



West Haven Community House

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Partnership with WH Community House and CT Food Bank Helps Local Families

West Haven, CT—(December 9, 2019) Local families participated in monthly nutrition education workshops and received food from The Connecticut Food Bank GROW program, which provides highly nutritious food for low-income households with children enrolled in early childhood, pre-school daycare, Head Start programs, and elementary schools.

Through the GROW program, more than 3,000lbs of food was distributed to families of children enrolled in West Haven Community House's Head Start program and the West Haven Family Resource Center who participated in the three month program.

"The purpose of the GROW program is to help children by educating their parents. The belief is that if we can get parents to begin making those subtle changes in what, and even how they are cooking when their children are young, eating healthy will be a part of that child's everyday diet as they grow up", said Huwari Thornton, Jr., community partners and programs coordinator at The Connecticut Food Bank.



Families participating in the program attended nutrition education workshops conducted by SNAP-Ed, which teaches people how to shop for and cook healthy, budget-friendly meals, and how to make their SNAP dollars stretch. After each workshop, parents board the GROW (Grocery On Wheels) Truck where they select healthy food items and receive information on how to prepare foods that may be unfamiliar to them.

The GROW Truck serves as a healthy food pantry on wheels. The customized vehicle is equipped with refrigerated cases and special shelving to stock food items such as fresh fruit and vegetables, low-fat dairy products, meat, fish and other healthy proteins, along with healthy foods like brown rice and whole-grain products.

The GROW initiative is made possible through a grant from Our Family Foundation by Stop & Shop.

In addition to receiving healthy food and learning about healthy eating habits through the workshops, families save money that can be used to open a savings account, pay down bills and help stabilize their budgets.

In addition to providing the skills and knowledge necessary for success in kindergarten, the Community House's Head Start preschool program connects income eligible, working families with a variety of resources that offer nutrition, health and social supports and help them achieve their goals around housing stability, continued education, and financial literacy.

"We are fortunate to collaborate with the Connecticut Food Bank and their partners to bring this vital services to the families we serve", said Patty Stevens, executive director of The West Haven Community House. "These programs along with charitable donations from local clubs, organizations and individuals help strengthen families and improve the quality of life for hundreds of people in our community".

About the West Haven Community House: For more than 78 years, the Community House has been the cornerstone social service agency of West Haven with programs including Head Start, a quality school readiness program for children from income-eligible families; Children & Youth Services, a before and after-school and summer program for school-aged children; and Community Connections day and residential program for people with intellectual disabilities.