

# AN ASSESSMENT OF THE NEED FOR A COMMUNITY GARDEN PROGRAM

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## Introduction

### Family Wellness

Family Wellness is a non-profit fitness and wellness facility built in a partnership with Sanford Health and the YMCA of Cass and Clay counties. Family Wellness develops and implements programs to enhance the healthy lifestyles of children and families.

### Community Gardens

A community garden is defined as a plot of land that a group of people garden together and is comprised of individual or shared plots on private or public land (University of California, 2019; "Urban agriculture and community gardens", 2015).

### Goal

To determine the need for, and components of, a Family Wellness Community Garden Program

### Objectives

- To determine the topics that should be covered in the program
- To identify specific fruits and vegetables that members would like grown in the garden
- To determine the ideal start time, days of the week, duration, frequency, and length of the program

## Materials and Methods

### Procedures

- Approved by the Concordia College Institutional Review Board

### Participants

- Members, specifically families, of Family Wellness and Schlossman YMCA who had access to Family Wellness twelve times a year
- Members under the age of 18 were excluded

### Survey

- 23-question survey developed with Qualtrics
- Electronic and printed surveys were distributed to members in-person or via email between October 31, 2018 and January 18, 2019
- Questions included:
  - Demographics (gender, age, ethnicity)
  - Desired start time, duration, length, frequency, and day(s) for a community garden program
  - Topics to be covered in education sessions
  - Fruits, vegetables, and herbs to be grown in the garden

### Analysis

- Data were cleaned, sorted, and organized
- Frequencies were computed using the Statistical Package for the Social Science Statistics, version 24

## Results

### Demographics

- 74 participants
  - 57 female; 14 male

### Program Logistics

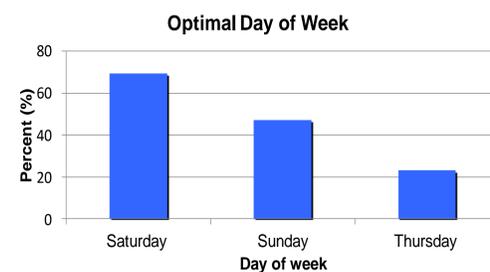


Figure 1. The figure illustrates the percentages of days of the week participants desired the program to be held.

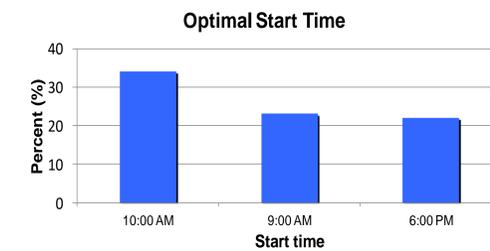


Figure 2. The figure illustrates the percentages of desired program start times.

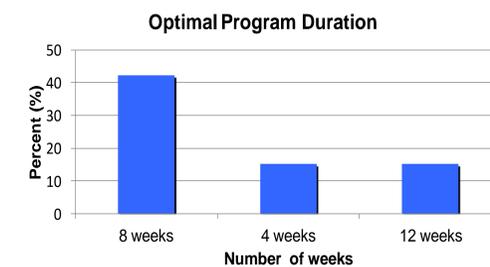


Figure 3. The figure illustrates the percentages of desired program duration.

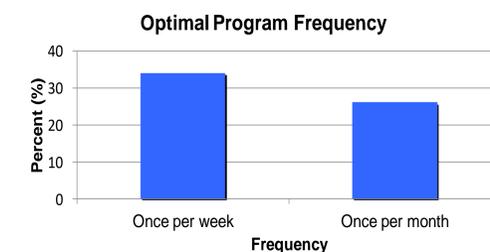


Figure 4. The figure illustrates the percentages of desired program frequency.

- Optimal session length:
- 1 hour 80%

## Results

### Program Components

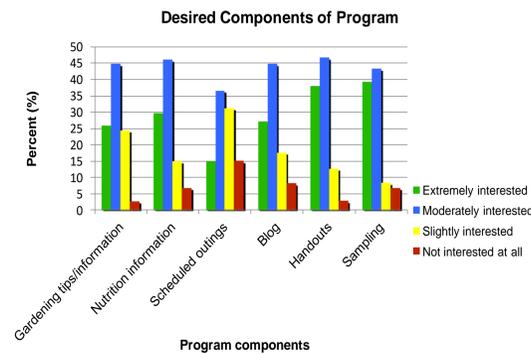


Figure 5. The figure illustrates the percentages of the desired components to include in the community garden program.

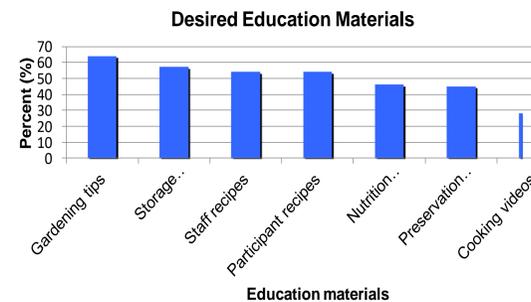


Figure 6. The figure illustrates the percentages of the desired education materials to include in the community garden program.

### Gardening

- Home garden 47%
- Garden 1-2 hours per week 23%
- Benefit from raised garden beds 50%

### Fruit and Vegetables

- Consumption ("Extremely" or "very important"):
- Eat fresh fruits and vegetables 88%

### Desired produce in garden:

- Strawberries, raspberries, melons, tomato, cucumber, carrots, peas, squash, peppers, and basil

### Children

- Children will participate in program 69%

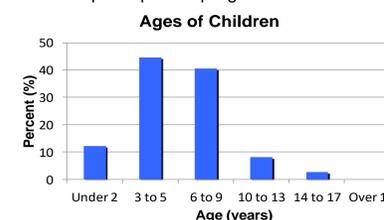


Figure 7. The figure illustrates the percentage of children in each age range who would attend the community family garden program.

## Conclusions

There is a need for Family Wellness to implement a community garden program for families.

Program components should include:

- Handouts with recipes, gardening tips, and nutrition information
- Sampling of produce in the kitchen, which includes demonstrations on how to properly wash and prepare fruits and vegetables grown in the garden
- A blog featuring information also found in handouts
- Activities in the program should be designed so all ages can participate; however, a specific focus should be placed on the age group of three to nine year-olds

## References

- University of California, Division of Agriculture and Natural. (2019). Community Gardens. Retrieved January 13, 2019, from [http://marinmg.ucanr.edu/Great\\_Gardening\\_Information/Marin\\_Community\\_Gardens](http://marinmg.ucanr.edu/Great_Gardening_Information/Marin_Community_Gardens)
- Urban agriculture and community gardens. (2015). A blueprint developed by the Cass Clay Food Systems Initiative.

## Acknowledgments

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## For further information

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**Familywellness**  
A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN SANFORD HEALTH

**CONCORDIA COLLEGE**

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