

Youth Adolescent Physical Activity Grant Success Story

City of Bloomington Parks and Recreation



Division of
**Nutrition &
Physical Activity**

Fall 2022

Overview

The one-year Youth and Adolescent Physical Activity (YAPA) Grant provided by the Indiana Department of Health (IDOH), [Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity \(DNPA\)](#) in collaboration with Maternal and Child Health Title V Funding, aims to help schools and youth-serving organizations provide physical activity and physical education opportunities for kindergarten to twelfth grade youth and adolescents. The [City of Bloomington Parks and Recreation](#) excelled at this task by creating an All Kids Swim program for local underserved youth in kindergarten to third grade to have access to swimming-related physical activity opportunities.



“All Kids Swim was developed to increase water skills and confidence in Banneker [Center] campers. Studies have shown that formal

swimming lessons reduce the likelihood of drowning by 88%. By providing free swim lessons for kids, the program provided not only new skills and improved safety, but also reduced barriers to more swimming-related physical activity in the future for kids.”

- Emily Carrico, Former Health and Wellness Coordinator
Bloomington Parks and Recreation

Challenge

A reported 64% of African-American, 45% of Hispanic/Latino and 40% of Caucasian children have little-to-no swimming ability. By teaching youth with very limited swimming skills how to swim, it will reduce barriers of access to swimming-related physical activity opportunities and drowning incidents in the future.

Bloomington Parks and Recreation initially received the YAPA grant in 2020; however, due to safety concerns during the COVID-19 pandemic, the All Kids Swim program was delayed until summer 2022.

Solution

The City of Bloomington Parks and Recreation partnered with local organizations to ensure that participating youth had the tools they needed to participate in the All Kids Swim program.



The [Banneker Community Center](#) staff provided bus transportation to and from the outdoor pool for the weekly lessons.



The [Indiana University \(IU\) Recreation Sports](#) reserved their outdoor pool and provided participating youth with high-quality swimming instruction.



The All Kids Swim program provided all participating youth with a swimsuit, backpack, towel and goggles to participate in the swim lessons.



Results

The All Kids Swim program was originally intended to accommodate up to 48 campers in one summer season, but exceeded expectations by serving 81 youth (kindergarten through third grade) during summer 2022. Participating youth received free swim instruction, and an extra 45 minutes of physical activity for up to eight swimming sessions.

Several youth were timid and anxious prior to the swimming sessions, but through the program were able to develop confidence, comfortability and water safety skills that they will carry into adulthood. By the end of the program, all youth were able to demonstrate the water safety skills of entering and exiting the water safely, floating on their back and blowing bubbles through their nose. Many youth surpassed these skills by being able to swim multiple yards unassisted and without stopping by the end of the two-week period.



Indirect Benefits

While this grant program accomplished what it set out to do by increasing student physical activity minutes, there were also indirect benefits for the participants, and the greater community.



Participating youth experienced increased social and emotional skills, peer support and a sense of belonging.



Participating youth were able to spend time outdoors in a safe environment, and observe collegiate student athletes practice during their swim lessons.



Participating staff from the City of Bloomington Parks and Recreation, the IU Recreation Sports outdoor pool and the Banneker Community center were able to collaborate and ensure the All Kids Swim program was successful.

Sustaining Success

While the City of Bloomington Parks and Recreation YAPA Grant term has ended, the All Kids Swim program has the community support to continue future summer programming.



Physical activity equipment: The swimming equipment and supplies that were purchased with grant funding will remain available for staff. The swimsuit, backpacks, goggles and towels were given to participating students to keep for future pool use.

For additional information:

Emma Smythe, esmythe@health.in.gov, Youth Physical Activity Coordinator
Indiana Department of Health, Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity

