

RELEVANCE

In Kleberg County, 33% or 10,124 adults are obese, and 7% of the population or 2,148 people have been diagnosed with diabetes. In Kenedy County, 22% or 89 adults are obese, and 11% of the population or 44 people have been diagnosed with diabetes.² Texas youth continue to face health issues like those of adults. In fact, 17.3 percent of Texas youth ages 10 - 17 are considered obese, with Texas ranking 12th among other states regarding youth obesity status (<https://stateofobesity.org>). In addition to obesity, the top causes of death for youth ages 10-19 include unintentional injuries, cancer, suicide, heart disease, respiratory disease, and influenza.

Health Factors & Outcomes ²	Kleberg County Population: 30,680	Kenedy County Population: 404
Poor or Fair Health: adults reporting poor or fair health	27% or 8,283.6 residents	38% or 153.5 residents
Adult Obesity: adults reporting a BMI over 30	33% or 10,124.4 adults	22% or 88.9 adults
Physical Inactivity: adults reporting no leisure time physical activity	25% or 7,670 residents	21% or 84.8 residents
Cardiovascular Deaths: per 10,000 population	59	36.8
Diabetes Prevalence: adults diagnosed	7% or 2,147.6 adults	11% or 44.4 adults

RESPONSE

In response, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service has developed healthy lifestyle programs that can address these issues with an evidence-based approach through education, in addition to, its vast resources, education, and hands-on activities that encourage healthy food intake and best practices related to safety, mental health, and general health. In Kleberg & Kenedy Counties, the Healthy South Texas Coalition and Task Force groups have identified Learn, Grow, Eat & GO! as an educational approach to address overweight and obesity.

Program Description:

- **Learn, Grow, Eat & GO!** LGEG grows good kids through an interdisciplinary program combining academic achievement, gardening, nutrient-dense food experiences, physical activity, and school & family engagement.
 - **Target audience: 4th grade students**
- **Healthy Texas Youth Ambassador Program:** There are opportunities for high school age youth to become trained Healthy Texas Youth Ambassadors which will equip them with the knowledge and skills to assist the County Extension Agent and adult volunteers in providing positive health educational activities for youth in the classroom and through the 4-H youth development program.
 - **Target audience: 9-12th grade students**

Collaboration: Multiple collaborative efforts were made that fostered relevant programs and community needs. Collaborating organizations include local school districts, Kleberg and Kenedy Counties, and Texas A&M University-Kingsville.

VALUE STATEMENT

Obesity Prevention & Reduction

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service engages children and adults in programs that teach them how to eat nutritious foods and engage in regular physical activity to promote health and reduce their risk for obesity. The Texas public benefits through a healthier population, reduced healthcare costs, and increased productivity.

RESULTS

LGEG Program Location	Date(s)	Participants	<p>An evaluation instrument (pre and post approach) was used to measure behavior change and adoption of practice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 80% indicated that participation in LGEG has made them want to come to school. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (Increase of +2% from 2019-2020 and +24.5% from 2018-19) 55.0% indicated they taught someone else how to make better food choices through participation in LGEG. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (Increase of +6.4% from 2019-2020) As a result of a successful fall garden program, several schools participated in our “garden show” where Master Gardener volunteers judged student entries.
Sarita 4 th grade	Feb – Mar 21	14	
Jubilee 4 th grade	Feb – Mar 21	18	
Harrel 4 th grade	Feb – Mar 21	40	
Nanny 4 th grade	Feb – Mar 21	18	
TOTAL YOUTH WHO RECEIVED NUTRITION LGEG EDUCATION		90	

<p>LGEG Participant Comments: What is the most important thing you have learned in Learn, Grow, Eat & GO!?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “make good food choices” “I learned to like fruits and vegetables.” “That eating vegetables are healthy for you.” “I have made better food choices 	<p>Healthy South Texas School Recognition: A recognition for schools committed to supporting and encouraging students, staff, and parents with healthy lifestyles through participation in Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service programs. The following campus earned the Healthy South Texas School Recognition in 2021.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Harrel Elementary of Kingsville ISD, Kleberg County.
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Healthy Texas Youth Ambassadors	Hours	<p>Healthy Texas Youth Ambassador Major Projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flood Relief Food Drive – A food drive to help those affected by the torrential rains and flooding that occurred in Kleberg County on May 19, 2021. Healthy Texas Youth Ambassador Road Trip – A series of training programs to develop the skill set of Ambassadors that focused on local commodities, volunteer work, healthy lifestyle activities, college/career exploration, goal setting, etc.
Mackenzie Everett	72	
Trae Everett	31.5	
Soleil Lopez	60	
Nicholas Stokes	44	
TOTAL HOURS CONTRIBUTED TO BETTER HEALTH	207.5	

Summary:
 Program delivery was significantly impacted by COVID-19.

Future Programming:
 The 2021-2022 Healthy Kleberg-Kenedy Youth Nutrition plan includes Learn, Grow, Eat and GO! Garden program to educate and youth on gardening, nutrient-dense foods, physical activity, and school & family engagement.



For More Information:
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