



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HealthStart Foundation Partners with Kingsville Area Schools to Launch Nutrition Education Program

The “What are You Feeding?” program helps students establish healthy eating habits.

AUSTIN, TX, January 21, 2020 – In February 2020 HealthStart Foundation will launch the “What Are You Feeding?” (WAYF) Cafeteria Nutrition Education Program with a grant from the L’Aiglon Foundation. HealthStart is a nonprofit organization, dedicated to building healthier Texas communities through early health education. L’Aiglon Foundation, headquartered in Kingsville, Texas, has supported programs in Kingsville schools and community efforts since 1982. The 2 ½ year pilot program will take place in four Kingsville area Independent School Districts: Driscoll ISD, Kingsville ISD, Ricardo ISD, and Santa Gertrudis ISD.

The Pilot Program’s goal is to provide children with tools to build healthy eating habits. What children eat can affect their physical health and academic performance. Poor nutrition can lead to illnesses such as obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease. The WAYF program brings nutrition education to the cafeteria by using visual aids to help children make connections between the food they eat and its function in the body.

Texas has the 6th highest childhood obesity rate in the nation. A study completed in 2017 found obesity rates for Hispanic youth in Texas at almost 26% or 1 in 4 youths. This rate is much higher than the rates for non-Hispanic, White or Black youth which were at 16.6% and 18.2% respectively. Hispanics represent slightly more than 72% of the Kingsville area population.

The program will reach over 2680 elementary school students to help students make good choices about what they eat. Research has shown that when children eat better, they do better in school, behave better in the classroom, and are absent less. A study from the National

Institute of Health concluded that children who consume higher quality nutrient diets made higher grades and missed fewer days of school compared with children whose diets were of poor quality. This link shows the importance of adequate nutrient-dense foods in a child's diet.

"We are honored to have received a 2 ½ year grant from L'Aiglon Foundation to bring our nutrition education program to Kingsville area elementary schools. The sticker system and tools we use give students a fun, easy way to connect what they eat to their health," said Robin Herskowitz, Founder, HealthStart Foundation.

"We have a wonderful opportunity at Driscoll ISD to help our students learn how to make healthy food choices through the What Are You Feeding campaign. Driscoll students will be learning how to nourish their bodies through the food choices they make on a daily basis at school. It is our hope that this new knowledge will affect their food choices at home and help our students build lifelong healthy eating habits." said Lynn Landenberger, Principal, Driscoll ISD

"We're looking forward to helping our students develop a lifelong skill that will enable them to grow into healthy adults. Building healthy eaters, grows strong adults." said Marci Braswell, Principal, Ricardo ISD

To learn more about HealthStart, visit www.healthstartfoundation.org.

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About HealthStart Foundation: Since 2010, HealthStart Foundation's early, science-based health education programs have set a strong foundation for a healthier tomorrow. HealthStart teaches kids the science behind good health with lessons on how our bodies work, the food, and fitness activities to keep every part of the body healthy and strong. HealthStart kids also learn when they care for one another and our environment they help build healthy communities. www.healthstartfoundation.org

About L'Aiglon Foundation: Established in 1982 in Kingsville, Texas, L'Aiglon Foundation has an established interest in supporting projects in education, the creative arts, land/watershed conservation, and the development of human capital. <http://www.laiglon.org/>

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