

On-going Research on the Effects of Soy Nutrition

El Centro Escolar Católico Santa Luisa

Recent Research:

200 Students at Santa Luisa are currently participating in ConnectEd's soy program. The students have been receiving one glass of soy milk a day for four months and are excited to continue participation in the program. ConnectEd's directors recently conducted a study based on teacher surveys about the effects of soy milk. While the children have only been drinking the milk for a short period of time, results were still noted. Many teachers stated that the students found it easier to concentrate and that the majority had improved both in their class work and their behavior. Teachers also observed that the children complain less of headaches and stomachaches. They requested that we serve the milk at an earlier hour because so many children come to school without breakfast and thus find it difficult to concentrate during class. We have since changed the hour and now serve the milk two and a half hours earlier based on teachers' suggestions.

More about the program:

Those students who are capable pay \$.20 a week for their milk. It has been found that the children come more often to drink the milk if they have invested some of their own money in it. Thus while the \$.20 does aid in the costs of soy milk preparation, it is more of a symbol of collaboration. It is our goal that the students feel that they are buying the milk, instead of candy for example, for their own health. And that they see themselves as participants in the program, not just recipients.

Because it is important that the students decide to continue to drink the milk, we have done our best to ensure that the opportunity to participate in the program is seen as a privilege and not only something with which they have been gifted. Up until now that goal has been met and the children take pride in paying their \$.20 as a means of collaborating with us. The younger children are also extremely proud of themselves when they drink their entire glass of milk and often find it necessary to show as many of us as possible that they have an empty glass.

La Comunidad de Quetzalapa II

About the program:

Quetzalapa II is a small rural community on the outskirts of San Salvador, the capital city of El Salvador. ConnectEd's directors were approached by a member of that community who had seen the soy project at Santa Luisa and were asked how his community could get involved in a similar project. After interviewing various members of the community to assess need and conducting a workshop on the importance of various nutrients and soy milk preparation, ConnectEd decided to expand the program to Quetzalapa II. The program is currently run by women in the community. They serve milk three times a week to about 150 children. Research on the success of the program in this community is still pending as the project has just begun.