Imagine School at Avondale Arizona

USING STEM TO PROMOTE
HEALTHY HABITS

Submitted by
Stephanie Walsh
Imagine School at Avondale
Arizona
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CONCEPTUAL OVERVIEW:
The main purpose of this project is to raise awareness in our community of the need to choose healthier living and eating habits. Additionally, to enable students to conduct research and gather data in order to determine need and track their progress, using that data to establish a pathway towards these “Healthy Habits.”

STUDENT GOALS:
To teach students observation and data analysis skills that will enable them to develop a program to change unhealthy dietary and exercise habits. Students will learn to recognize and maintain a healthy diet through the tracking of data relating to food intake and caloric counts, as well as charting data from physical exercise using pedometers, heart rate and body fat calipers. Students will use the acquired data to modify their own and their families’ behaviors to achieve the desired healthier results. Persistence and the subtle changes they make will, over time, result in positive lifelong changes in health and fitness.

COMMUNITY GOALS:
To make students, their families, and the community-at-large aware of the 33% obesity rate in Maricopa County. Through this awareness, stakeholders will recognize the need to make healthier eating and exercise choices to result in a proactive approach to healthy living and enable our participants to employ strategies learned for a lifetime.

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Next Generation Standards/MS-ETS1-2
ACTIVITIES:

Students will utilize skills learned to research and collect information in order to formulate a plan to define health risks and healthy nutritional choices to our student and community population. Students will organize a “Healthy Habits” informational assembly program to raise awareness and create excitement for planned before and after school events. Student-led events will include a morning walking club, double Dutch jump rope team, yoga classes, and a cooking class that will focus on the preparation of healthy meals and snacks students themselves can prepare. At these events, students will measure and chart progress towards participant’s goals in personal journals.

Students will also mentor a second grade class to encourage younger students to participate. Students will help them plan and plant a raised bed salad garden to be harvested and served at a special classroom luncheon.

With an endorsement from the City of Avondale and the support of a local children’s hospital, students will plan a community-wide family health fair and walk-a-thon including healthy food demonstrations, a family exercise class, and project-related student exhibits that will demonstrate how to track and maintain a healthy lifestyle. Students will also sponsor a healthy snack contest in which students will be challenged to create an original recipe for a healthy snack. The aim of this community-wide project is to equip stakeholders with the tools necessary to maintain a healthier lifestyle and reduce the incidence of obesity in our community.