

# New Summer Camp Off To Good Start

Our Steps to Success Middle School Health & Wellness Summer Camp is in full swing.

“I really love it,” said Jaylissa Saint-Fleur, who is 11 and attends the eight-week camp at our center in Lake Worth West. “I get to do a lot of things like play outside and go on trips to movies and bowling. I’ve also made many new friends. And the counselors are so nice.”

More than 40 middle school youth are participating in the new camp that will run through Aug. 10. The camp’s focus is on health and wellness, as well as learning academic skills such as computer coding and Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM).

But on a recent hot morning in mid-June, the youth just wanted to escape the sun and have fun. They were watching a World Cup soccer game inside the recreation building. They were eating snacks, cheering on the teams and just happy being together.

“The kids have a lot of fun. They like coming here,” said Lesha Roundtree, our summer camp director.

That’s the point of the camp. For many pre-teen youth growing up in the area, there was little to do in the lazy summer months until the camp opened. Many sat at home, watched TV and accomplished very little.

“We wanted to change that,” said Rhonda Rogers, executive director of Lake Worth West Resident Planning Group. “We set out and created a middle school camp to give the youth a place to go this summer that was educational and fun. I think we succeeded.”

The funding for the camp was made possible by Impact 100 Palm Beach County, which provided a \$100,000 grant. These funds are paying for counselors, teachers and assistants to supervise the youth and emphasize nutrition, academics, and staying focused on the future.

Once the camp ends, the youth, as well as many of the staff, will continue on through an after-school program at our center. The youth will come three times a week to complete homework, get tutoring, and be involved in activities close to their home.

“We made sure that our programming for these middle school youth was year-round so they benefited from learning and relationship-building by being with each other – that was really important to us,” Rogers said.