 programming:
• Staff training on relationship building
• Emphasize teaching social skills
• Align lunch menus with garden products
• Offer fresh food as snacks daily

Next steps:
• Examine impact on older participants (Youth LEAD staff, ages 15-18)
• Revise/refine measures of connection (to community, adults, and peers)
• Use findings to build community support and strengthen future grant applications

Contributors
Youth Farm & Market Project
Gunnar Liden, Rina Rossi, Zoe Sommers-Hass, Amanda Stoelb

Prevention Research Center, University of Minnesota
Nancy Leland, Barb McMorris, Nancy Pellowski-Wiger, Andrea Everson

This publication is supported by Cooperative Agreement Number 1 U48 DP001939 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
Contact Information

Gunnar Liden, Executive Director, Youth Farm & Market Project
gunnar@youthfarm.net
612-872-4226

Nancy Leland, Senior Research Associate, Evaluation Team Leader, Healthy Youth Development • Prevention Research Center, University of Minnesota
nancylee@umn.edu
612-624-8134

References available upon request

What is a PRC?

For over 20 years, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have worked to eliminate health disparities and create healthy communities by funding Prevention Research Centers (PRCs) throughout the United States.

The Healthy Youth Development • Prevention Research Center, housed at the University of Minnesota, Department of Pediatrics, is one in a network of 33 academic centers whose main objective – as a PRC – is to link science to practice through collaborations with public health agencies and community-based organizations.

Contact the PRC
• prc@umn.edu
• 612-625-1674
• www.prc.umn.edu
• Director – Michael Resnick, PhD
  resni001@umn.edu
• University of Minnesota
  Department of Pediatrics
  Division of Adolescent Health & Medicine
  717 Delaware Street SE
  Minneapolis, MN  55414