Youth and staff involved in food justice projects are engaging their neighborhoods in a community organizing process to renew their local food system. Empowering adolescents as community organizers involves issues of motivation, decision-making power, and realistic expectations of how long things take.

Food justice programs use different strategies to motivate young people to get involved. The majority of programs convene and train a core group of youth to serve as advocates. Initial motivators for youth participation include discontent with the quality of food available, getting credit for school, and employment. Long-term motivation is based on a variety of hands-on training experiences that enhance youth’s commitment to increasing access to healthier food.

The training process includes skill-building activities, group projects, and discussions to analyze problems in the food system and to start thinking about solutions. For example, a group of young people in the Bay View Hunter Point neighborhood of San Francisco, surveyed the availability of healthy foods in their neighborhood. They were impressed to see that only 1% of the food options were healthy.

The majority of youth food access programs are working with high school age students. The Healthy Food Coalition supported by the Center for Food and Justice of Occidental College works with engaged middle school youth. Seventh and eighth graders figure out the connections between lack of access to healthy food in their neighborhood, marketing of junk food, and the prevalence of overweight youth.

(continued on p. 2)
Youth Address Food... (Cont.)

Program coordinators realize the importance of having planning meetings that ensure a balanced participation of young people from a variety of backgrounds and experiences. Some young people may feel uncomfortable fully expressing themselves in adult-dominated planning meetings. The Youth Council for the Rooted in Community network identified their own processes for communicating, conducting meetings and developing an action plan. As a result, youth hold their peers accountable to adhere to established norms and ground rules.

Program leaders find that they can serve a valuable role as mentors—offering skill-building and advice. Youth build their capacity when surrounded with supportive people who recognize and work to develop youth strengths.

Another important role of program leaders is to create opportunities for youth that are working on food justice issues to talk to other youth. Youth advocates learn from each other’s experiences and feel motivated to know that they are not alone.

Outcomes of food justice initiatives involving youth are not only food access but community mobilization and youth empowerment. It takes time to form personal relationships, to formulate and express ideas, and to consult with stakeholders instead of making spontaneous decisions. These steps may take more time than outsiders expect but are the essence of youth empowerment, capacity building and community mobilization. For suggestions on learning and working with youth (and their parents) from different cultures, see Chapter 2 of the newly published CANFit Super Manual.

Sources:
Interviews conducted with:
Francesca de la Rosa, Center for Food and Justice (LA)
Malaika Edwards, Peoples Grocery (Oakland)
Michelle Mascarenhas, Food and Society Policy Fellow (San Francisco)

African American Youth On the MOVE for Health

On Saturday, May 22, 2004 the 100 Black Men of the Bay Area, Inc. (100 BMBA) hosted the 1st Annual Tommie Smith Youth Track Meet in Oakland. Over 700 registered youth, ages 4 to 14, participated in sprint, middle and long-distance races, in addition to field events. The California Healthcare Foundation sponsored the event in collaboration with the YMCA of the East Bay and Alameda County Public Health Department.

The track meet was part of 100 BMBA’s MOVE for Health Initiative, which is currently leading a coalition of community organizations, churches, schools, government agencies, and businesses to develop programs designed to improve the health of the Black community.

MOVE for Health Chairman and Olympic medallist Tommie Smith is dedicated to inspiring kids to exercise and make a commitment to fitness. He is devoting his time and resources to the cause and enlisting world-class athletes to help. Smith explains, “Aside from being an introduction to track and field for many children, this meet has been organized to call attention to the need for organized sports programs for our youth.”

The MOVE for Health Initiative also includes a nutrition education component. Dr. Mark Alexander, Chair of BMBA’s Health and Wellness Committee, notes, “a well-balanced, nutritious diet is also critical to health and wellness. Unfortunately, many African Americans are sustained instead by high-fat, fast food diets. Our goal is to educate people about healthy food selection and preparation.” Toward this end, Chef Leslie James has developed the Community Culinary Academy, with the sponsorship of 100 BMBA. This exciting nutrition program teaches African Americans how to prepare delicious and nutritious meals. The academy is conducting classes in various communities throughout Oakland, California, and covers: how to find, select and purchase healthy cooking ingredients; how to cook healthy meals; and how to plan and prepare culturally appropriate meals.

There are over ninety 100 Black Men of America (BMOA) chapters internationally. Local chapters operate after-school programs and integrate mentoring, education, economic development, and health and wellness. In 2000, CANFit partnered with the 100 BMOA to develop culturally sensitive strategies that would empower after-school programs to insert nutrition education and physical activities into their programs. These strategies are now compiled into the recently published CANFit Super Manual. To order a copy of the Super Manual, visit www.canfit.org. If you are interested in 100 BMBA’s MOVE for Health fitness initiative or would like information on how to start a track team in your area, please e-mail Dr. Mark Alexander at mxa@dor.kaiser.org.
Berkeley Youth Alternatives (BYA)
Team Nutrition peer educators comprised of BYA teens encourage healthy eating habits through hands-on workshops and the provision of nutritious snacks to the participants in both the After-school and Summer Jam Programs.

BYA’s Summer Jam provides a safe environment for over 100 children and teens ages 5-16 from diverse backgrounds to enjoy exciting and fun activities. Children are encouraged to discover individual and unique talents through swimming, karate, tap dance, jazz dance, hip-hop, music, and much more. The day camp offers families educational and positive experiences throughout the day. Contact person: Kevin Williams. 1255 Allston Way, Berkeley, CA 94702. Phone (510) 647-0714. Fax (510) 849-1421. Email: Kevin@BYAonline.org

Mission Neighborhood Centers – Mission Girls
The book, “Queen Bees and Wannabes,” and the movie, “Mean Girls,” have emphasized the harsh interpersonal dynamics sometimes shown among young women. Inspired by these accounts, Mission Girls participants are currently developing a play that depicts the dynamics of how young Latinas treat one another. Included will be how so many of their perceptions on body image are influenced by the images portrayed in the media and also their relationships with peers. The performance will be held in June 2004 and open to the public. Mission Girls works with Latino girls’ ages 9 to 17 in providing prevention and intervention programming. The program first began as a mentoring program on pregnancy, violence and gang prevention, positive body image development, and health and fitness promotion. Girls are encouraged to make positive decisions and build healthy relationships. Contact Person: Gloria Romero. 362 Capp St., San Francisco, CA, 94110. Phone (415) 648-2826. Fax (415) 648-5196. Email: missiongirls@aol.com

Hands for Hope
Participants at Hands for Hope are hosting the Tween Fitness Challenge, a youth-organized physical activity event planned for August 2004. A committee of young people selected yoga, tai chi, and kickboxing as some of the fitness challenges. Letters were sent out to celebrities requesting their involvement. Outreach is being made to 10-15 year old youth. During the Tween Fitness Challenge, Hands for Hope will distribute NO SODA pins to reinforce their campaign to decrease soda consumption among young people. Contact Person: Lydia Floyd. P.O. Box 812198, Los Angeles, CA 91601. Phone (818) 763-4673. Fax (818) 736-5385. Email: lfloyd@hands4hope.org

East Bay Asian Youth Center’s Roosevelt Health Center (RHC)
As the only middle school based health center in Alameda County, RHC is not only providing one-on-one clinical treatment for the health problems of Roosevelt Middle School students, they are promoting health and well-being of the whole student body and the surrounding neighborhood. RHC’s Body Pride Alive program trains middle school youth as peer educators on issues of nutrition, body image, and presentation skills. Peer educators make interactive classroom presentations to youth a year younger. These presentations are well received since adolescents give such importance to what peers have to say.

As part of a broader community mobilization effort to promote increased physical activity and healthy eating among young people and families in the surrounding neighborhood, Roosevelt Health Center peer educators planned and conducted a community health fair on May 1, 2004. The mobilization effort includes a parent peer education component that will initially focus on active living and healthy eating. Contact person: Samantha Blackburn. 1926 19th Avenue, Oakland, CA 94606. Phone (510) 879-2953. Fax (510) 879-2956. Email: samblackburn@sbcglobal.net

San Diego Youth & Community Services - Youth Education Town (SDYCS-YET)
SDYCS-YET is hosting the Pedometer Challenge. The community event in the predominantly Latino neighborhood of Sherman Heights/Golden Hills will promote physical activity with parents and youth. Fathers and sons and mothers and daughters try to out do one another in how many steps they take each day.

The 19 youth that participated in the “To Your Health” 10-week curriculum at San Diego Youth & Community Services - Youth Education Town brainstormed and developed numerous recipes of snacks, drinks, and meals. The collection of recipes is being edited for publication. Participating youth, aware of the food options available in local markets and school campuses, wrote letters to State Senator Martha Escutia supporting SB1566, a senate bill that clearly outlines nutrition standards in schools, kindergarten –12th grade. Contact Person: Peter Edelson. 3255 Wing St., San Diego, CA 92110. Phone (619) 232-8126 ext. 202. Fax (619) 232-0937. Email: pedelson@sdycs.org

CANFit Grantees Promoting Physical Activity, Healthy Eating and Positive Body Images
**Super Size Mania**
McDonald’s claims that the discontinuation of their super size menu in March ’04 and the recent release of Morgan Spurlock’s “Super Size Me” is unrelated. Are you looking for a real life account of the dangers of life in the fast food lane, cruise into see Morgan Spurlock’s “Super Size Me.” Invite after-school program staff and youth. After the movie, see if anyone is inspired to put the breaks on consuming food in super un-moderated volumes (SUVs). For consumer tips on how to steer clear of supersized portions, visit www.wvportions.com.

**Healthier Vending Machine**
Schools are raising funds without undermining children’s diets and health. See http://cspinet.org/new/pdf/school_vending_machine_case_studies.pdf for a list and description of what schools have done to improve their food and beverage offerings while not sacrificing revenue.

**Physical Activity Initiative Addresses Special Needs**
The US Department of Health and Human Services launched the new “I Can Do It, You Can Do It” Campaign to support good health and physical activity for the 6 million American children and youth who have disabilities. Under the initiative, the partner organizations will help bring together physically fit mentors with young people with disabilities to help increase appropriate physical activity and good nutritional habits as an important part of their lives. Mentors will include young adults and adults, both with and without disabilities. Participants will be eligible for physical activity awards from the President’s Council on Physical Fitness and Sports. To access fact sheets and other press material about the campaign, visit http://www.hhs.gov/news.

**CDC Launches Youth Website**
Are you looking for a youth-oriented website with quick tips on eating healthy and getting active? Check out CDC’s electronic magazine aimed at youth ages 9 – 13, BAM! (Body and Mind) BAM! was created to answer kids’ questions on health issues and recommend ways to make their bodies and minds healthier, stronger, and safer. BAM! also provides middle school health and science teachers with interactive activities that are educational and fun. Visit www.bam.gov.

**Teen Fitness**
Lady of America and Ladies Work-out Express Fitness Centers are kicking off the second season of its FitTEEN program. Last year, approximately 35,000 teenage girls, ages 13-19, signed up all over the country for the program that allows them to have access to a health club for the entire summer at no charge. For more information and to find the nearest location, visit www.ladyofamerica.com.
New from CANFit:
CANFit Supermanual—hot off the press, is an “all-in-one” resource for teachers, program managers, mentors and after-school providers. From “Nutrition and Physical Activity 101” to detailed lesson plans, handouts and recipes, the Supermanual has it all. The 135-page guide contains program ideas, tips on evaluation, assessment tools, curriculum standards, and 25 different nutrition and physical activity lesson plans that are contemporary, educational and best of all, fun!

To order, send this page with a check or money order made out to CANFit/Tides Center ($35 without a binder, $40 with a binder) to:
California Adolescent Nutrition and Fitness Program
2140 Shattuck Avenue, Suite 610, Berkeley, CA 94704
or call 800-200-3131 with credit card information.

Contact Name:_____________________________________

Program Affiliation:________________________________

Mailing Address:____________________________________

Phone:____________________________________________

Email:_____________________________________________
Triangle Tag

Objectives: Agility, Cooperation

Equipment: Cones for general space boundaries; music, whistle or other start/stop cue

Directions: Have all of the students number themselves in groups of four. In each group, numbers one through three join hands and form a triangle. Number four is the first tagger. The object is for #4 to safely tag #1. The triangle moves to prevent that from happening! No diving in or through the triangle. On start cue, begin. On stop cue, have a new tagger and taggees! Start/stop the game until all have had a turn as tagger.

Source: BOLT (Building Opportunities for Leisure Time) Manual, San Diego State University Foundation.

Natural and Yummy Snack
Plum Apple Sauce

Ingredients

1 can Plums*
1 can Applesauce
½ cup Raisins

* Packed in juice.

To Prepare
1. Drain plums. Throw syrup away (if not packed in juice) and rinse thoroughly with cold water. Drain again.
2. Take out the pits, if necessary.
3. Chop plums into tiny pieces and mash with a fork, or put plums in a blender and blend until smooth.
5. Before serving sprinkle raisins on top.

Serve cold.

Serve with:
1. Whole wheat toast, cut into quarters
2. Small flour tortillas, cut into quarters
3. Mini bagels, cut in half
4. Graham crackers, mini rice cakes, etc.
Meeting Calendar

November 4-6, 2004
2004 National Middle School Conference: Take Your Job and Love It! Co-sponsored by CANFit and California School-Age Consortium (CalSAC) will be held at the Cathedral Hill Hotel in San Francisco. We are combining forces to provide an exciting and valuable training experience, especially for afterschool, school-age care, and youth development professionals. There will be plenty to choose from with more than 50 workshops on topics including fitness and nutrition, diversity and inclusion, program management, pop culture, and much more. Save the date now! For more information, visit www.canfit.org or www.calsac.org.

Aug. 4-5, 2004
7th Annual California Nutrition Network for Healthy, Active Families Social Marketing Conference, “Changing Environments for Healthy Eating and Active Living.” For more information, go to www.ca5aday.com and click on the icon for the Conference.

Invest in CANFit!

I would like to invest in CANFit’s work to improve the lives of our youth and their futures!

Name:
Address:
City / State / Zip:
Phone:
Email:

Enclosed is my tax-deductible donation of $ _____ made payable to The Tides Center/CANFit.

☐ Contact me about volunteer work with CANFit.

Have a suggestion for CANFit? __________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Thank you for your support!

Days of Dialogue

In May and June 2004, CANFit and the CPEHN (California Pan Ethnic Health Network) hosted four community convenings (Fresno, San Diego, Stockton, and Inglewood, CA) to discuss local perspectives on what is currently being done in diabetes and obesity prevention in communities of color. With a total attendance of over 100 participants representing diverse communities, discussion issues included the need for culturally competent providers, data driven policies and supportive legislators. Look for a full report at www.canfit.org in July.

CANFit Remembers Joseph Cice

Joseph Cice will be greatly missed by the many people that he touched throughout his career in working with troubled youth. He died in a car accident on May 9. Joseph was a CANFit grantee from 1998-2001 through East County Community Health Services in San Diego. He was known for founding the Lakeside Teen Advisory Board (a collaboration among the clinic, schools, social and law enforcement agencies, youth, and parents) which became a model for community collaboration. He also spearheaded a campaign that resulted in the opening of the Lakeside Teen Center which is being renamed the Joseph Cice Teen Center in his honor.
CANFit is a non-profit organization that engages communities and builds their capacity to improve the nutrition and physical activity status of California’s low-income American Indian, Latino, Asian/Pacific-Islander, and African-American adolescents 10-14 years of age.

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