

HEAL Zone Highlights • South Sacramento

The South Sacramento HEAL Zone is a network of organizations and residents working together to make healthy choices the easy choice for 13,000 people in the Valley Hi neighborhood. In our community, 60% of adults and at least 14% of children are overweight or obese. Supported by Kaiser Permanente, our focus is to prevent diseases such as diabetes and hypertension that often result from being overweight. Working together we're creating environments that encourage our residents to eat better and move more as part of daily life. Here are just a few examples of what we've achieved so far.



www.healzones.org/southsacramento

- 150** parents attended **Family Nutrition Night** at a local school where they received cookbooks, fresh produce, cooking demos, and tastings
- 120** weekly spectators cheer on 40 players in a regular **evening basketball game** at Valley Hi Park (described below)
- 80** 4th, 5th, and 6th graders participated in the Health Education Council's FitKids pilot, an **after-school curriculum** of physical activity and nutrition information that runs 2 hours a week for 8 weeks
- 945** pounds of food sold to 175 customers at the new **Valley Hi Farm Produce Stand**

You don't know what you don't know, and **when you know better, you do better.**"

—Marissa Simpson, a participant in Valley Hi healthy cooking classes through the South Sacramento HEAL Zone, on a TV news segment about the classes

"I like this because **it takes the exercise out of the workout.** I think I'll join with my daughter."

— Dana Fields-Johnson, first-time Zumba participant at the Farm Produce Stand unveiling in Valley Hi

Transforming a Park, and a Mindset

When the Health Education Council first suggested holding Thursday evening basketball games in Valley Hi Park, Sacramento Police Captain Neil Schneider was skeptical, doubting the games could really make a difference in the climate of the park. "But I wish we had time-lapse photography to show the transformation." Initially, the police captain planned to have two officers patrol the park during the games. Now, he says, it's not needed. And it's not just players who are getting exercise during the games, which have changed the whole atmosphere of the park. On one Thursday, there were children on the playground, moms pushing strollers, people walking, a soccer team, and volleyball game. "The park is infused with so much great activity. I go now weekly as a fan," said Captain Schneider.

