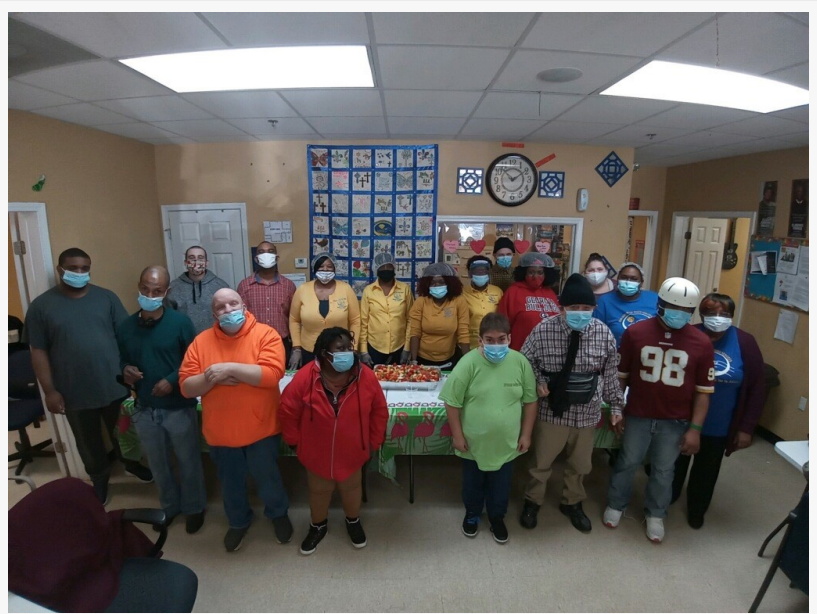


The Diamond Center Focuses on Healthy Lifestyle with CACFP

Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Member The Diamond Center of Rex, Georgia featured by the National CACFP Sponsors Association

ROUND ROCK, TX - TEXAS, USA, March 25, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Diamond Center Adult Day Program is a Community Access Group offering person-centered services to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities working to improve, acquire or retain communication and socialization skills. These skills are implemented for active participation and independent functioning outside of their home setting. Sheila Russell, director, had a vision to open a center that would make a positive impact through enhancement and advancement of the individuals regardless of their disability. That vision became a reality when the Diamond Center opened in July of 2013.



The Diamond Center encourages healthy living and a healthy diet while engaging individuals in ISP goals and community integration.

"I believe that everyone can learn something no matter how long it may take or how simple the task may be. Engagement and positive reinforcement, as well as support in giving assistance for the goal at hand, is extremely significant. We will continue to encourage a healthy lifestyle through diet, exercise and rest with the hope of a most enjoyable life. Community relationship is vital, giving our individuals a sense of belonging and self-worth as they volunteer and work. It is rewarding to see them celebrating their victories and joy in knowing they can accomplish much with support from those who have essential interest in their success in life."

Healthy lifestyle is a focal point for the Diamond Center. The center encourages individuals to acquire healthy dietary habits, get daily exercise, drink adequate amounts of water, participate in hands-on activities and group discussions - all of which educates them on healthy living and how to strive for optimum health. After learning about CACFP, Sallye Jones, CACFP Manager,

immediately enrolled the center as a member. As a result, the Diamond Center has been able to serve over 36 participants through CACFP.

“We are afforded the opportunity to vend in hot lunches and serve our participants a well-balanced meal Monday through Friday with CACFP,” added Jones.

Participants often express how much they enjoy their meal and eagerly volunteer to help during lunchtime by passing out plates, utensils and drinks. Water is offered throughout the day, stressing the importance of keeping the body hydrated and that drinking water is good for vital organs to work properly while giving energy and flushing out toxins. After lunch, participants volunteer for clean-up duties by cleaning tables, sweeping and taking out trash under supervision. By letting them know that they are doing a great job and that they are appreciated, the participants develop a sense of pride which reflects in their positive dispositions.

Morning and afternoon exercise is implemented daily and individuals who are capable, complete jumping jacks, leg bends, running in place and other aerobic activities. Other individuals with low mobility participate by doing staff-assisted upper and lower body movements. Work-out videos are used occasionally and walks are taken outside around the building when weather permits. All work together to help establish healthy habits for participants.

Group discussions are facilitated and create an opportunity for individuals to communicate and express how they are feeling in a caring and friendly environment. Planning the monthly calendar is one of the highlights of discussion as they give their suggestions and exercise their options of activities. The Farmer’s Market is a favorite place to visit as they learn the difference between fruits, vegetables, and their various textures. Individuals are educated on the effects different foods have on the body and knowing how to differentiate nutrient dense, whole foods from junk foods.

They are given the option of choosing simple healthy recipes they would like to make during “Look and Make” activity. They may choose to learn how to make a fruit salad, smoothie or yogurt parfait with fresh strawberries.

Holidays are acknowledged by hosting special luncheons and parties, with participants preparing for the occasions by helping to decorate, creating the perfect ambiance for the occasion. They also dress up in semi-formal attire and take pictures. A nutritious and delicious lunch is served, incorporating fresh fruits and leafy green salads. Parents, providers and other core team members are invited and always welcomed to the Diamond Center.

“It warms my heart to see them dancing, laughing and having fun. Engaging and interacting with them results in everyone having a good time,” added Jones.

The goal at the Diamond Center Adult Day Program is for individuals to proceed to a higher level than their initial admission. It is very important to encourage healthy living, healthy diet and to

engage individuals in ISP goals and community integration. The Diamond Center continuously strives to lead by example regarding principles of nutrition, encouraging healthier choices in every aspect of life and will continue to provide support looking at individuals as a whole.

CACFP is an indicator of quality child care. When children are cared for by providers who are part of the CACFP they are receiving the best nutrition available. Learn more about other CACFP providers featured in the [Member Showcase](#) through the National CACFP Sponsors Association.

Since 1986, the [National CACFP Sponsors Association](#) (NCA) is the leading national organization for sponsors who administer the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). It provides education and support to thousands of members in the CACFP community and in particular to sponsors of all sizes from across the country. CACFP strives to improve communication between families, caregivers, sponsors and their supervising government agencies.

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