



# Newsletter

March 2015 (Nutrition Month Issue)

## Let's Move! Cambridge

*America's Move to Create a Healthier Generation of Kids*

This issue highlights some of the exciting work that recipients of the 2014 Let's Move! and Cambridge in Motion mini-grants have been doing all across the city.

Do you have an idea for a project to help people in Cambridge eat healthy or get physically active? Applications for the 2015 mini-grant cycle are **now open!** Download the [form](#) for more information, and to apply.



### Haggerty Keeps Birthdays “Sweet”...No Junk Food Necessary!

When community members at the Haggerty JK-5 School decided to do something about the over-reliance on unhealthy sweets as part of celebrations, they realized they needed to offer something equally fun and exciting to help the kids mark birthdays and other big occasions.

Led by school nurse Maureen Hanlon, members from across the Haggerty community—including students, teachers, and parents—came up with a new tradition. The creative juices were flowing as one family wrote and recorded a new birthday song, and a group of teachers choreographed a funky new dance to existing music (view [video clip](#)). With these new traditions, the school has found a way to use their mini-grant to successfully foster a long-term culture of health around birthdays, without changing how fun celebrating can be!



## **Kids at the Cambridge Community Center Go “Green”**

Children participating in the Cambridge Community Center's Green Program, supported by new supplies bought with the Let's Move! and Cambridge in Motion mini-grant, got the full “farm-to-table” experience. Kids were able to choose which vegetables to plant, tended their crops, harvested the food, and finally prepared healthy recipes with their teacher.



With a little help from a site coordinator, the kids did almost everything themselves! They grew not just one plant, but a veritable rainbow of healthy veggies including cucumbers, tomatoes, lettuce, kale, radishes, carrots, and mint.

During its first two years, the program was able to support two classes of kids; for the 2014-15 school year, however, it has grown to add a third class. The program now serves 30-40 kids throughout the year.

Proof of the enthusiasm of Green Program participants taking part in this fun, healthy, educational process, Community Center staff recalled one younger student who couldn't help but run around the garden beds asking, “Can we eat this?! Can we eat this?!” Luckily for her, that was the entire point!



## **Bollywood Fitness at the Fletcher-Maynard Community School**

With support from their Let's Move! Cambridge in Motion mini-grant, Fletcher-Maynard Community School was able to offer classes teaching fitness through Bollywood dancing (the fun, energetic style of dance made popular worldwide by Indian movies) at a deep discount. Child care was also available for participants.

This drop-in class is **still going on** until mid-April, so come on by to learn the moves from your favorite (or soon-to-be-favorite) Bollywood films! Tuesday at 4:30pm on 3/17, 3/31, and 4/14; and Tuesday at 6pm on 3/24 and 4/7. \$5 per class and only \$3 for childcare.



## **Citywide Senior Center Makes Physical Activity Memorable**

The Cambridge Citywide Senior Center used their mini-grant award to increase the number of men who participate in programming. The Senior Center sponsored fun activities that were focused on the interests of their male participants, yet were also fun and inclusive for seniors of any gender!

Activities included weekly trips to Castle Island, complete with a cookout at the end of the summer, and Fenway Park. Senior Center staff reported that one participant who has lived in Cambridge her entire life was able to see Fenway for the first time; upon seeing the field, she exclaimed, "I finally made it!"



## **DHSP's Preschoolers Move to the Beat**

Students and their families from all six preschools run by the City's Department of Human Service Programs (DHSP) recently had the opportunity to come together and try out their favorite dance moves! With their Let's Move! Cambridge in Motion mini-grant, DHSP was able to hire the high-energy, age-appropriate live band Made in the Shade to get kids moving for a full hour of fun, active movement, and dance.

Rainy weather forced the event indoors, but was no match for the enthusiasm of the kids, families, and staff, who were joined by the City Manager and a number of City Council members. Participants and staff reported that the band was "great," the kids had "such fun," and the event even helped

program staff who work at different sites foster a greater "feeling of community." In all, 110 preschoolers and their families participated, and, as one DHSP staffer reports, "Children and staff left the event feeling happy and tired."



## **Salsa in the Park Returns to Area 4**

With assistance from their mini-grant, MetaMovements Latin Dance Company was able to put on a program so fun that they described it as "entertainment that is actually a public health event in disguise!"

Hundreds of residents came out to MetaMovements' 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Salsa in the Park event last August, held in Sennott Park. Attendees got a fun workout through salsa dancing, with the occasional break to appreciate the dance stylings of the MetaMovements Youth Dance Team. The event also promoted healthy beverage options by featuring a "water bar" offering refreshing Cambridge tap water steeped with different fruits and herbs.

**For more information about the *Let's Move!* campaign in Cambridge, please visit the Cambridge Public Health Department's [website](#).**

### **Josefine (José) Wendel, MS, RD**

*Let's Move!* Coordinator

[jwendel@challiance.org](mailto:jwendel@challiance.org)

Cambridge Public Health Department

119 Windsor Street

Cambridge, MA 02139

Phone - 617-665-3765

Fax - 617-665-3876