

GARDENS AND GOOD LIVES: SETTING AN EXAMPLE



Willie James Spriggs, who founded the BGACDC garden, with youngsters in a plot he cultivates.

Americans are finally getting the message, especially in the Delta, that obesity and diabetes are shortening lives and impairing happiness in nearly every family. But they are confused by all the conflicting messages about how to fix the problems.

There is no confusion and little dispute about one solution - a daily diet that includes properly prepared vegetables from the garden or the produce counters at the grocery store. Raw or lightly steamed or boiled fresh vegetables are far better than the canned and highly processed kind you get from the shelves.

The Boys, Girls, Adults Community Development Center has been driving those points home for three years in its campaign against obesity and diabetes, especially in children. Its own vegetable garden and restaurant are both servants and symbols of the cause.

Willie James Spriggs, once the president of BGACDC and a longtime volunteer, started the BGACDC garden in 2013. It is an educational tool for children, who learn about the source of food and fiber and the value of eating healthily and exercising.

The garden's greens, cabbage, onions, beans, tomatoes and other leafy vegetables are turned into delicious and healthy meals at the BFT (Best Food in Town) Restaurant at the BGACDC headquarters.

"We encourage families to follow our example and grow their own fresh vegetables or, if they can't, seek them out at the market," said Mrs. Beatrice Shelby, executive director of BGACDC. "We hope they'll realize the connection with health and happiness and spread the word."



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June 2014