



Healthier Future Event

The event was first held in February 2004 as part of the Why 5 Project which worked across Derwentside and part of the Chester-le-Street Local Advisory Group Area.

The event had been promoted throughout the North East by "The Greenery" - Tony Billsborough and Noel Goulding - a Retail Consultant and a chef. The Why 5 Programme Coordinator in post at that time - Liz Moran - pioneered the process and the "Greenery Event" was born. A Steering Group consisting of staff working on the Why 5 project and staff from Derwentside District Council's Leisure Services Department organised the event with a massive amount of input from Tony and Noel. Leisure Services were involved as they had the specialised knowledge about venues, facilities and event management.

Tony ordered the fruit from a local wholesaler, provided all of the practical equipment needed and attended the whole event giving support to staff. As a chef, Noel's role was to bring each session to an end by way of a "Ready Steady Cook" demonstration and to offer support with fruit and vegetable preparation. His presence was an integral part of the first four years of the event as his "larger than life" personality and his chef's attire made the children eager to enjoy their time with him.

2004s event focused on Healthy Eating only and there were 12 stations, two each of bananas, vegetables, salads, soft fruits, apples and pears, as well as citrus fruits. The event took place over three days, one day at The Louisa Centre, Stanley, one day at Belle Vue Sports Centre, Consett and one day in Pelton Roseberry Comprehensive School. During the visit to each station the children collected various items of fruit from the stands in 5 A DAY carrier bags provided by North eastern and Cumbria Co-op. They also provided 1500 fair trade bananas for the event.



For the first time in April 2005, physical activity was incorporated into the event with 5 stations for the children to try. This year, the event was called Why 5 Try 5 as the Leisure Services project to promote physical activity was called Try 5 in line with the Governments recommendations to participate in physical activity 5 times a week. The healthy eating stations were changed and focused on five continents - ASIA, AFRICA, NORTH AMERICA, SOUTH AMERICA and EUROPE - and the fruit and vegetables which came from those places. This gave the children an opportunity to see, taste and learn about fruits and vegetables from all around the world that they may not ordinarily experience.



Leisure Services staff were heavily involved in delivering the project as well as a superb team of "volunteers" who gave up their day jobs to deliver this event. 2004 and 2005 were funded by New Opportunities Fund.

The event continued as "The Healthier Futures Event" in 2006 and was organised by the Healthier Futures Team. From then on was funded by Neighbourhood Renewal Fund

and Healthy Schools who donated £3000. The junior children from St Joseph's Primary School from Stanley were involved in this year's event as they had pre-booked the Louisa Centre where we were holding the event. It expanded to cover four days and continued in January for the next three years.

2007 saw the introduction of an Open Day where Age Concern joined the partnership and were very involved in the planning process to ensure that physical activity sessions were age appropriate - for example, new age curling and tai chi were included for the first time.

2008 continued in the same vein with the Open Day attracting over 200 people ranging from very young children with their parents, to young people, to older people in their 80s. Feedback from those attending on the day was very positive. For the first time in 2008, the event was organised locally with no involvement from Tony and Noel. This reduced costs somewhat, however, staff wages, venue hire and transport were still costly and a local personality was included to ensure equivalence over the years. Also we had to provide the display boards and equipment which Tony and Noel usually brought.

Each year VIPs from relevant organisations attended a "session" and were invited to stay for a healthy buffet lunch with the staff working at the event. Alex Watson, Leader of the Council and local councillors attended most of the events and indicated a desire to see more "health promoting" events in the future. Dr Anne Low, previous DPH for Derwentside PCT attended in 2005 and was very enthusiastic about the event.

In 2008, we were fortunate to have the two local MPs attend the event - Hilary Armstrong and Kevan Jones. They were both interviewed for the DVD of the event and were very positive in their comments.

Article supplied by Gillian Watson
Health Promotion Specialist - Food and Health Worker
<http://www.countydurhampct.nhs.uk/>