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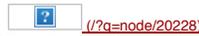


## CLUB RINGS IN 2012

Submitted by Ruston Leader on Sat, 12/31/2011 - 8:04pm  
in

### Healthy plans made by staff, members

Jessica Darden



Before the New Year began, the club held a 5k to help members get a better understanding of what Triple Play was going to be about — Mind, body and soul.

Out with the old and in with the new.

The Boys and Girls Clubs of North Central Louisiana received a grant in late 2011 that has enabled them to completely implement a program designed to promote healthier lifestyles. The club received a grant of \$60,000 from the Lincoln Health Foundation that will be used strictly for a program titled Triple Play.

Triple Play is about mind, body and soul, and since the club received the Lincoln Health Foundation grant they were made eligible to receive even more money from the Boys and Girls Clubs of America.

The grant from the Boys and Girls Clubs of America totaled \$7,500, which is also designated for the Triple Play program.

"Triple Play is a healthy habits program that allows the club to educate our kids on healthy lifestyles through social recreation, through health education and through exercise," said Sabrina Love.

Love, unit director for the club, said events such as a field day, a health fair and a 5K run have been held.

"Our route for the 5K wasn't approved by the city, so instead we made the club into our track," she said.

"Club members walked or ran for 30 minutes because that is part of the program — exercise. Then we had a health fair where the Health Hut came out and parked with us and our first event was the field day. We had volunteers from Louisiana Tech come out to help us."

She added that an instructor out of Shreveport came over to organize the whole event. "He brought all the equipment for the various stations," Love said. "He brought everything. Each station had different games or obstacles and emphasized exercising through play and through recreation."

Parents also came out to the event, Love said. She added that this year the club would begin a cooking class, daily challenges and weekly tournaments.

"In the cooking class, we're going to teach the kids how to make healthy snacks at home that can still be fun, such as Ants on a Log, which is celery, peanut butter and raisins," she said. "We want our kids to know that they can eat fun stuff. So this part of the program allows them that freedom, but with healthy snacks."

The mind portion of the program, Love said is the education about healthy eating habits. As for the exercise portion, she added that is the exercise activities.

"We're going to start hosting an exercise class three days a week," she said. "We could target only one age group of our members, but we're not going to do that. We want to have everyone involved in the Triple Play program, because the younger they start, the more likely they are to develop these healthy habits."

The final section of the program — soul — encompasses the other two areas as well.

"Social recreation is involved in the soul portion of the program," Love said. "We want to teach our kids how to be nice and to have good character. Sometimes it's hard not to be a bully. This part gives kids the education they need about having good morals, good sportsmanship and it brings everything all together."

Love said small portions of the Triple Play program have been around for years, however, funding has limited what the club has actually been able to do.

"We've held summer exercise classes and had the social recreation component," she said. "But in August, we really started the whole program back in full force. We had decided that we were going to do this thing full out and the grant monies we have received are really going to allow us to do that in 2012."

Love added that each child will be able to go to the cooking class once a week, and because of the partnerships they are creating with both Grambling and Tech, the club will continue to utilize our resources to keep the program going.

"The Lincoln Health Foundation grant is allowing us to implement all aspects of Triple Play right now," Love said. "So, we hope that once the grant cycle is over, we will be able to continue as much of the program as possible."

Eldonta Osborne, executive director, said the Lincoln Health Foundation grant has allowed the club the opportunity to enhance its programming.

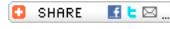
"We've had health-related programs, but we still needed more money to implement more parts of the program," he said. "This program is going to teach our kids the good habits they need to improve their overall health."

Osborne said the \$60,000 Lincoln Health Foundation grant has been just enough to get the program completely up and running.

"The Boys and Girls Clubs allowed for an instructor to come and work with our staff on the Triple Play Program," he said. "This is a great opportunity for our staff, because it allows for everyone to attend the seminars. That way, once the grant money is gone, they will still have the tools needed to keep the program in tact."

Although the grants will only help to cover a small portion of the expenses needed to put 122 club members through the program, Osborne said they have been a tremendous help for the club to get started.

"They are allowing us to make long-range plans, which in turn brings new aspects of programming to the club," he said. "We can now have a more dramatic effect on our kids."

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