



Health and the Summer Self

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COMMUNITY PARTNER

Located in the heart of Manayunk, **North Light Community Center** serves the children, families, and residents of the greater Manayunk-Roxborough neighborhoods. From offering a summer camp program for four- to twelve-year-old children, to providing a space for distanced learning during the pandemic, North Light is an instrumental resource for children in the area. North Light also serves as a food pantry and distributes food, household items, and essentials to those in need in the community. More about North Light can be found on its website: <https://www.northlightcommunitycenter.org>

PROJECT

As part of the summer wellness camp at North Light Community Center, BTG interns designed health activities and lessons for four different age groups, ranging from ages four to twelve. The topics that were covered included: hand hygiene, nutrition, oral health, cardiovascular health, tobacco prevention, mindfulness & emotions, and sun safety. The format of these lessons integrated videos, worksheets, pamphlets, open discussions, and coloring sheets. As part of the oral health lesson, dental supplies from the University of Pennsylvania School of Dental Medicine were distributed to students. When not delivering these lessons, the BTG interns assisted groups, attended field trips, provided emotional support to the campers, and helped promote a safe and fun atmosphere at camp.

REFLECTION

Anthony Ciro: "This experience has given me the opportunity to immerse myself in the lives of children from different backgrounds. It allowed me to strengthen my communication skills, enhance my capacity for empathy, and further develop my problem-solving skills. Working with children challenged me to see and understand topical issues from the unique and innocent perspectives of today's youth. I was given the opportunity to relive a childhood summer, with the vantage of designing and impacting the experience of many children."

Jaclyn Zois: "As an aspiring pediatrician, the opportunity to continue broadening my experience working with children was a welcome reminder of why I am pursuing a career in medicine. The weekly health lessons allowed me to develop my medical communication skills, specifically within a pediatric realm. Working with the team at North Light felt like joining a family and allowed me to gain a deeper perspective into the community environment that they serve, and the city of Philadelphia. I'm thankful for the experience to play with little hesitation despite being in medical school and honored to have been able to impact the lives of young individuals."

PROJECT RESULTS

Hand & Self Hygiene

- 4/5- and 6/7-year-old campers watched a fun video outlining all steps of hand hygiene. Campers then finger-painted an outline of a germ. Once completed, students needed to wash their hands, and demonstrated so as they had learned.
- 8/9- and 10/11/12-year-old campers reviewed proper hand hygiene and as age-appropriate self-hygiene through BINGO.

Nutrition

- 4/5- and 6/7-year-old campers watched a video where they had to guess the fruit or vegetable being described. They then listened to the book "*The Two Bite Club*" which introduced the five different food groups. Campers showed what they learned by coloring a plate with some of their favorite foods within each food group, demonstrating a well-rounded meal.
- 8/9- and 10/11/12- year-old campers learned about the five food groups by brainstorming foods for each category. Activities such as a word search, word decoding, and filling in a well-rounded meal were also done.

Oral Health

- 4/5- and 6/7-year-old campers watched an animated video on the proper technique of teeth brushing and then completed an activity where they identified what is good/bad for their teeth. 8/9-year-old campers watched videos about bad breath and the importance of oral hygiene, and then they completed a word search and tooth-anatomy worksheet.
- 10/11/12 year-old campers reviewed the importance of flossing and brushing their teeth. They discussed what types of food cause cavities, what happens to a tooth when it gets a cavity, and simple ways to prevent cavities.

Cardiovascular Health

- 4/5-, 6/7-, and 8/9-year-old campers were encouraged to engage in physical activities such as basketball, dodge ball, playing on the playground and tag.
- 10/11/12- year-old campers discussed the seven major factors that maintain cardiovascular health, as indicated by the American Heart Association (avoiding tobacco, being physically active, eating a heart-healthy diet, keeping a healthy weight, blood pressure, and sugar and cholesterol levels. They also were exposed to the signs and symptoms of heart attacks and strokes so that they are prepared to act if they see someone having one.

Tobacco Prevention

- 10/11/12 year-old campers were exposed to different forms of peer-pressure surrounding tobacco use and evidence-based techniques to respond to them effectively. They also briefly discussed long term effects of tobacco use.

Mindfulness & Emotions

- 4/5- and 6/7-year-old campers watched a video that normalized the experience of emotions, listened to the story "*I Am Peace*" and then created "Joy Jars" in which they drew in items that bring them happiness.
- 8/9-year-old campers made lists and drawings for what make them feel: happy, sad, angry, bored, excited, and tired.
- 10/11/12 year-old campers completed reflections in which they wrote about happy events and sad events in their lives, and they learned techniques for dealing with and experiencing their emotions.

Sun Safety

- 4/5- and 6/7-year-old campers watched a Minion video about sun safety and then designed their own Minions on a beach with proper sun-attire. It was stressed how sunblock must be reapplied when engaging in outdoor activities, especially when swimming or playing in water.
- 8/9- and 10/11/12- year-old campers completed a word search and word scramble related to sun safety and then discussed various topics such as the meaning of SPF, UV index, sunbelt states in the United States, and proper sun-attire.

