

Herb Garden

Enhancement

Program Proposal

Group 8

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Introduction

Gordon Neighbourhood House (GNH) is a community service organization that delivers a wide variety of program to support the growth of the West End community. The services provided are tailored to meet the necessities of the neighbourhood. Currently, GNH is collaborating with different partners on over 20 different community programs varying from workshops which involve family activities to community lunches. The herb garden is one of the programs available from the array of services GNH provides. GNH sees the significance of food, not only in improving individual well-being, but also in strengthening community-capacity building. Hence, many of their initiatives are food-related.

As part of their food initiatives program, GNH has located 10 community herb gardens in various part of the West End area. These gardens provides fresh and accessible produce that are available to anyone in the community who needs it. However, the herb garden has not been used to its full potential by the community as very little to no interactions between the two have been observed. GNH representatives and volunteers tending the garden have also noticed improper uses of the herb garden resulting to damages and difficulties in growing the plants.

To solve these issues, the Herb Garden Enhancement program was created. The aim of this program is to increase community engagement with the herb gardens provided by GNH. We believe if there are more interactions between the community and the gardens, the herb gardens will be used to its fullest potential. The herb gardens will also be treated with respect by the community members when people start to understand the gardens' purpose. The overarching goal of this project is to improve the community awareness about the herbs while also educating the community on how to interact with it.

Significance

The term herb is usually referred to a plant or part of plant with having nutritional and/or medicinal value (Kitteredge J, 2012). Herbs have been used in the society for those reasons for centuries (Craig, M. J., 1999). This project is noteworthy because of the significance of how herbs change our food consumption, and its health promoting properties. According to Wei Chun Wang (2013), by introducing herbs into the diet, it may help in reducing salt consumption since it is a healthy alternative as a seasoning. Herbs are a healthy alternative also because of the production of phytochemicals such as flavonoids and terpenes that can provide therapeutic effects (Craig, M. J., 1999). Rosemary, thyme, sage and oregano are some of the varieties which are planted in the herb boxes. These herbs are known to not only inhibit tumors, but also reduce risk of disease because of the phytochemicals in them (Craig, M. J., 1999). The presence of this herb box will allow its community to try and implement herbs into their daily food intake. In addition to that, community members with mobility issues do not have to search far for basic cooking herbs as these boxes are scattered around their neighbourhood. The community can also take this opportunity to learn how to incorporate herbs into their meals while cooking at home. Having these herbs boxes and teaching the community how to properly

use them can not only improve their food choices but also improve food literacy in the community by allowing people to get involved in the process of growing their own food. Having the access and choices to these herbs will improve the food security and food literacy in the West End.

Objective

Goal: To improve the community's awareness on the herb gardens while also educating the community on how to interact with it.

Objective 1: Presenting the boxes with different signages to make the box more visible to the community and the proper way to harvest herbs

Objective 2: Serving herb teas to the passersby while connecting with them near herb boxes with different traffic

Objective 3: Create a poster showing pictures of the herbs found in the gardens so the community can know the name and usage of the different types of herbs

Methods

For this project, we have to obtain sufficient information before planning any activities to pursue our goals. Firstly, we collect information by sending surveys to volunteers who foster the individual gardens occasionally. The survey is the main tool for us to learn about how people interact with each garden and how often the gardens are being used. For example, through the survey, we can gain an insight on the frequency of interaction between the community and the herb gardens based on the volunteers' observations. With the collected data, we can then generate ideas and design different strategies for the enhancement program. Additionally, we will interact with the residents in the community to acknowledge them about the garden as well as teaching them how to properly utilize the gardens. At the same time, we will prepare herb teas and serve them to people who are interested in knowing how to incorporate herbs into their daily diets.

Outcomes

After conducting surveys and interacting with residents in the community, our group will deliver several final products to our community partner, the Gordon Neighbourhood House. The final products include posters and signages that can be attached to the garden boxes. The posters will indicate the proper ways to interact with the herbs, such as how to harvest the herb without damaging them. The signage will be an upgrade to what is currently found on the boxes, clearly indicating that the boxes are open to public and people should treat them with consideration. Besides the poster and signage, our group will also prepare teas with the different types of herbs planted in the herb gardens. The herb teas will be served to the passersby who are interested in knowing how the herbs taste like. These products will increase the community's awareness on the herb gardens, encourage people to use the garden properly, and hopefully

reduce the amount of theft and vandalism. The posters and signages will be delivered to Gordon Neighbourhood House by November 22.

Reference

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