

# Food Program Needs Assessment for the Garfield Teen Life Center

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## Background and Purpose

- Garfield Teen Life Center (GTLC) is a teen focused community center of Seattle Parks and Recreation located in the Central District of Seattle, Washington
- This project engaged diverse inner-city teen life center's participants to describe perceived needs, knowledge, and beliefs about food & nutrition
- Strong standing relationship between the nutritionist at Odessa Brown Children's Clinic and the GTLC
- A Recreation Specialist returned GTLC in Sept. 2013 and expressed interest in expanding the nutrition programs
- Assessment of nutrition awareness and food justice at GTLC and within the Central District was required to determine if nutrition programs could maintain attendance and provide meaningful benefit to participants

## View of GTLC From Garfield High School



## Goal and Aims

Goal: assess the current GTLC food and nutrition programs and make recommendations for future directions

Aims:

1. Identify and describe participants' food and program interests
2. Introduce participants to innovative recipes, concepts of food, social, and economic justice

## Methods

- Collected teen's perspectives via discussion groups and pre- & post-test qualitative surveys
- Outcome indicators measured include:
  - Reports of food choice
  - Attendance
  - Staff observations
  - Activity Interest Survey in future program participation
- Discuss groups included new foods like borscht to teen participants and provide familiar recipes like nachos
- Four qualitative interviews were conducted of a convenience sample of GTLC staff
  - Themes from staff interviews were identified and reported.
- Youth collected data on following:
  - Grocery prices
  - Subjective neighborhood photos through "Windshield Survey"
  - Interview of farmers at Farmer's Market

## Discussion Groups

- 4 youth were recruited by GTLC staff
- They participated in warm-up activities and qualitative discussions to address directed questions related food and nutrition programs and a curriculum geared towards raising awareness of food, social and economic justice
- The completed different levels of hours:
  - Youth 1 ~ 5 hours
  - Youth 2 ~ 7 hours
  - Youth 3 ~ 17 hours
  - Youth 4 ~ 9 hours

## Barriers to Discussion Groups\*\*

- Distance
- Time
- Parent permission
- Other jobs
- Afterschool commitments

\*\*These are reported barriers to program participation by both youth and GTLC staff

## Demographics of Activity Interest Surveyed Youth

	N = 23
14-16 years	13
17-18 years	9
19-21 years	1
Prefer not to answer (gender)	1
Boy/ Male	15
Girl/ Female	7

## Subjective Samples of "Windshield Survey" Photos: Yesler Terrace Neighborhood



"Some [houses] are put together..." ~Youth



"...not good, people can't live here" ~Youth

## Subjective Samples of "Windshield Survey" Photos: Madison Park/ Madison Valley Neighborhood

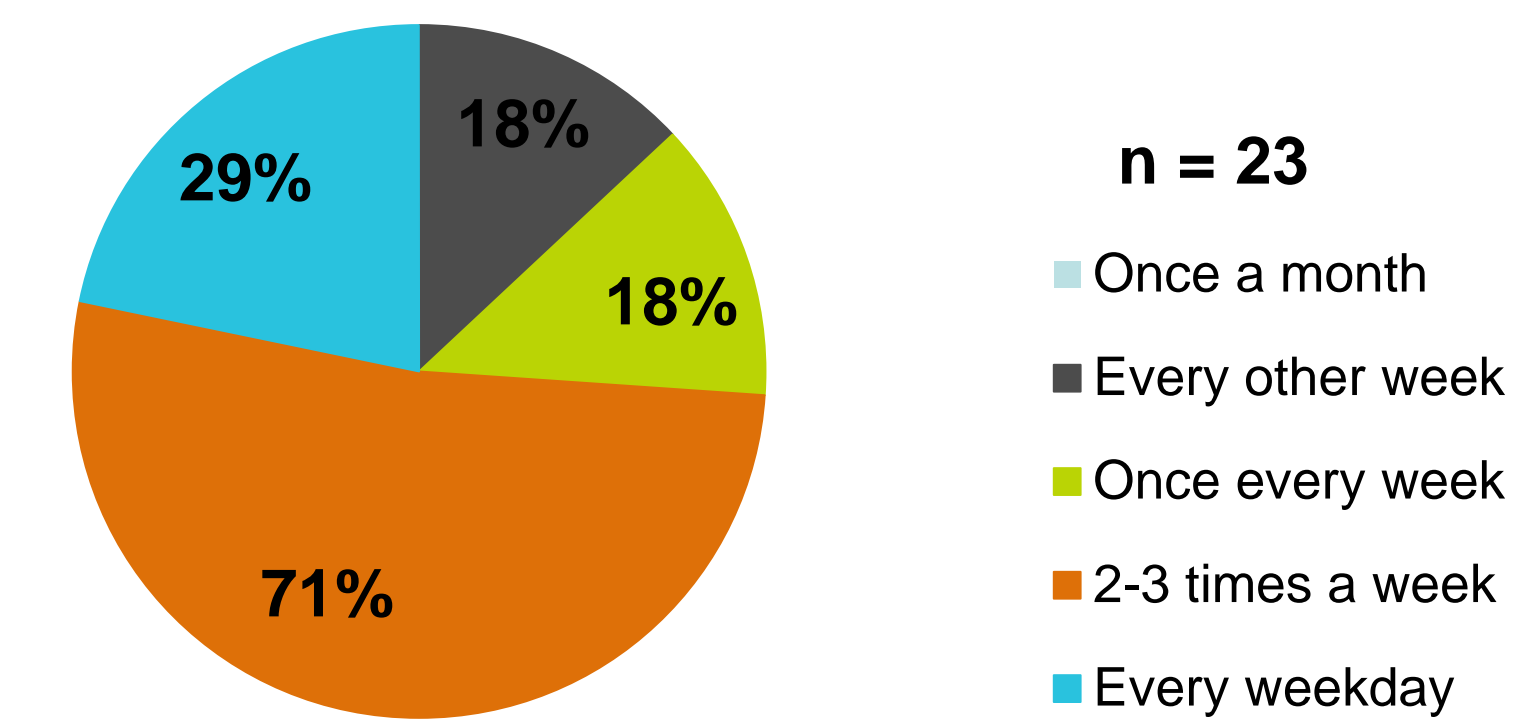


"[houses are spaced] far apart and also isolated..." ~Youth



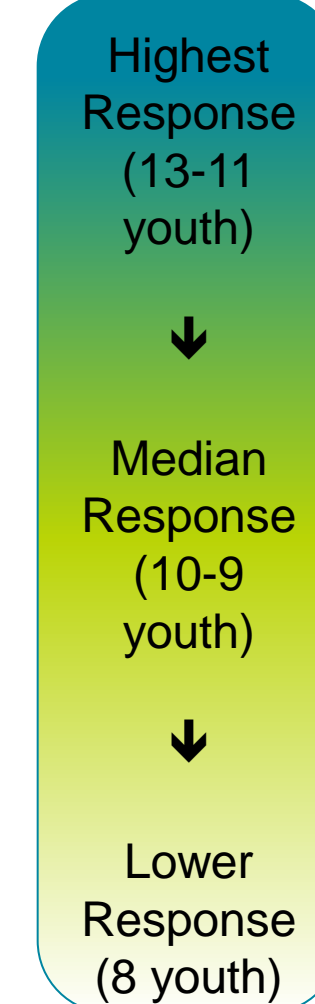
"Good" ~Youth

## How Often do Youth Drop-In at GTLC?



## Activity Interest Results

- 35% (n=8) or more of surveyed teens responded to the activities below and at least 8 youth are needed to initiate a program:
  - Photography
  - Basketball
  - Watching TV/ Movies
  - Job Training
  - Football
  - College Planning
  - Hiking
  - College Applications
  - Film Making
  - Game Design
  - Cooking
  - Weight Training



## Staff Interview Themes

- Four staff interviewed have worked for Seattle Parks and Recreation Teen Programs for a mean of 12.8 years

## Vision for Teen Life Centers

- Be a safe place for youth to offer programs that encourage growth to develop leaders
- Generate community outreach and promote service
- Be a voice for the community and a source of information
- Build relationships with youth through staffing model

## Desired Community Partners

- Juvenile Justice Center
- Seattle Public Library
- Boys and Girls Club
- Seattle Police Department
- Local Hospitals
- Seattle Public Schools
- Department of Neighborhoods
- Public Health Seattle-King County
- Local religious organizations
- Local Artists

"Every partner that we get is necessary. It is important to have partners. Everybody always has a different philosophy and you can work together to help raise a child. It takes a village."

"I think the hospitals need to do more outreach... People need to be educated on their health and well-being."

## Future Directions

- A sustained volunteer position for food and nutrition programming to carry continuous curriculum directed nutrition and food programs forward
- Kitchen Usage policies for GTLC kitchen and inventory tracking that the volunteer position may oversee and report problems to the Rec Specialist
- A referral network of services from different community programs and agencies to each other
- Food and Cooking Program that utilizes the existing 8-week teen focused cooking curriculum by Elisabet Eppes
- Distribution of the "Basic Cooking Knowledge Guide" to Teen Life and Community Centers