

From the community

JCYS and Nurture Promote Healthy Lifestyles Among At-Risk Youth

By Lisa Brewer
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Nurture joins the staff of JCYS, Jewish Council for Youth Services, for Champ Camp in the summer of 2011. Champ Camp, formerly Grand Slam Tennis Camp, is designed to promote a healthy life-style through a combination of tennis, fitness, swimming and nutrition education. JCYS Champ Camp serves primarily high-risk, low-income group of Hispanic, elementary-aged children who attend summer school at Oak Terrace in Highland Park.

“Champ Camp provides vulnerable youth with the opportunity to develop confidence, self-esteem, healthy lifestyle habits, teamwork skills, and an appreciation for athletics and sportsmanship,” according to Micky Baer, JCYS Assistant Director of North Shore Operations. The camp provides families with a safe place for children to spend their afternoons at an affordable price of \$65 per student. Many children would otherwise be unsupervised until their parents returned from work.

Currently Nurture is providing monthly nutrition and wellness lessons to all Oak Terrace students. This Champ Camp collaboration bridges the world of healthy eating and physical activity. "This is a fun way of digging deeper into the lessons of the past school year. Campers will cook, play games, and do crafts which teach things like importance of a balanced diet and the difference between Go and Slow foods," says Lisa Brewer, Nurture Regional Director. "It's a perfect fit for a sports camp."

JCYS is an independent, not-for-profit agency dedicated to serving Chicagoland's Jewish and greater communities and developing leaders who continue its tradition of volunteer service. Embracing Jewish values and culture, JCYS provides educational and recreational programs that promote individual growth and responsibility toward others.

Since 1907, JCYS has provided Chicago families with innovative programs that encourage learning, recreation, personal growth, and active leadership service. Annually, JCYS serves nearly 20,000 individuals of all races, ethnicities, and religions through many diverse programs.

Nurture is a local, grass roots non-profit whose mission is to empower family members of all ages (children, teens and adults) with the tools and resources needed to prepare healthy, delicious meals even when faced with limited time and budget. Nurture was founded in 2008 to address hunger, childhood obesity, wellness, and an increasingly unhealthy food chain. It focuses on low-income families with children at high risk for nutritional and health problems. www.nurtureyourfamily.org