

# IDEAL Program Impacts Asian Community in Philadelphia on Healthy Nutrition!

Steve Shive

## At A Glance

Thanks to the collaboration and support from community leaders and market owners. The healthy educational messages in the stores and community organizations led them to start eating healthy, and to cook and shop based on diet guidelines. With the increased awareness and healthy food accessibility, the program will benefit more residents in the Philadelphia Metropolitan Area.

## Public Health Challenge

Poor nutrition is affecting Asian Americans and leading to many health problems in the community, such as hypertension, stroke, heart disease, and others. Lots of traditional Asian foods which contain higher sodium, unhealthy fat and less fiber are still popular in Asian families. Together with the unhealthy western foods in America, these unhealthy eating habits are a condition contributing to these diseases. According to the newly released American Diet Guidelines in 2016, these diseases can be prevented and managed by changing eating and cooking behaviors.

## Approach

The IDEAL program has collaborated with 10 Asian Supermarkets and 44 CBOs over the last two years to increase access to better food choices for Asian Americans. The goal of the program is to learn and promote ways to reduce the use of sodium to no more than 2,300 mg/day, use no more than 5-7 teaspoons of better oils and to make at least half of the total grains whole grains while eating and preparing food. The IDEAL program developed three slogans to improve poor nutrition "Less Salt, Better Oil, Whole Grain." Signs in both English and Asian languages for healthy food choices and nutrition recommendation have been displayed in 10 local Asian supermarkets, aisles and shelves and facilities of 44 Community Based partners.



## Find Out More

**You can support healthy nutrition of Asian community by purchasing fresh food, low sodium products, more whole grain products and healthier oil in your local Asian supermarkets to change the whole environment. Follow the new diet guideline to tailor your diet.**

## Results

The program involved 10 supermarkets joining in the past two years. This setting reaches at least 2500 patrons each week in each site. Owners/managers willing to share the healthy eating awareness and promote this program. While talking about the impact, one of the owners said, "My customers were curious about this program and asked me what's going on in my store. I have explained this program to them and they like it." There were 44 Community organizations that reached over 9,000 members and promoted the healthy eating messages to improve healthy diet guideline among their member through handouts and newsletter distribution, oral presentation, and others. Many members believe this message should be spread more widely to inform the whole community.

## Contact

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*"I am very happy to join in this program. Everyone wants to eat healthier foods and the in-store nutrition message is really helpful."*

- Mr. Berberabe (Supermarket Owner)

## What's Next

The program goal is to increase access to better food choices for Asian Americans. We plan to reach additional 5 Asian supermarkets and 22 community based organizations in Asian community within greater Philadelphia to implement the healthy changes in following program year. We are also seeking to reach more Asian community residents through our partners and increase their awareness of nutrition. This project is supported by funding from CDC's Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health (REACH).