



INNOVATIVE
HEALTH
SOLUTIONS

2025 | IMPACT REPORT

Letter to Partners



Dear Friends and Community Partners,

In 2025, as we continue to navigate an evolving political and funding landscape, our mission has remained clear and steadfast: to create inclusive, healing-centered programs that uplift the health and dignity of every person we serve—across all ages, identities, and lived experiences.

This year has been one of growth, innovation, and recognition. We are honored to have our work featured in the Journal of Trauma-Informed Community Health, Nutrition, and Physical Activity (J-TICH) through two impactful articles. The first, “An Outcome Evaluation of a Medically Tailored Meal Intervention for Older Adults with Diabetes,” highlights the powerful health impacts of our nutrition-focused programs for aging adults. The second, “Trauma-Informed Nutrition Education for Black/African American Perinatal Women with Substance Use Disorder: A Pilot Study,” demonstrates how trauma-informed nutrition practices can enhance both the physical and mental health of perinatal women of color.

This pilot study not only assessed participant and organizational readiness for trauma-informed care but also showed promising outcomes in building food resilience among Black and African American women engaged in a multidisciplinary substance use treatment program. Through Grow and Glow, formerly Melanated Mamas Meals, we are helping establish a model that centers cultural relevance, trauma awareness, and holistic maternal wellness.

These publications reflect what we have long known: when programs are rooted in equity, cultural humility, and community voice, lives change.

In addition to national recognition, we took bold local steps to reimagine services for older adults through the launch of Lunch Buddies Bistro. This vibrant transformation of Solano County’s congregate dining program invites older adults to rediscover lunchtime as a joyful, shared experience—not just a meal, but a moment of connection, fun, and celebration.

Now active in seven local community centers, Lunch Buddies Bistro offers themed celebrations, seasonal social events, and interactive activities such as line dancing and Bingocize, all within a warm and welcoming environment where older adults can build connections and feel at home. Picture colorful tablecloths, family-style meals, and rooms filled with music, laughter, and lively conversation. It is more than a meal—it is a reminder that aging with dignity includes joy, community, and care.

We also proudly supported a milestone effort this year: the creation of the Solano Master Plan for Aging and Disability. Partnering with Solano County Health and Social Services, Older and Disabled Adult Services (ODAS), and the Napa/Solano Area Agency on Aging, we contributed to the development of this strategic framework to address the needs of our county’s growing population of older adults, people with disabilities, and their caregivers. Through extensive community engagement and cross-sector collaboration, this plan lays the foundation for building a more inclusive, age- and disability-friendly Solano County—both today and for generations to come.

Together, these initiatives reflect a core truth: when we design programs with cultural humility and a trauma-informed lens, we don’t just meet needs—we help people heal and thrive.

To all our partners, supporters, and champions: thank you. Your trust, advocacy, and investment made 2025 a year of meaningful impact and new possibilities. We look forward to continuing this journey with you and invite you to help us expand this vital work—because every person deserves access to belonging, nourishment, and hope.

With gratitude and hope,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Norma Lisenko'.

Dr. Norma Lisenko, DrPH, MPH
Founder and Chief Executive Officer

OUR MISSION

Innovative Health Solutions dedicates itself to playing a leadership role in connecting public and private organizations, thereby creating collective policy, systems, and environmental community changes.

OUR VISION

As an organization, we work toward healthy and equitable communities for all.

OUR VALUES

- Innovate, inspire, and implement
- Value partnerships that last and have an impact
- Support community equity and empowerment
- Develop and manage multi-sector programs that create an impact
- Advocate for changes in policies, systems, and environments
- Serve as the link connecting diverse sets of partnerships and stakeholders who collaborate to improve public health and wellness

FOSTERING INNOVATIONS

- Publishing and promoting emerging research to inform evidence-based practices
- Leveraging existing partnerships to design and launch innovative programs
- Delivering ethical and equitable services that meet the needs of diverse communities



2025 Program Overview



YOUTH and FAMILIES

- Children/Youth Impacted: **975**
- Families Impacted: **187**
- Classes Held: **37**
- Indirect Activity Outreach: **26,407**
- Materials Shared: **490**



OLDER ADULTS PROGRAMS

- Adults Impacted: **1,755**
- Direct Physical Activity Participants: **804**
- Total Class Attendance: **3,911**
- FosterLuv Kinship Care Participants: **110**
- Indirect Activity Outreach: **300**
- Materials Shared: **175**



COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Grow and Glow Perinatal Support Program

- Support Sessions: **270**
- Mothers Served: **12**
- Meals/Food Boxes Provided: **1,153**

Medically Tailored Meals

- Individuals Served: **77**
- Meals/Food Boxes Delivered: **14,048**
- Additional Food Boxes Distributed: **24**

Congregate Meals Program

- Individuals Served: **787**
- Meals Served: **16,702**
- Participants Engaged in Nutrition Education: **342**

Cross-Collaborative Achievements

- Served as the fiscal sponsor for **2** community collaboratives
- Provided backbone support for **4** collaborative meetings
- Completed **10** PSE change projects across Napa and Solano Counties

CREATING *Active & Engaged Communities*

Solano County – CalFresh Healthy Living Program

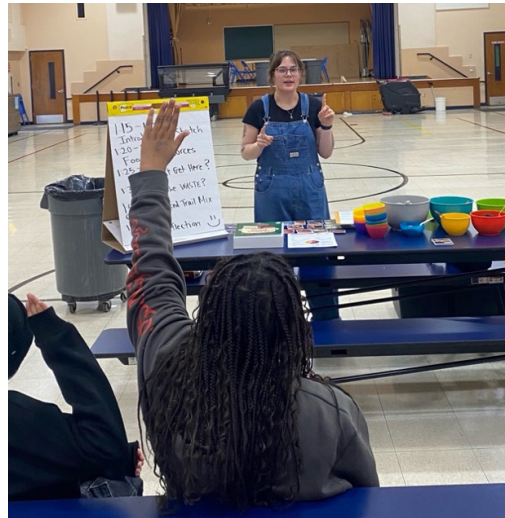
Young Chefs, Big Impact: Students Learn to Cook and Reduce Waste

Through hands-on cooking and sustainability lessons, students at Dan O. Root Elementary discovered how simple changes in the kitchen can benefit their health and the environment.

This spring, Innovative Health Solutions (IHS) partnered with Dan O. Root Elementary School in the Fairfield-Suisun Unified School District to deliver Food Smarts: Waste Reduction for Kids classes. Over five weeks, students came together after school to cook, create, and learn how everyday choices can improve both their health and the environment.

Each session combined hands-on cooking with lessons in food resource management. Students were encouraged to think beyond the typical “take, make, and waste” approach. Through fun activities, they explored composting, recycling, and how to make the most of the food they have at home.

In the weeks that followed, many students proudly shared how they had started applying what they learned—like making their own salsa from ingredients already in their kitchens. By the end of the program, these young learners had new skills, greater confidence in the kitchen, and a deeper understanding of how small actions can create a big impact on their community and the planet.



“Over the weekend, I made salsa with my mom. We added some leftover fruit from our fridge—it tasted so good!”

– DAN O ROOT STUDENT

Youth & Families

Napa County - CalFresh Healthy Living Program



Teaching the CalFresh Healthy Living Program's Create Better Health curriculum at multiple family resource centers in Napa County is a truly rewarding experience. Each session offers more than just instruction—it becomes a personalized journey for each participant. The educator is constantly inspired by how individuals set their own goals throughout the week. Hearing about the positive changes participants make—not only for themselves but also for their families—is deeply fulfilling and highlights the program's meaningful impact.

Here are a few stories from one of the programs held at Napa Junction Elementary School Family Resource Center in American Canyon. These examples highlight the meaningful impact the program has had on participants and their families, reflecting the power of community-based education and support.

One participant committed to incorporating water infusion into her daily routine and took the initiative to explain its benefits to her family. By choosing water over sugary beverages, her household not only reduced their sugar intake but also saved money by cutting back on soda purchases. Her husband supported the challenge wholeheartedly, and together they began Creating Better Health.

Another participant used to buy fruit juice for her children, believing it to be a healthy option. After learning more during the sessions, she made it her personal goal to replace juice with infused water. She even involved her children in preparing their own infused water recipes. The kids loved the activity, came up with creative ideas, and now prefer water infusion over juice. This simple change has led to a healthier lifestyle for the entire family.

One participant, in particular, has truly taken the lessons to heart. He now carefully reads nutrition labels during his grocery trips, determined to make healthier choices for his family. His dedication serves as a powerful example of the lasting impact this program can have on individuals in their households.

Gratitude is extended for the ongoing support received at community sites. At the elementary school, staff consistently go out of their way to make participants feel welcome by offering coffee, tea, and snacks. One particularly meaningful moment came when the usual sweets were replaced with a healthier option—blueberries, grapes, and nuts. It was a thoughtful surprise and a clear reflection of the healthy habits the program and community are working to promote together.



There is no doubt in my mind that the Create Better Health curriculum empowers families to make meaningful changes. It fosters a supportive, healthy environment and gives individuals the tools they need to take charge of their well-being. *Thank you for your continued support in helping us build healthier communities.*

SUCCESS STORY

Solano County - CalFresh Healthy Living Program

Garden Club Grows More Than Just Plants at Armijo High

THE NEED

When I first thought about joining the Garden Club at Armijo High, I wasn't sure what to expect. I didn't know much about gardening, and I was a little shy about joining a new group. I wanted to find a way to meet new people and do something good for the school and the community. I just didn't know if I'd fit in.

THE WORK

From the start, the Garden Club made me feel welcome. The members showed me how to care for the plants—how to water them, trim them, and harvest the fruits, veggies, and herbs. Everyone worked together, and I quickly became part of the team.

One thing that really stood out to me was that all of our harvests went to people in need. Knowing that our work helped others made me feel proud and gave our club a real purpose.

We also had fun events during the year. One of my favorites was Club Rush. We got to share what we do with other students and teach them about gardening. It was great to see people smiling and learning at our table.

Another thing I loved was baking for club events. I brought treats to share, which helped me connect with others. It was a fun way to bring people together.



Sylvia Herrera—Champion Teacher, and Kylie Manning—Member, Armijo High School Garden Club

And of course, seeing the plants grow was amazing! I was surprised by how big and healthy everything became. Watching our hard work turn into something so beautiful was really rewarding.

THE IMPACT

Joining the Garden Club changed a lot for me. I didn't just learn how to garden—I learned how to work with others, make new friends, and feel more confident.

The club helped me open up and become more social. I met so many great people, and together we built a little community right on campus.



“Now, I can say for sure: the Garden Club isn't just any club. It's a family. It's open to everyone—students, teachers, staff. And it's a place where you can learn, grow, and help others.

Thank you for the chance to be a part of it. I can't wait for another year in the garden!”

— KYLIE MANNING
ARMIJO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT

Nurturing Our Older Adults Through Food, Movement, and Nature



Lunch Buddies Bistro: More Than a Meal—It Brings Food, Fun, and Friendship!

Bringing Joy and Connection to Older Adults in Solano County

Last year, we reimagined community dining with Lunch Buddies Bistro—a program that turned an ordinary lunch into a celebration of good food, friendship, and vibrant community life.

Older adults gathered at seven local community centers in Solano County to share hearty meals, spark new friendships, and participate in fun, engaging activities. For many, Lunch Buddies Bistro quickly became the highlight of the week—a place where everyone felt welcome.

Participants enjoyed nutritious, home-style meals served family-style, along with themed celebrations and interactive activities like line dancing and Bingocize. The atmosphere was warm and inviting, filled with laughter and lively conversation.

Cheerful tables, set with placemats and tablecloths, welcomed guests to enjoy balanced meals, while games, music, and friendly faces created a joyful space. Through these gatherings, strangers became friends, and friends became Bistro Buddies.

Today, Lunch Buddies Bistro continues to help older adults across Solano County build meaningful connections, boost their well-being, and rediscover the joy of gathering together. Adults aged 60 and over are invited to join the program at no cost, with voluntary contributions continuing to help sustain the effort.

The movement for joyful, healthy, and connected living continues to grow, inspiring more people each day to come together in support of vibrant, engaged aging.

“What a treat! Ashley and I had lunch in Fairfield today—everything was fantastic! So well organized, the food was delicious, and the setup looked beautiful. The nursing students were amazing—loved having them serve us! And Carolina, the hostess, was just wonderful. The whole experience was so nice!”

– Elaine Clark, Napa/Solano
Area Agency on Aging



How to Make a Lunch Reservation:

(Meal reservations are required two days in advance)

- Go to one of the sites from 11am-1pm
- Call or text (707) 684-4376
- Email info@innovativehealths.com

Join us regularly for our dining experiences:

Florence Douglas Center Vallejo
333 Amador St., Vallejo, CA 94590

Benicia Senior Citizens
187 E L street, Benicia, CA 94510

Joseph A Nelson Community Center
611 Village Dr., Suisun City, CA 94585

Fairfield Adult Recreation Center
1200 Civic Center Dr., Fairfield, CA 94533

McBride Senior Center
91 Town Square Pl, Vacaville, CA 95688

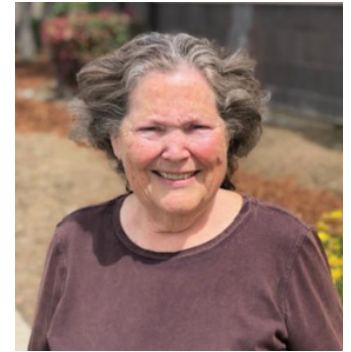
Rio Vista Senior Center
25 Main Street, Rio Vista, CA 94571

Dixon Senior Multi Use Center
201 S 5th St., Dixon, CA 95620

SUCCESS STORY

A Heartfelt Commitment to Community & Connection

Mary's journey is a powerful example of dedication, compassion, and resilience, making a lasting impact on the Congregate Meals program participants at the Joseph Nelson Community Center in Suisun. After retiring from a 27-year career in food service and navigating the challenges of the pandemic, Mary returned to her community as a Congregate Meal Site Host, driven by a deep desire to serve.



For Mary, this role is much more than a job—it's a meaningful opportunity to foster connection and provide nourishing meals. She shares,

“I make it a point to spend time talking and engaging with everyone who comes by for a meal. This isn't just an eat-and-go experience; here, we are family.”

Mary has been instrumental in enhancing the dining experience, advocating for older adults during key changes—such as transitioning to a new food provider and upgrading from disposable items to real dishes, tablecloths and placemats. These improvements have made mealtime more welcoming and dignified for all.

But the Joseph Nelson Community Center is about so much more than meals. It offers a vibrant array of activities including grocery box programs, line dancing, Tai Chi, Bingocize, table tennis, painting, and bingo—each designed to promote wellness, social connection, and joy among older adults.

Mary's commitment embodies the spirit of service that makes Joseph Nelson a vital pillar of support, connection, and care in the community. Her work highlights how a local senior center can profoundly enrich lives, proving that small acts of kindness and advocacy create lasting, positive change.



“The way we build the world tells the story about who we believe belongs here.”
— Anonymous

Master Plan for Aging and Disability Advisory Committee Members

Fostering Collaborative Sustainable Partnerships for Greater Outcomes

Leading the development of the Solano Master Plan for Aging and Disability to guide inclusive, long-term policy and service strategies.

Innovative Health Solutions (IHS) was awarded a contract to support Solano County Health and Social Services, in collaboration with Older and Disabled Adults Services (ODAS) and the Napa/Solano Area Agency on Aging, in developing a framework to address the needs of the county's growing population of older adults, people with disabilities, and their caregivers.

Aging is changing—and it's changing California. The state's population over age 60 is projected to diversify and grow faster than any other age group. In Solano County, older adults already outnumber children.

In response, IHS led the effort to create the Solano MPAD, a comprehensive blueprint designed to foster a community where people of all ages and abilities are engaged, valued, and supported throughout their lives.

To guide the development of the plan, IHS conducted an in-depth analysis of local data, demographics, and trends. The team established the Solano MPAD Advisory Committee, composed of members from diverse ethnic backgrounds, cultures, and

all regions of the county. The Advisory Committee played an essential role in shaping a culturally inclusive plan.

IHS also hosted a series of listening sessions throughout the county, reaching out to a wide range of community groups, including Filipino Americans, LGBTQIA+ individuals, Spanish-speaking residents, African Americans, and adults with disabilities. These sessions drew 241 participants and captured more than 1,000 individual comments, ensuring that the voices of those with lived experience informed the plan's development.

Throughout the process, IHS actively engaged stakeholders across sectors, incorporating their insights and feedback to help shape a shared vision for an age- and disability-friendly future.

The resulting Solano Master Plan for Aging and Disabilities will serve as a vital tool for guiding the county's efforts in building a more inclusive, supportive community for older adults and people with disabilities. The plan is expected to be unveiled in late 2025.

Partnering for Student Wellness in Calistoga

We are proud to celebrate our growing partnership with Calistoga Unified School District—a collaboration that has flourished since 2019. This ongoing success is a testament to the leadership of Food Service Director Rosa Rubio and the district's dedicated Wellness Committee, whose shared vision and hard work continue to inspire lasting change.

Together, we have brought impactful health and nutrition initiatives to life, creating opportunities for students to learn about the importance of healthy eating, regular physical activity, and environmental stewardship. From classroom activities to campus-wide campaigns, our joint efforts are helping foster a culture of wellness that extends beyond the school walls.

Most recently, we were honored to support the district's annual Wellness Week, held each April—a highlight of the school year that engages students, staff, and families in fun, interactive ways to promote healthier living. Innovative Health Solutions contributed CalFresh Healthy Living resources and collaborated with school leaders to inspire students to adopt healthy, sustainable habits. A standout example from this year's event: encouraging the use of reusable water bottles during the school-wide jog-a-thon, combining lessons in hydration, physical fitness, and environmental responsibility.

“Thanks to this collaborative work, we're seeing more students build lifelong habits around good nutrition, staying active, and caring for the environment. Together, we're helping lay the foundation for healthier futures.”

– ROSA RUBIO
FOOD SERVICE DIRECTOR



Where We Are Headed

As we move forward, our focus is on expanding and strengthening key initiatives to better serve our community. Central to this vision is our commitment to advancing CalAIM Enhanced Care Management (ECM) services. CalAIM, or California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal, is a transformative initiative designed to improve health outcomes by providing more coordinated, person-centered care for Medi-Cal beneficiaries. Through ECM, we connect individuals with comprehensive support that addresses not only medical needs but also critical social determinants of health such as housing, nutrition, and transportation.

In addition to ECM, we are expanding our use of Community Supports (CS) services, which provide vital assistance for housing navigation, housing deposits, and housing sustainability. These supports are essential to helping individuals secure and maintain stable housing, a foundation for long-term health and well-being.

To advance knowledge and best practices, we will continue to publish evaluation reports in academic journals, sharing evidence-based insights that inform the field. Building on this foundation, we are developing our second evidence-based curriculum, GROW: Generations Reconnecting Our World. This innovative program serves as an on-ramp for participants to engage in local policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) work focused on food access and community health.

GROW offers meaningful opportunities for community engagement through school and community gardens, gardening clubs, recycling programs, gleaning efforts, and initiatives aimed at improving nutrition standards across organizations. The curriculum introduces youth to careers in agriculture while supporting the formation of “Champions for Change” groups for older adults—fostering intergenerational collaboration to advance policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) change. By promoting health, sustainability, and cross-sector partnerships, GROW strengthens relationships between programs serving both youth and older adults, ultimately deepening community impact and resilience.

Together, these efforts position us to grow our impact, deepen partnerships, and build a healthier, more connected future for the communities we serve.



THANK YOU TO OUR

Community Partners

Anna Kyle Elementary School

Adventist Health Saint Helena

Aging Disability Resource Connection

Aliados Health

American Canyon Clubhouse—Boys & Girls Club

American Canyon Community & Park Foundation

Armijo High School

Bay Area Nutrition and Physical Activity Collaborative

Benicia Community Center

Benicia Senior Center

Black Infant Health

Blue Zones Project Upper Napa Valley

CalFresh Healthy Living Program

Calistoga Joint Unified School District

Calistoga Elementary School

Calistoga Junior-Senior High

Catholic Charities of Santa Rosa Rainbow House

Catholic Charities Yolo-Solano

Child Start Inc.

Choice in Aging

City of American Canyon Park and Recreation

City of Calistoga Parks and Recreation

City of Napa Parks and Recreation

City of St. Helena

Dan O. Root Elementary School

David Weir K-8

Dixon Senior Center

EAH Housing

Eatwell Farms

ExtraFood.org

Fairfield Adult Recreation Center

Fairfield-Suisun Unified School District

Fairfield Parks and Recreation

Florence Douglas Community Center

Food Agricultural and Nutrition Network of Solano

First 5 Solano

Food Bank of Contra Costa & Solano

Food is Free Bay Area

Girls on the Run Napa

Greater Vallejo Recreation District

Independent Living Systems

Joseph Nelson Community Center

Kaiser Permanente

La Clinica Vallejo

Live Healthy Napa County

Marina Towers

Marin Community Foundation

Marin Food Policy Council

Mayacamas Preschool

McBride Senior Center

Meals on Wheels Solano

Napa and Solano Area Agency on Aging

Napa County Bicycle Coalition

Napa County Department of Public Health

Napa County Farmers Market

Napa County Office of Education

Napa County Regional Open Space District

Napa Community Organizations Active in Disaster

Napa Farmers Market

Napa Resource Conservation District

Napa Senior Center

Partnership Healthplan of California

Rosemary's Farm to Fork

Redwood Community Health Services

Rio Vista Senior Center

Rohlffs Manor

Saint Helena Primary

San Francisco State University

Soilogical

Solano County Nutrition Services Bureau

Solano Mobility Transportation Options

Solano Pride Center

Solano Transportation Authority—Solano Mobility Program

Suisun City

Sustainable Solano

The City of Benicia

Touro University

UpTown Provisions

UpValley Family Center

Vibe Solano Alliance

Von Brandt Family Resource Center

West Marin Climate Action

West Marin Fund



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