



Extension Education in Starr County

Making a Difference

*Improving Lives.
Improving Texas.*

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service has been dedicated to educating Texans

for nearly a century. In 1915, the agency was established under the federal Smith-Lever Act to deliver university knowledge and agricultural research findings directly to the people. Ever since, AgriLife Extension programs have addressed the emerging issues of the day, serving diverse populations across the state.

Through a well-organized network of professional educators and some 100,000 trained volunteers, Extension delivers practical research-based knowledge to Texans in all 254 counties. Our expertise and educational

outreach pertain to the food and fiber industry, natural resources, family and consumer sciences, nutrition and health, and community economic development. Among those served are the hundreds of thousands of young people who benefit annually from Extension's 4-H and youth development programs.

Texans turn to Extension for solutions. Its agents and specialists respond not only with answers, but also with resources and services that result in significant returns on investment to boost the Texas economy. The agency custom-designs its programs to each region of the state, relying on residents for input and for help with program delivery. Here are just a few highlights of Extension's impacts on this county and its people:

STARR County – Summary of 2012 Educational Contacts

Program Area Committees – 5
Organized 4-H Clubs – 6
4-H Club Members - 205
4-H Community Based Outreach – 1,146
4-H Curriculum Enrichment – 2,621
4-H Total Volunteers – 135
Starr County Fair Board – 24
FCS Program – 37,524
AgNR Program – 16,450

Agriculture and Natural Resources



- Agriculture Distance Learning Program
 - Agriculture Profitability Plan

Making a Difference

Agriculture Distance Learning Program Starr County 2013

Developed by Omar Montemayor, County Extension Agent AGNR

Introduction. Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service has been offering distance learning educational programs for many years. These educational programs have been mostly offered to Extension personnel but are suitable for use with Extension clientele. We are now beginning to see this technology applied to producer type programs. Many local producers have not been exposed to this type of innovative distance learning. The advantage of this technology is to be able to access the expertise of specialists all over the state while minimizing travel time and costs.

Program. The following educational activities were organized, with the input and assistance of the Extension Agriculture and Natural Resource Committee and Leadership Advisory Board, to achieve the program objectives.

1. Agent conducted four (4) educational programs for Starr County ranchers that focused on Drought Recovery. These programs were all picked by the Starr County Agriculture & Natural Resource Committee early in the year. All five educational workshops were offered online through Lyncs. These workshops were projected on to a screen with the sound amplified through a speaker system. The educational activities were interactive as participants could ask questions through a chat room that was available to the person making the presentation. This format was different than previous years in that the committee chose what program topics were going to be discussed rather than choose from a list of available programs.
2. The five workshops were selected by the AGNR committee. The committee met earlier in 2013 to select the workshops from a list and then planned for the location and program evaluation strategy.
3. Agent compiled summary of the agriculture distance program based on the results of the evaluations that were collected from each of the participants that attended the educational programs.
4. Developed interpretation marketing piece will be shared with members of the county commissioner's court, task force members and general public .

Evaluation Method. A one page retrospective post- design evaluation was administered to each of the participants. The survey was used to determine the level of clientele knowledge change acquired by participating in each of the educational programs. The evaluation was developed with input from all AGNR committee members. The key focus was to determine how comfortable the participants were with the delivery of the program.

Collaborators. The following groups assisted with resources to make this program possible:

- Starr County IT Department
- R.Y. Livestock Sales, Inc.
- Starr County Farm Bureau
- Texas/Mexico Border Coalition

Results. The following results are shared from the program evaluation to indicate the achievements of the project.

- 88% of participants gained knowledge of drought recovery.
- 95% of participants felt comfortable with the way this program was presented using long distance technology.
- 90% of the participants felt that their questions, or of any participants, could be satisfactorily answered using this type of program delivery.
- 91% of the participants indicated that they would attend another distance education program.

Summary. This program did appear to build knowledge and change perceptions concerning distance learning programs. Producer responses indicate that they have a better appreciation for new technology and the way these programs are now being delivered. This program will continue next year, focusing on agriculture profitability.

For More Information Contact:
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V A L U E	
Wildlife Management	
	Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service programs about fish and wildlife teach participants how to effectively manage these valuable resources. Hunting, fishing, and wildlife watching contribute approximately \$8 billion to the state's economy annually, supporting 139,000 jobs in Texas and enhancing the quality of life of all residents.

Making a Difference

2013 Agriculture Profitability Plan Starr County

Developed by Omar Montemayor, County Extension Agent AGNR

Introduction. Despite a continued drought in South Texas, Starr County Agriculture producers continue with agriculture production practices. It is estimated that over 50,000 acres are under production agriculture worth a little over 45 million dollars. The beef cattle industry in Starr County is worth 30 million dollars followed behind by wildlife with about 10 million dollars

Local producers need to keep up to date on new management practices that will increase production and total farm/ranch profits. Additionally these individuals need basic educational information on environmental stewardship and natural resource management.

Program. The following educational activities were organized, with the input and assistance of the Extension Agriculture and Natural Resource Committee.

1. Educational programs and workshops that offered 5 continuing education units toward a private applicator license.
2. Bull Gain Test and Heifer Development Program that offered a feedback program on the performance of animals consigned to the feedlot.
3. Two private applicator license trainings.
4. Drought Management webinars
5. Aerial Brush Control Demonstrations.
6. A Ranchers Field Day.
7. Installation of local weather station.

Collaborators. The following groups assisted with resources to make this program possible:

- Starr County Farm Bureau
- Texas Mexcio Border Coalition
- USDA-FSA
- USDA-NRCS

Summary. Starr County Agriculture producers gained a better perspective about some of the issues affecting their operations. In addition to offering some improved management strategies to making their operations more profitable, they also learned about drought management practices that would help them manage their operations more efficiently. This year was a very critical year with the drought conditions that were experienced. Over 60% of the ranchers liquidated at least half of their livestock herds and many producers experience 70% of crop failures.

VALUE

Livestock Production



Texas A&M AgriLife Extension programs targeted to large- and small-scale livestock producers help generate safer food and fiber products with maximum efficiency. The result is quality, consistent, affordable products and industries that support the state's rural economies.

Family and Consumer Sciences



- Friend to Friend – Pink Party
- Si Yo Puedo Controlar Mi Diabetes
- Child Care Provider Conference
 - Better Living for Texans
- Transforming Texas (TT)Healthy Communities

Making a Difference

Friend to Friend in Starr County, 2013

The *Friend to Friend* program's purpose is to encourage women to get regular mammograms and Pap tests for the early detection of breast and cervical cancer, when the disease is most curable.

Relevance

- Regular screening significantly increases the likelihood of finding cancer early, when treatment is more often successful.
- Women living in rural areas of Texas are less likely than their urban counterparts to have had a mammogram or Pap test within the past two years.
- Mortality is higher for rural women because of later diagnosis.

Response

- This project's goal is to decrease breast and cervical cancer morbidity and mortality for women living in rural Texas counties by improving screening rates and early detection of cancer.
- Funding was applied for and awarded by the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas (CPRIT) to fund screenings and transportation to uninsured and underserved women in need of screening services.
- The county Extension agent, regional cancer prevention specialist, and patient navigators plan and implement a *Friend to Friend* event. Women attending are given the opportunity to sign a commitment card to obtain a mammogram and/or Pap test within the next year and the option to complete a help request form for assistance in obtaining screening services.

Impact of the Program

- *Friend to Friend* was implemented in 42 Texas counties in 2013.
- 125 women attended the *Friend to Friend* events on May 10, 2013 at the Multi-Purpose Center – Fort Ringgold Campus in the city of Rio Grande City, and on May 23, 2013 in the community of San Isidro, Texas at the Abel Gonzalez Jr. Community Center.

Demographics of women who attended the events:

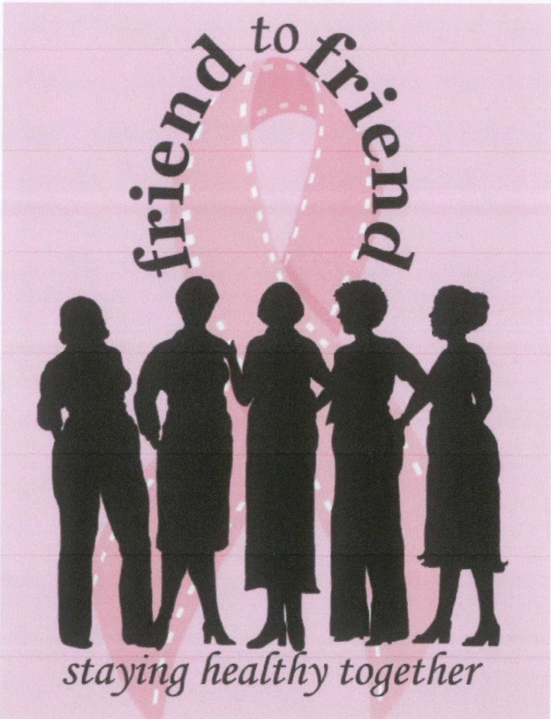
- Median age was: 45.
- Ethnic breakdown:
 - African American: 0%
 - American Indian/Native American: 1%
 - Asian/Pacific Islander: 0%
 - Latina/Hispanic: 89.7%
 - White: 3.8%
 - Multiple race/ethnicity: 4.8%
 - Other/missing: 4.8%
- 86 total volunteers assisted at party/events.
- A Physician, other Health Professionals, and Survivors urged women to obtain a mammogram/Pap screening at the events.
- At the end of the event 83.1% of women, aged 40 or over, correctly identified the need for a mammogram screening every year.
- 90 Women requested help to navigate screening and diagnostic services.

- Over six Clinical sites for screenings, diagnostics, radiologists and lab services were contracted including the following:
 - Starr Co. Rural Health Clinic
 - Starr Memorial Hospital
 - Women's Health Institute in Starr
 - Ameripath/Quest Diagnostics
 - Adam Quraishi, Radiology Assoc.
 - Nuestra Clinica del Valle
 - Dr. Fredricka Borland, Surgeon
- A total of \$40,070.30 has been paid in Starr County for both Mammogram screenings and diagnostics and Pap screenings and diagnostics through CPRIT funds.
- 35 Women were referred to other available sources for Breast and Cervical screening and diagnostics. These women had Medicaid/Medicare, private insurance, or receiving Primary Health Care. Approximately 12 women were already current with their screenings.

Success Stories

- Two parties were conducted in Starr County to meet the need for Pap and Mammogram screenings for Women. A combined total of 125 women attended, and 90 women requested help to navigate screening and diagnostic services.
- The 1st Fiscal Year, a total of \$3,394.66 was paid in Starr County for both Mammograms and Pap Screenings and diagnostics through CPRIT funds, in comparison to \$40,070.30 in year 2.





Making a Difference

Child Care Provider Conference Outcome Report, 2013

Over 60 percent of children from birth through age 6 (not yet in kindergarten) receive some form of child care on a regular basis from persons other than their parents. The Texas Workforce Commission estimates that there are over 100,000 child care providers caring for more than 760,000 children under the age of 13 in licensed or regulated child care facilities in the state of Texas. Additionally, child care is the 16th largest industry in the state, generating over 145,000 jobs and \$2.3 billion in wages for Texans.

Findings from longitudinal research have clearly established the fact that quality does matter when it comes to child care. Children who receive high-quality care (e.g., warm sensitive caregiving, well educated child care staff, low child-to-adult ratios, small group size) develop better language, math, and social skills; exhibit fewer behavior problems; and tend to be better prepared for entrance into school. Having a well-trained child care workforce is essential to providing the high quality child care that children need to develop physically, socially, emotionally, and cognitively.

Child Care Provider Conference

On August 24, 2013, the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service conducted a child care provider training conference in Rio Grande City, Texas for **199** child care providers and directors who provide care for **4,979** children enrolled in **52** child care centers or family day homes. One hundred and ninety-nine participants completed a written evaluation of the conference (see Table 1 for participant characteristics). A total of **1,592** clock hours of training were provided to child care professionals seeking to meet state mandated training requirements established by the state of Texas.

Table 1. Participant Characteristics (N = 199)*

Variable	Percentage*	Mean
Age (in years)		38.5
Number of Years in Child Care Profession		8.7
Gender		
Female	91.0	
Male	5.5	
Ethnicity		
African American	0.5	
Caucasian	0.5	
Hispanic/Latino	98.0	
Other	1.0	
Education		
Less than High School Diploma	3.5	
High School Diploma	44.7	
Associates Degree	33.7	
College Graduate	12.0	
Program Type		
Home Day Care	6.0	
Child Care Center (other than Head Start)	23.1	
Head Start	65.8	
Other (e.g., Montessori)	4.0	
Program Licensed and/or Registered		
Yes	88.4	
No	0.0	
Attended Extension-Sponsored Training in Past		
Yes	60.3	
No	22.1	

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Not Sure	7.5	
*Percentages do not always equal 100% due to missing cases.		

Participants were asked to indicate their agreement or disagreement with a series of items related to the training. One hundred and ninety-nine participants completed written surveys (See Table 2 for participant responses).

Table 2. Child Care Provider Conference Outcomes (N = 199)*

Item	Percent in Agreement*	Percent not in Agreement*
Acquisition of New Information		
Learned new information	96.5%	0.0%
Will utilize new information to strengthen program	97.0%	0.0%
Intent to Use Information		
Will use now	97.0%	0.0%
Will use in future	97.0%	0.0%
Training's Influence on Provider/Program Quality		
Will be more effective provider	97.0%	0.0%
Will lead to improvements in quality of care offered	97.0%	0.0%
Relevancy of Training		
Helped provider obtain required clock hours	97.0%	0.0%
Topics relevant to daily work	95.0%	0.5%
Other		
Training cost-effective	95.0%	0.5%
Plan to attend another Extension conference	91.5%	0.0%
*Percentages do not equal 100% due to missing cases		

In addition to the above items, participants were asked to rate the quality of the conference compared to other child care trainings they have attended in the past by non-Extension organizations/agencies. Table 3 below contains the results.

Table 3. Perceptions of Quality Compared to Other Non-Extension Trainings (N = 199)*

Item*	Much Worse	Worse	Same	Better	Much Better
Compared to other child care trainings you have attended (not provided by Extension), how would you rate the quality of today's training?	0.5%	0.5%	12.1%	39.7%	38.2%
*Percentages do not equal 100% due to missing cases					

As can be seen in the tables above, child care providers found the training to be very beneficial. Over 90 percent of participants acquired new information from the conference, considered the training to be very relevant to the work they do, plan to utilize the information gained at the conference to improve their programs, and consider themselves better equipped to work with the children in their care. Moreover, **78%** of providers rated the training "Better" or "Much Better" compared to other trainings they have attended that were not conducted by Extension.

Report prepared by Dr. Stephen Green on November 21, 2013. For more information, please call (979) 845-6468.

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"Giving Every Child a Great Start"



19th Annual Child Care Conference

Making a Difference

***Get the Facts* - Evaluation of Curriculum on Nutrition Label Reading 2013 Starr County Report**

Relevance

Health disparities among low income populations are well documented. Obesity, heart disease and hypertension are conditions which are more prevalent in low income populations. These health conditions can be improved thru consumption of a healthy eating plan as affirmed in the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. However, dietary behavior change can be difficult and requires knowledge, skills, motivation and an environment conducive to change.

Response

Basic food buying skills enable clients to consider more healthful food choices when shopping. *Get the Facts*, a three-lesson series on the Nutrition Facts food label, was developed by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service nutrition specialists to enhance participant skills necessary for positive dietary behavior change. The skills-building series focused on comparing serving size, fat and sodium information when selecting food choices. These three items were specifically selected as they relate to obesity, heart disease and hypertension.

Session goals were:

- Serving size: Understand the difference between a serving and a portion; estimate common serving sizes; use serving sizes to create healthy, balanced meals using the plate method.
- Fat: Gain knowledge of the basic components of the Nutrition Facts label; understand the health consequences of consuming saturated and trans fat; compare food labels to select products lower in saturated fat and trans fat.
- Sodium: Explain that most (more than 70%) of the sodium in the American eating plan comes from processed foods; understand the effects of sodium on blood pressure; compare food labels to consistently select products with less sodium.

The evaluation of knowledge and intent to change behavior among *Get the Facts* participants was accomplished thru the use of pre/post/follow-up survey instruments. *Get the Facts* participants could opt out of the evaluation process if desired. Nonetheless, 142 *Get the Facts* pre/post survey sets, of which 133 included the follow-up survey, were received from Starr County.

The typical *Get the Facts* participant (n=142) was Hispanic (98%) and female (95%) with a mean age of 37 years. Participants described themselves as white (97%). Most participants (56%) had a high school diploma, GED or less. Many participants (36%) had been told by a health professional they needed to lose weight.

The typical household had 4.6 members, of which 2.2 were children. Of those participants (n=66) who reported receiving food stamp benefits the typical monthly amount was \$361. Participants reported other program use: food stamps (21%), free or reduced price school meals (23%), WIC (50%), and food banks or pantries (6%). Most participants (58%)

reported Better Living for Texans (BLT) was the first AgriLife Extension program they had attended. Most participants (89%) rated the *Get the Facts* lesson series as excellent.

Results

Change in Knowledge

There was a statistically significant ($p < .001$) increase in mean knowledge during the time *Get the Facts* was taught; interestingly, further knowledge gains were noted during the follow-up period (Table 1).

Table 1. Mean correct knowledge scores (out of 6)
Pre/post/follow-up survey sets (n=133)

Pre-survey	Post-survey	Follow-up survey
2.7a	3.6b	5.4c

a, b and c are statistically different at $p < .001$

Change in Behavior

Many participants reported increased label reading during the time the series was taught; additional behavioral improvements were noted for fat and sodium during the follow-up period (Table 2).

Table 2: Percentage of *Get the Facts* participants who reported always or almost always checking the food label while shopping for food.
Pre/post/follow-up survey sets. (n=133)

Behavior question	Pre Survey %	Post Survey %	Follow-up Survey %
How often do you use the information about <u>SERVING SIZE</u> on the food label to determine the amount of food you will eat?	26	53	44
How often do you use the information about <u>FAT</u> on the food label when shopping for food?	40	73	95
How often do you use the information about <u>SODIUM</u> on the food label when shopping for food?	27	64	87

Self-reported behavior improved ($p > .001$) regarding serving size, fat and sodium food label usage during the time this lesson series was taught; fat and sodium had additional gains during follow-up (Table 3).

Table 3. Mean food label usage scores (5=never thru 1=always)
Pre/post/follow-up survey sets (n=133)

Behavior question	Pre Survey	Post Survey	Follow-up Survey
How often do you use the information about <u>SERVING SIZE</u> on the food label to determine the amount of food you will eat?	3.0a	2.3b	2.4b
How often do you use the information about <u>FAT</u> on the food label when shopping for food?	2.7a	1.8b	1.2c
How often do you use the information about <u>SODIUM</u> on the food label when shopping for food?	3.1a	2.1b	1.4c

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Answers coded: 5=never; 4=almost never; 3=sometimes; 2=almost always; 1=always
a, b and c are statistically different at $p > .001$

Statewide Results

Positive behavior change was reported by participants (Table 4).

Table 4. Selected Statewide Comments


Participant responses to: “What changes have you made?”
<i>Changed to smaller portions, buying frozen vegetables instead of canned, changed to 2% milk from whole, use whole wheat bread.</i>
<i>Paying attention to servings and portions, look at labels more before I buy</i>
<i>Buying more fresh vegetables and fruits, stop buying sodas and junk food, no more hot Cheetos or chips. How to read the food labels and serving sizes.</i>
<i>Take time to read labels and compare products for sodium and saturated fats.</i>

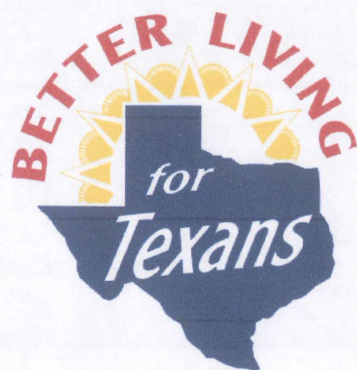
Other participant comments were captured. For example:

- Participants stated that they learned the difference between a recommended serving size and a portion which is the amount consumed. Participants stated they now eat smaller portions. Consistently eating smaller portions can help reduce the risk of obesity.
- Participants mentioned that they now use the Nutrition Facts labels to identify saturated fat in food products. Some clients stated that they switched to lower fat milk. Whole milk is a major source of dietary saturated fat, therefore this behavior change can significantly reduce dietary fat intake in these clients.
- Many participants commented that they did not know 70% of dietary sodium comes from processed foods. Selecting food products with lower sodium content while shopping can significantly reduce dietary sodium intake. While a reduction in sodium intake will not cure hypertension, it can help reduce its severity and consequences.

Get the Facts is a Texas SNAP-ED approved curricula available to help meet the needs of local county Extension agents. Evaluation results ($n=1453$) suggest *Get the Facts* curriculum was effective ($p > .001$) at increasing participant knowledge and improving behavior related to nutrition label reading.

Label reading skills are necessary for clients to make healthful food choices and thereby reduce their risk of chronic conditions such as obesity, heart disease and hypertension.

V A L U E	
Obesity Prevention and Reduction	
	The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service engages children and adults in programs that teach them how to eat nutritious foods and engage in regular physical activity to promote health and reduce their risk for obesity. The Texas public benefits through a healthier population, reduced health care costs, and increased productivity.



Making a Difference

¡Si, Yo Puedo Controlar Mi Diabetes! 2013 Starr County Report

¡Si, Yo Puedo Controlar Mi Diabetes! (Si, Yo Puedo) is an evidence-informed, culturally competent educational program targeting low-literate Hispanic/Latinos with diabetes. The curriculum is predicated on the American Diabetes Association's national standards of care and employs the social cognitive and self-regulation theories as its foundational support. Empowerment is an overarching theme of the program, and, to this end, *Si, Yo Puedo* aims to equip participants with knowledge and lifestyle skills to better control their diabetes.

Relevance

- Diabetes cost Texas more than 12 billion dollars.¹
- Texas Hispanic/Latinos 45 to 64 years of age are disproportionately affected by diabetes prevalence (11.0 percent) than their White, non-Hispanic counterparts (16.8 percent).
- In 2007, mortality rates were more than double among Texas.¹ Hispanic/Latinos (40 per 100,000) than Whites, non-Hispanics (19 per 100,000).¹
- Among persons with diabetes, a higher proportion of Texas Hispanic/Latinos (32.5 percent) could not see a doctor in the last 12 month due to cost compared to Whites (16.5 percent).²



Response

- Proper management is critical to minimize the potential negative effects of diabetes.
- Self-management education is the cornerstone for diabetic care and vital for blood glucose control.
- Recognizing the need for a culturally-relevant type 2 diabetes self-management education targeting Texas Hispanic/Latinos *Si, Yo Puedo* was developed to address this gap in health programming.

Impact of Yo Puedo

In 2013, 21 individuals registered to for the *Si, Yo Puedo* class offered in Starr County, Texas. Among those enrolled in the program, 57.1% (N=12) of the participants completed the classes. More than half of the participants (75% N=9) reported never having received any diabetes classes.

The findings below summarize the impact of the *Si, Yo Puedo* program delivered in Starr County.

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Outcome indicators include diabetes knowledge, self-efficacy, acculturation, and diabetes self-care behaviors.



- Demographic characteristics: 75% (N=9) of the participants were females, 16.7% (N=2) male. The average age was 54 years, and 91.7% of the participants were Hispanic/Latino. Among the program participants, 50% (N=6) had less than high school education. A total of 41.7% of participants (N=5) reported their yearly income as \$20,000 or less.
- Participants were minimally acculturated. A total of 41.7% of participants (N=5) had an acculturation score less than 10, where a total score of 25 indicates highly acculturated.
- Diabetes knowledge increased two-fold Pre-test 7.8 (out of 10) and Post-test 9.1 (out of 10).
- Diabetes self-care scores reveal that participants significantly improved in performing routine health behaviors to better manage their diabetes: Pre-test mean score: 28.3 out of total score of 44; Post-test: 35.5 out of 44.
- Self-efficacy scores slightly improved with participants reporting increases in their confidence to engage in diabetes self-care behaviors): Pre-test 3.1 M (out of 4) and Post-test 3.4 M (out of 4). (Scale: 1 = I don't feel sure; 4 = I feel very sure.)

Success Stores

- *I learned that my eating habits were very poor. I ate the wrong foods. Mrs. Silla taught us how to eat healthier. What to do if our sugar gets up or down. To take better care of our teeth and eyes and feet.*
- *I learned a lot about diabetes, things I didn't know before these classes. Thank you for all for providing these classes.*

Reflections

Overall, 2013 evidence demonstrates that the *¡Sí, Yo Puedo Controlar Mi Diabetes!* significantly enhances participants' engagement in diabetes self-care behaviors, improvements in self-confidence about diabetes self-care, and increases diabetes knowledge. This program lends support to the benefits of a culturally competent diabetes self-management education targeting lower literate, Spanish-speaking Hispanic/Latinos with diabetes. Given the high rates of diabetes among Hispanic/Latinos, *Si, Yo Puedo* is a program to address this concern in Starr County, Texas. We envision this effort to continue that will help ensure the sustainability of *Si, Yo Puedo*.

References

1. Texas Diabetes Council, Texas Department of State Health Services. *Changing the course: A plan to prevent and control diabetes in Texas*. Austin, TX: TDSHS Publication No. 45-10524.
2. Texas Diabetes Council, Texas Department of State Health Services. *Diabetes: A comprehensive approach*. Austin, TX: TDSHS Publication No. 45-10524.

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*Yes! You can control your
diabetes!*



Making a Difference

Transformation Grant YR 2: Starr County Project - 2013

Relevance

Starr County is located in South Texas, Rio Grande Valley and is a border county with Mexico to the South. The highest percent of Hispanic residents of any county in the US are in Starr county, with over 99% of residents speaking Spanish. Colonias, very low income areas which often lack safe and sanitary housing, inadequate physical and social infrastructure, are found throughout the county. Almost 40% of Starr residents live below poverty and approximately 36% of residents are uninsured. Health indicators for Starr County are very poor including:

- Approx. 28% adult obesity rate
- Approx 15% preschool obesity rate
- 29% of adults in Starr County are physically inactive; only 2% have access to recreational facilities
- 20% diabetes rate

Response

The Texas Department of Health Services (DSHS) is funding Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service for 5 years to support a chronic disease prevention program in Starr County. The project is focused on improving the health environment of Starr County by increasing the resident's access to:

- Fresh fruits and vegetables
- Physical activity opportunities/places to be active
- Smoke free environments
- Preventive community and clinical health care.

Under the leadership of the local FCS Extension agent, a comprehensive health coalition was formed (Starr Working on Wellness (WOW)) to assist in identifying local health and nutrition needs. Fifteen community planning and implementation meetings were held in 2013.

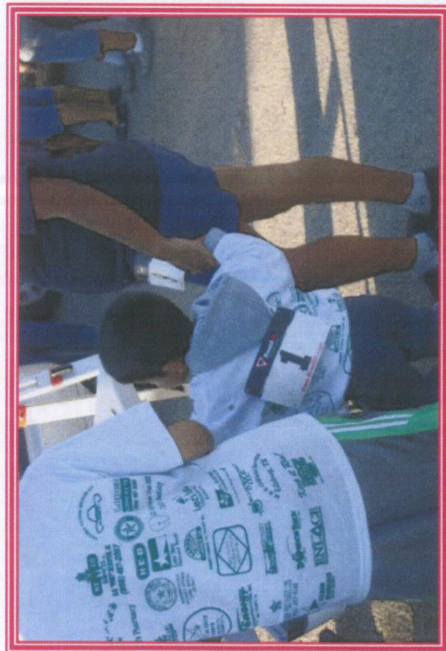
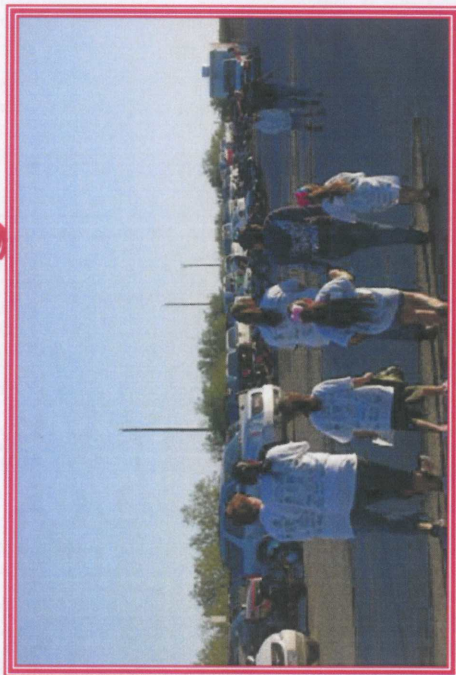
Results

During year two of this five year project, significant improvements were made.

- A local mobile farmer's market was developed to sell local produce within identified food deserts and colonias areas in Starr county. The mobile market reached approximately 7,500 community members and sold approximately 19,500 lbs. of fresh produce.
- Support continued for the addition of 2 additional gardens, bringing the project total to 12 school and community gardens, which promote fresh produce consumption as well as physical activity. Harvest and distribution logs indicate that approximately 5,900 lbs. of produce was harvested from the gardens and were distributed to parents, youth, school staff, community members, church and food pantries, school cafeterias for use, etc.
- Two walking trails and playscape areas were developed at a local school and community center and work was started on two community parks that will be revitalized as a part of this grant. These walking/play/park areas include the addition of: walking paths, lighting, shade trees, new exercise equipment, paint and benches. Work on revitalizing the 2 parks will continue into year 3 and 4 of the grant.
- Approximately \$125,000 of in-kind contributions for the various gardens, trails and park projects have been donated during YR 2 of this grant. Everything from labor hours, to heavy machinery and equipment use, to soil, caliche, water, seeds, paint and various other forms of donations and materials have been provided from within the community. This tremendous project is bringing together great partnerships and friends for Extension to support future programming efforts into the future.

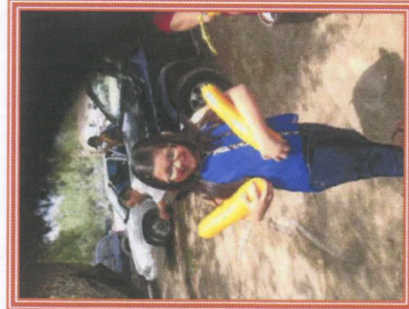
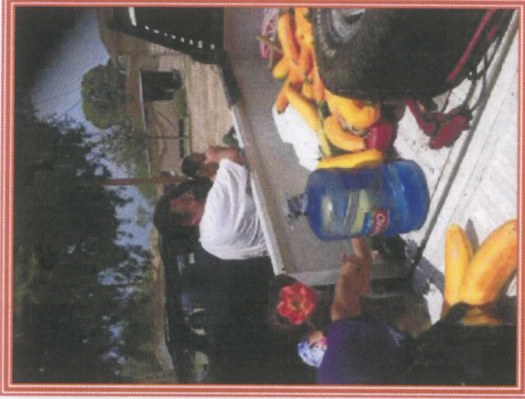
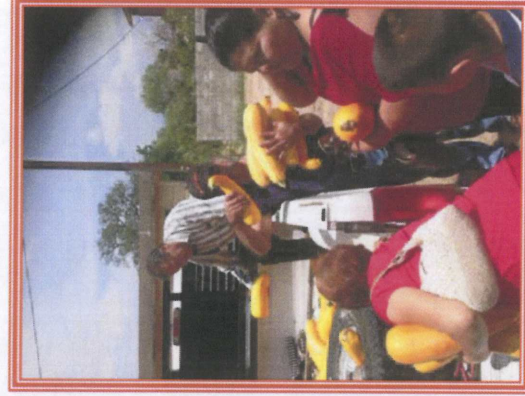
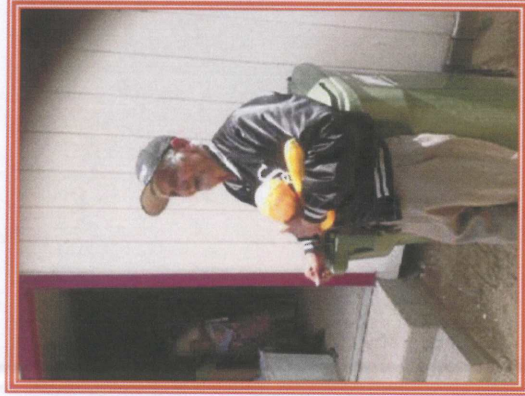
Lastly, the leveraging of existing Extension programs, funded thru other grants projects, is also improving access to and integration of community prevention health services for limited resource individuals in this underserved county. Specifically, the Si Yo Puedo Controlar Mi Diabetes, Type II Diabetes education program and the Friend to Friend, Breast and Cervical Cancer screening program are now being offered on a regular basis in Starr County with support from the local hospital.

1st Annual Family Stampede



Wings of Fire Church

TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION

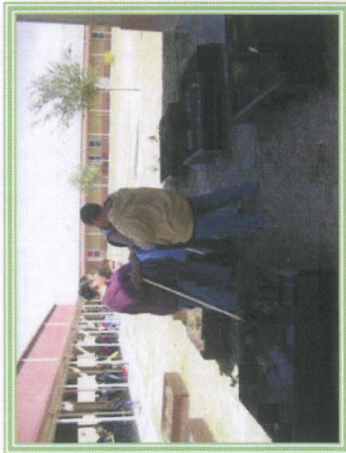


LONG LIVE
TEXANS
STARR COUNTY

Bringing the farm to church

STARR COUNTY COALITION
WOW
WORKING ON WELLNESS
TRABAJANDO PARA TU SALUD

Dr. Mario Ramirez Elementary Garden



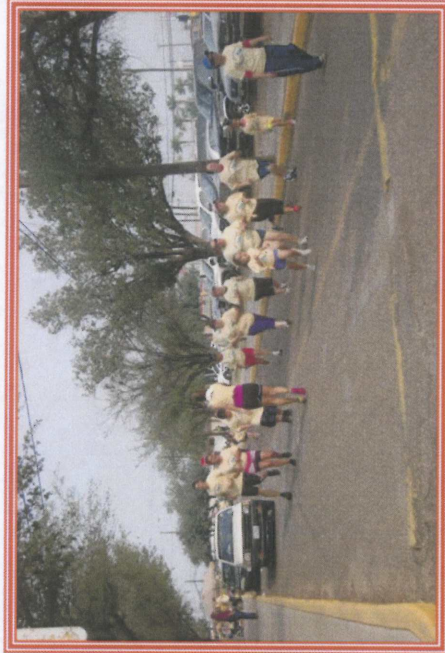
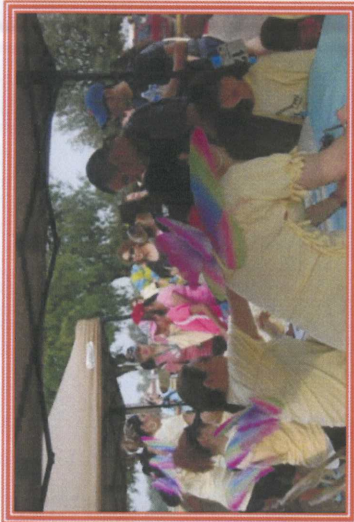
LONG LIVE
TEXANS
 STARR COUNTY

STARR COUNTY COALITION

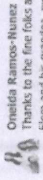


WORKING ON WELLNESS
 TRABAJANDO PARA TU SALUD

DR. B'S COMMUNITY FITNESS DAY







Oneldia Ramos-Nunez
Thanks to the fine folks at The Farmer's Wife and General Ricardo Sanchez Film and his grandpa, my son was inspired to plant a garden. Fruits and veggies are soon to follow -- with Blanca Garza.
Unlike · Comment · Share · February 2 via mobile
near Las Lomas

You, Linda C Salas-Lopez, Ramiro Garcia Jr., Veronica-Ram Trellido and 86 others like this.

1 share



Alicia Garza Super cool!!!
February 2 at 9:17am via mobile · Like · 1



Laura Gomez Garza Awesome!
February 2 at 10:52am via mobile · Like · 1



Laura Gomez Garza Love the scarecrow! Was that your mom?
February 2 at 10:52am via mobile · Like · 1



Oneldia Ramos-Nunez Lol... No harm. Scarecrows are courtesy of Hobby Lobby!
February 2 at 10:54am via mobile · Like · 1



Melissa Ann West How cute! I bet my to is thrilled lol
February 2 at 1:00am via mobile · Like · 1



Oneldia Ramos-Nunez Of course! It's a project! We all know how much he LOVES projects. Lol. There's also a new rabbit, a show hog, and a baby goat. You have to bring Landon.
February 2 at 11:03am via mobile · Like · 1



Melissa Ann West How exciting! Yes we need to get out there again
February 2 at 11:03am via mobile · Like · 1



Elsa Villarreal You're must be thrilled. It is a lucky little guy to have such a wonderful grandpa, and it helps when you're the favorite. Jma awaits the harvest... Way cool Oneldia
February 2 at 11:16am via mobile · Like · 1



Oneldia Ramos-Nunez Thanks Elsa! They did a similar thing at school and he was dying to try it for himself. For carra, from the farmer's wife, is their mentor. It is pretty cool.
February 2 at 11:34am via mobile · Like



Elsa Villarreal That's an awesome experience ya noma! Iet fallu un tractor and that's where Julio comes in... It is so lucky to have the best of both worlds: life w the parents n grandparents who equally share in their upbringing... Best thing you ever was take them with you
February 2 at 11:54am via mobile · Like · 1



Blanca Garza Come by in two weeks...will give him some free cabbage plants... Come by this week will give some free Clinton feed--yipee
February 2 at 9:11pm · Like · 1



Oneldia Ramos-Nunez Thank you so much. He really enjoyed what you taught them at school. He worked out there all day today. That's so nice of you. I'll take him by.
February 2 at 9:16pm via mobile · Like



Naomi Salinas How is everyone doing Blanca? Hope all is well.
February 2 at 3:26pm · Like

HARVESTING DAY R.T. BARRERA ELEMENTARY



LONG LIVE
TEXANS
 STARR COUNTY



STARR COUNTY COALITION

WORKING ON WELLNESS
 TRABAJANDO PARA TU SALUD



MOBILE MARKET

TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION



LONG LIVE
TEXANS
STARR COUNTY

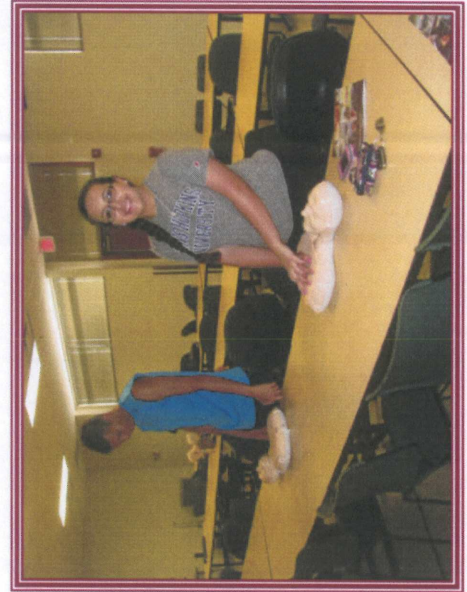
STARR COUNTY COALITION
WOW
WORKING ON WELLNESS
TRABAJANDO PARA TU SALUD

Taking Healthy Steps Event



WOW Health Ambassadors

TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION



4-H and Youth Development



- Quality Counts Program
- Annual 4-H Program Summary
 - 4-H Kids Fish Program

Making a Difference

Quality Counts Program Starr County 2013

Developed by Omar Montemayor, County Extension Agent-AGNR

Introduction:

Texas has the highest participation totals in 4-H and FFA livestock projects in the country. In 2006, there were over 89,000 market and breeding entries for cattle, sheep, swine, and goats across the state and (Coufal, 2007). These figures have continually climbed over the last decade and into the new millennium. Thus, Quality Counts in Texas has been developed for 4-H and FFA members who participate in these livestock project areas.

Quality Counts in Texas is a program for 4-H and FFA youth across Texas that exhibit livestock projects. This includes such market and breeding projects as beef cattle, sheep, swine, and goats. The purpose of Quality Counts in Texas is to provide an opportunity for youth across Texas to learn personal character attributes and acceptable livestock management practices associated with these projects. This unique combination of subject matter should result in the exhibition of the highest quality livestock projects by youth with unsurpassed character and ethics. Ultimately, this program will be an integral part of the junior livestock program. This will eventually lead to a safer, more wholesome nutritious product that is fed by responsible youth of Texas who are dedicated to providing the best meat products for consumers.

In Starr County, over 175 livestock animal enter the food chain through livestock projects that are exhibited at the Starr County Youth Fair. It is important that all exhibitors learn about food safety and ethical sportsmanship.

Program:

The Starr County Youth Board with the assistance of local agriculture science teachers, scheduled two Quality Counts Programs. The programs targeted the Starr County 4-H Program and all three FFA chapters in the County. These educational workshops provided the following educational components: A power point presentation for students, handouts with activities to reinforce educational topics, an online test, and a student evaluation.

The following educational activities were organized to achieve the Quality Counts Program objectives.

1. Agent worked with high school agriculture science teachers and club managers, representing each of the 4-H clubs and FFA chapters, to select training topics for workshops, set up schedule of events, and assist with the development of the student evaluation instruments.
2. Contacted Extension 4-H and Youth Development Specialist to acquire power point presentation, and design written activities to reinforce training topics. Educational material and handouts was distributed to all students and teachers attending the workshop.

3. Students participated in a three hour workshop that provided information about the Quality Counts Program. The workshops also featured information for students to take a required on-line course and obtain a personal identification number that they can use to prove that they have completed the course.
4. Agent compiled a summary of the youth program based on the results of the Quality Counts Program students evaluations that were collected from each of the participating students.
5. Agents shared the results of the Quality Counts Program with residents of the county through the local newspaper where they featured a story about the events. Results were also shared with the agriculture science teachers and 4-H Youth Board.

Evaluation Method:

A one page retrospective post design evaluation was administered to the participating students. This type of design is a popular way to assess learners' self-reported changes in knowledge, awareness, skills, confidence, attitudes or behaviors (Howard, 1980). This evaluation was developed with input from all 4-H club managers, and agriculture science teachers. The strategy was used to determine the level of knowledge youth acquired through this educational event. A total of 42 student and 4-H club member evaluations were used to determine the effectiveness of this program.

Collaborators:

Starr County Youth Fair, local Agriculture Science Teachers, and 4-H Youth Board.

Results:

A total fifty six (42) FFA students and 4-H Club members participated in this program. The scale of responses for these statements was defined as 1=Poor, 2=Fair, 3=Good, 4=Excellent. Based on the evaluations, 94% of all the respondents better understand the importance of food safety as these show animals enter the human food chain. Eighty nine percent (89%) understand the importance of keeping accurate records of livestock medications. It is also evident that participants learned, (91%) about withdraw periods of medications. Almost all the respondents (98%), have indicated that they found this program beneficial and will work to become more ethical show people.


Summary:

This program did appear to build knowledge and change perceptions about the ethical showing of livestock projects. Participant responses indicate that they have a better appreciation about character education, food safety, and livestock medication withdraw periods. This program design will continue next year, possibly addressing another emerging issue, with the support of agriculture science teachers.

References:

Howard, G.S. (1980). Resonse-Shift bias a problem in evaluating interventions with pre/post self reports. Evaluation Review, 4 (1), 93-106.

For More information Contact:
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service
500 N. Britton Avenue
Rio Grande City, Tx 78582
Tel. (956) 487-2306

V A L U E	
Character and Leadership Development	
	<p>Texas A&M AgriLife Extension's 4-H Youth Development Program teaches participants leadership skills and character traits. Participating youth become mentors, role models, and leaders in their schools and communities.</p>



4-H and YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

TEXAS A&M AGRI LIFE EXTENSION

Making a Difference 2013

Annual 4-H Program Summary

County 4-H Youth Involvement

Chartered Community Clubs
Members Enrolled in 4-H Clubs
Youth Reached through Community-based Programs
Youth Reached through School-Based Enrichment Curriculum

Total Youth Reached

County 4-H Leadership, Advisory, and Support Organizations

Youth Board Members attended Meetings
County 4-H Council Members attended Meetings
Adult Leaders & Parents Organization Members attended Meetings



Participation in County 4-H Events

County Participation in District Events

County Participation in State/National Events

Most Popular Club Projects in the County

Most Popular Curriculum in the County

County 4-H Volunteer Support

Registered & Screened Volunteers Supporting Clubs
Club Managers, Co-Managers, and Project Leaders
Hours Contributed by Volunteers in Support of Clubs

Livestock Show Premium Sale Proceeds*

Includes all projects (4-H and FFA)

Value of Volunteer Time Supporting 4-H



County 4-H Leadership & Personal Development Programs

Attended State-level Leadership & Personal Development educational or competitive events
Attended District-level Leadership & Personal Development educational or competitive events
Attended District Leadership Lab
Received 4-H Scholarships valued at a total of

Local Training Opportunities for Youth and Adults

Significant Leadership & Personal Development accomplishments from county Events & Activities

County 4-H Agriculture & Natural Resource Programs

Livestock Projects (all species)
Participated in County Livestock Shows
Attended State-level Livestock Shows
Attended District-level Agriculture & Natural Resources educational or competitive events
Youth Trained through "Quality Counts" Program

Local Training Opportunities for Youth and Adults

Significant Agriculture & Natural Resource accomplishments from county Events & Activities

County 4-H Family & Consumer Science Programs

Attended State-level educational or competitive events
Attended District-level educational or competitive events

Local Training Opportunities for Youth and Adults

Significant Family & Consumer Science accomplishments from county Events & Activities

Making a Difference

4-H Kids Fish Program Starr County 2013

**Developed by Omar Montemayor, County Extension Agent-AGNR
Elva Yolanda Morado, County Extension Agent-FCS**

Introduction:

Modern society has removed young people from enjoying the outdoors. It is important for young people to enjoy the outdoors, through recreational programs. Many young people do not participate in outdoor recreational programs that can stimulate social skills and develop healthy lifestyles.

Program:

As a result of this concern the Starr County Youth Board along with local members of Texas Parks & Wildlife developed a program entitled "4-H Kids Fish. The program targeted all youth that could access Falcon State Park in Starr County. This educational program provided the following educational components: Recreational fishing for young people to enjoy with their parents, and promoting a healthy lifestyle by featuring a Fun Walk within the park.

The following educational activities were organized to achieve the 4-H Kids Fish Program objectives.

1. Agents worked with club managers, representing each of the 4-H clubs to identify volunteers for the event.
2. Contacted Texas Parks & Wildlife volunteers and employees to secure fish, identify location and develop emergency management plan for the event.
3. Worked with local youth board to plan, implement, evaluate and interpret the educational program. Group also identified other recreational activities, secured over \$4500 in sponsorships and assisted in marketing the event.
4. Agents hosted this year's 4-H Kids Fish program where over 215 youth participated. The fun walk, promoting healthy lifestyles, included 50 participants.
5. Agents compiled a summary of the 4-H Kids Fish Program based on the results of the evaluations that were collected from participants on the day of the event.
6. Agents shared the results of the 4-H Kids Fish Program with residents of the county through the local newspaper where they featured a story about the events. Sponsors were also recognized in the article featuring the story.

Evaluation Method:

A one page retrospective post design evaluation was administered to the participating students. This type of design is a popular way to assess learners' self-reported changes in knowledge, awareness, skills, confidence, attitudes or behaviors (Howard, 1980). This evaluation was developed with input from all 4-H adult volunteers and Texas Parks & Wildlife personnel. The strategy was used to determine the level of knowledge youth acquired through this educational event. A total of 43 evaluations were used to determine the effectiveness of this program.

Collaborators:

Starr 4-H Youth Board, and Texas Parks & Wildlife

Results:

A total forty (43) evaluations were summarized . The scale of responses for these statements was defined as 1=Poor, 2=Fair, 3=Good, 4=Excellent. Based on the evaluations, 90% of the respondents have a more positive feeling about the outdoor project they participated in . Ninety four percent (94%) have a better understanding of the resources the state park has for young people . It is also evident that participants learned, (91%) that fishing can be and excellent family recreational activity. Almost all the respondents (97%), have indicated that they would be more comfortable with serving in a 4-H leadership role because they participated in this activity.


Summary:

This program did appear to build knowledge and change perceptions about recreational outdoor activities and healthy lifestyles. Participant responses indicate that they have a better appreciation for the state park and what it offers to the public and how 4-H is offering excellent leadership opportunities for young people . This program design will continue next year, possibly expanding the program and adding more activities.

References:

Howard, G.S. (1980). Resonse-Shift bias a problem in evaluating interventions with pre/post self reports. Evaluation Review, 4 (1), 93-106.

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Character and Leadership Development	
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Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service STARR County

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