



2004 Award Winner

Nutrition Education and Promotion

Tri-County Headstart of Michigan Paw Paw, Michigan

The “Earthfriends” curriculum of our 2004 award winner for “Nutrition Education and Promotion” encourages children to make sound food choices not only for their own health, but also for the health of local farms and the planet.

Children and their families participate in an on-site gardening program, which includes lessons in recycling and composting. Produce is used in classroom cooking activities, which teach children and parents to prepare and enjoy fruits and vegetables, important steps in encouraging five servings a day.

Activities emphasize cooking as a valuable use of one’s time. Children enjoy cooking because it engages each of the senses; it also helps them develop language, reading and math skills.

Through its *Children of the World* program, food is also used as a focal point for discussing diversity. Each week, children eat a lunch featuring foods of a different culture and participate in activities related to that culture. Collectively, these activities teach children to identify similarities between cultures and appreciate differences. This approach to early childhood development enables the organization to meet the nutritional needs of its children while teaching the importance of diversity.

The 2004 award for “Nutrition Education and Promotion” is presented to the Tri-County Head Start of Paw Paw, Michigan.”