

## Does Your Nutrition Education Stop When Summer Vacation Starts? (It Doesn't Have to...)

*Children's Power Play Campaign Helps Kids in City of Dinuba's Summer Program Stay Active*



The school year offers many opportunities to integrate nutrition education inside and outside of the classroom. But to make sure the message sticks, it's important to make nutrition education a year-round effort. And what better time than summer, when kids are eager to be active and ready to play?

The *Network for a Healthy California's Children's Power Play! Campaign* offers summer programs an opportunity to continue to get the word out and fight the "summer slump" through its "Power Up Your Summer! Challenge." The program encourages kids to eat more fruits and

vegetables and be active for 60 minutes a day while helping them build confidence as they track their progress.

Children participate in a variety of activities and track their physical activity using individual Play! Tracker journals. Summer programs can host a PLAY! Week, a week filled with fun activities that concludes with a celebration to reward the kids' efforts.

### [City of Dinuba Powers Up its Summer Program](#)

Last summer, the City of Dinuba Parks & Community Services took its partnership with the *Power Play! Campaign* to the next level by taking on the Power Up Your Summer! Challenge. The department's recreation coordinator started by swapping out the program's snacks for healthier options like peaches, popcorn, and plenty of water. Next came scheduling some physical activity. Using *Power Play!'s* Community Youth Organization Idea and Resource Kit—a step-by-step guide filled with engaging and creative activities—staff were able to keep kids moving daily with activities like Power Tag, the Fruit and Vegetable Name Game, and the Fitness Circuit Challenge.

One of the greatest assets of the Power Up Your Summer! Challenge is the opportunity for community partnerships. *Network for a Healthy California* staff assisted in securing fresh fruit donations. They also coordinated a tour of a local grocery store to show kids how to make healthy choices when shopping with their families. Media partner Univision filmed a public service announcement showcasing the city's program as a way to encourage Central Valley families to be active throughout the summer. This summer-focused program offers plenty of opportunities to generate excitement, engage community partners, and bring in volunteers.

The Power Up Your Summer! Challenge offers summer programs new activities (who couldn't use some new ones to freshen up their repertoire?) and a great way to keep nutrition education going all summer long.



*(This article originally appeared in the March 2012 Summer Meal Coalition newsletter)*