

03/12/2024

Harvest Family Success Center

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Requesting \$4500

Healthy Habits Program

Summary Description: Healthy Habits will increase the intake of healthy produce for seniors, teaching them how to grow their own produce and prepare produce using healthy recipes.

1) What is the problem you have identified?

When the SNAP benefit were cut in 2023, older adults were hit with not just that loss, but also the increased prices for produce and groceries overall. Low-income seniors cannot afford to purchase healthy produce any longer. As produce is not available at our local pantries, these older adults are eating unhealthier, processed, packaged and canned foods high in sodium, empty calories, sugar and fat. At the Harvest FSC, we have seen these low-income seniors struggling.

Older adults need a reliable source of healthy alternatives to include along with their food pantry shopping to make their diet healthier.

Healthy Habits will serve older, low-income adults in Hunterdon County and beyond.

2) What is the solution you propose to address the problem?

The solution to this lack of “produce purchase power” is to ensure older adults have the ability to receive and grow their own fresh healthy produce at a program run free of charge and close to home, reducing the barriers to participation. Healthy Habits will combine our Veggiepalooza free weekly produce distribution with educational experiences and hands-on self-sustainability opportunities, so seniors can avail themselves of produce lacking in their diets due to availability and cost restraints.

In addition, Harvest FSC will also be able to offer Healthy Habits participants many other assistance programs which they may not know they are eligible to receive, such as food delivery programs and concrete supports such as help paying for utilities, etc.

3) What actions will you take?

- 1) Healthy Habits will host a monthly class run by a nutritionist on healthy eating and increasing produce intake. The individuals will all watch a demonstration, get a sample to taste, plus the ingredients and recipe so they can prepare the healthy offering at home (offered in English and Spanish).
- 2) Healthy Habits will provide a pot or window box “salad bar” for participants that they will help decorate and plant with items they enjoy that would be included in a healthy salad. Assorted plants such as patio tomatoes and peppers will be available as well as seeds for lettuces, spinaches, radishes, carrots and more to fill the window boxes and tubs, ensuring that even a sunny window can be a garden, as they learn how to grow their own produce right at their own home.
- 3) Lastly, Healthy Habits will include free access to our 6 window box herb gardens, so any time they wish they can come to our center and snip basil, chives, rosemary and more to make healthy eating taste even better!

4) What population will be served?

Healthy Habits will serve older, low-income adults in Hunterdon County and beyond.

Harvest FSC will be reaching out to the local senior housing apartment complexes, low-income housing complexes, local churches and food pantries to be sure those in need are aware of the program.

5) Are there partners for implementation and funding? Have similar programs been tried by other organizations?

The Harvest FSC will use our back yard and parking lot for the distribution, and provide volunteers and staff to run the programs.

Shop Rite has committed to a 20% discount on produce purchases.

The Flemington Presbyterian Church has given \$500 plus the use of their social hall during inclement weather to run the program.

The Frenchtown Presbyterian Church has pledged \$500 the Clinton United Methodist Church has pledged \$100, and Northfield Bank has pledged \$250.

Window box “Salad Gardens” are very popular, with food pantries and churches offering to community members “hands-on” instruction and the needed supplies. We

know Community Gardens are also popular, but we have no one in the area doing window box “Salad Gardens” educational free cooking classes, or herb gardens.

Our nutritionists programming is always very popular, and we have run our winter program, “What’s Crockin’” healthy crock pot cooking class with all classes full.

6) How will you know your actions are having an impact?

We will count the number of participants and have them fill out a pre and post survey to track what participants felt they gained throughout the project, what health benefits they experienced and if they learned anything new.

Their positive outcomes (I ate more produce, I tried a healthy recipe I was shown, I lowered my blood pressure, I lost weight, etc.) will mean Healthy Habits was a success!

Healthy Habits also addresses the isolation so many older adults are experiencing by giving them a place to go and learn and have fun with their peers.

Healthy Habits Budget:

Expense Description	Cost
Salad Bowl Window Box for 100	
containers	\$900
soil	\$500
seeds	\$200
seedlings	\$800
gloves	\$100
Nutritionist 6 Monthly Demonstrations	
stipend for nutritionist	\$600
produce for healthy recipe	\$2100
Window Box Herb Gardens at Harvest FSC	
containers	\$400
plants	\$150
soil	\$100
Subtotal	\$5850
Donations/Financial Support	
Frenchtown Presbyterian	-\$500
Flemington Presbyterian	-\$500
Clinton United Methodist	-\$100
Northfield Bank	-\$250
All staffing from Harvest FSC- in kind/no cost	
Donation Total	-\$1350
<u>Total Budget</u>	<u>\$4500</u>