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### Living healthy can be fun!

At first, both the volunteers age 50 and over and the children from Reidy Creek School were very quiet. They didn't know what to expect. So they answered a health questionnaire, and listened to a story about "Hearty Heart". They had a snack, but not just any snack. It was "Snackin' Time on the Trail." "Active Generations" was off and running, partner!

Hula hoops and parachutes with balls got children and adults laughing and active. "Dragons Tail Tag" and "See ya Later Alligator" were favorite games. And during the eight week session, the young and the not so young learned how to live a healthier life.

"Active Generations" pairs teams of adults age 50 plus with kids in grades 3 to 5. Classes meet once a week for 8 weeks. It uses CATCH: Coordinated Approach to Child Health, a proven, kid-tested program to increase healthy behaviors in children. Activities include fun games and exercises, preparing healthy snacks and learning about food choices.

"Active Generations" is funded at OASIS centers throughout the country by the WellPoint Foundation.

"The WellPoint Foundation is dedicated to working with organizations to identify and target public health concerns," says Caz Matthews, president, WellPoint Foundation. "With Active Generations, OASIS takes aim at childhood obesity, a serious and costly public health care epidemic, using a resource that is not only plentiful, but also extremely powerful in this country: mature adults who want to make a difference."

“Mr. Bob”(Bob Widerkehr) was one of the first Active Generations volunteers for the Escondido OASIS,” says Carolyn Collins, program coordinator. “He said he liked the idea of introducing children to healthy choices.”

“His wife told us he needed a reason to ‘go out and play with the children.’”

“Being healthy should be fun,” said Bob. And it was! One of the smaller children couldn’t take her eyes off the very tall Mr. Bob. Finally she asked him one day, “how did you get so big?” Bob laughed and told her he liked to eat healthy. “I don’t know if I want to grow that much,” she said.

Snacks were always well received by the children, with even the reluctant eater getting into the act. A favorite was the Garden Delight. Volunteers had the children make “face” sandwiches, using the bread, lettuce and tomato slice for the head, sprouts for hair, olive circles for eyes, a grape tomato for a nose and pepper strips for a mouth. Possibly a few crumbs were left.

Local community partners supporting Active Generations with Escondido OASIS are Palomar Pomerado Health and Henry’s Market.

“Ms. Sharon” (Sharon Woolbright) was the organizer of the Escondido OASIS/Reidy Creek School Active Generations program. The volunteer team looked to her for leadership and was never disappointed. During the eight weeks, other volunteers noticed she had lost a few pounds.

“Well,” Ms. Sharon said. “I can’t tell the children to do something I’m not doing: I need to be a good example”.

“Kids need more exercise and older adults want to make a difference,” says Collins. “Together we get kids moving again and eating healthier.”

For more information on the Active Generations program at Escondido OASIS, contact Carolyn Collins at 760-839-4047, or visit their website at [www.oasisnet.org/Escondido](http://www.oasisnet.org/Escondido).