



Summer Fun In The Garden



Over the last two months I have taught school aged children about gardening and the importance of eating your vegetables. There were four garden sessions: Mondays at North River Front Park with Hmong Preschoolers from the Head Start program, and Tuesdays at North River Front Park with kids from the Boys & Girls Club in Eau Claire. Wednesdays we headed over to McDonough Park with the older kids from the Boys & Girl Club. Lastly, on Thursday I was at the Long Fellow Youth Garden where any students who wanted to come could. The total number of youth attending all gardens was 259 with 10 African American, 122 Asian, 1 Hispanic.

While at the garden sessions, the kids were able to adventure into the garden and observe the growth of all the plants and vegetables. They helped the plants grow by weeding and watering. They also had the opportunity to harvest the vegetables and prepare recipes at the gardens with the Eau Claire County Wisconsin Nutrition Educators. The kids also took part in activities such as garden scavenger hunts, watering relay races, garden board games, making vegetable book marks, and making their own butterfly garden decorations. The kids picked vegetables such as beans, peas, potatoes, tomatoes, lettuce, cucumbers, zucchini, peppers, and onions.



When asking the kids what their favorite part about the garden programs were they responded...

"I liked how we got to pick the vegetables and then go cook with them"

"I loved eating the salsa and the salsa and the salsa"

"Learning how to cook food so I can do it at home"



While doing all those activities the kids learned a lot about how to take care of a garden and how different vegetables grow. Also they expanded their knowledge and taste buds on many different vegetables. I was surprised to see how the kids weren't afraid to try the new vegetable and how many kids couldn't stop eating them. While making salsa I explained how raw tomatoes aren't my favorite but I love salsa. At the same time a 4th grader named Taylor took a huge bite out of a cherry tomato, turned to me and said "Your crazy man, these things are amazing". The kids were learning how vegetables don't have to be cooked and they will still taste great.