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## Schoolkids Request Healthy Lunch Recipes

The request from a group of Perris elementary school youngsters was a simple one: Can our campus cafeteria prepare chick-pea dip with vegetables to make healthy veggie sticks?

The recipe first came to light as part of the City of Perris' ongoing healthy eating active living campaign known as Live Well Perris.

That program introduced low-calorie snacks to City school children as part of its "Chef-in-the-Classroom" initiative.

Chef Lee Burton, hired by the City of Perris to teach youngsters the benefits of eating fruits and vegetables instead of sugary snacks, created the veggie-sticks recipe with the help of students who prepped the ingredients and then ate what they made.

Those students remembered the recipe and asked for it while waiting for school-lunch to be served.

Val Verde Unified School District administrators were so impressed and delighted by the cafeteria-line query that they expanded the Chef-in-the-Classroom program from a few campuses to every school in that district.

Perris officials say their collaboration with Burton—begun as a pilot program at a handful of district campuses—is making a difference in determining the food choices of youngsters.



Perris Mayor Daryl Busch addresses a crowd of students, congratulating them on acquiring healthy-eating tips as part of the City's Live Well Perris program.

Perris Mayor Daryl Busch visited a pair of schools that took part in the Chef-in-the-Classroom experiment, giving certificates of appreciation to the students who learned about healthy food choices.

Busch was delighted at the success story.

"That's wonderful news," he said. "It's exciting to know that our school children are taking this message to heart. That's what Live Well Perris is all about—teaching people to eat healthier."



Perris Mayor Daryl Busch shakes the hand of an elementary school student who completed the Chef-in-the-Classroom program at Railway Elementary School.

Perris Mayor Pro-Tem Rita Rogers said the City has been recognized by the Western Riverside Council of Governments for its efforts to educate residents about good food choices. Education is the key to reducing the incidence of diabetes, high-blood pressure and other illnesses made worse by poor diet.

"It is through education that we get the word out to eat healthy," Rogers said. "Once again, the City of Perris is taking the lead in a most worthwhile effort that benefits our residents."

This new dimension to the City's wellness initiative and the closer partnership with the City's schools are sure to enhance the efforts to encourage healthier lifestyles throughout the Perris community. The City will be embarking on year two of the grant-funded programming over the next few weeks, and the school-based programming will be continued and expanded to offer even more options and exposure to the positive results of living well.

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