The Need:
In 2011 Delaware was the 21st most obese state in the country, according to F as in Fat: How Obesity Threatens America’s Future 2011, a report from the Trust for America’s Health (TFAH) and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF). Delaware’s adult obesity rate is 28% and 13.3% of children and adolescents in Delaware are considered obese. Obesity among youth in Delaware continues to climb. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), of adolescents in grades 9 through 12, 15.8% were overweight and 13.7% were obese. Among adolescents, 71.6% ate fruits or drank 100% fruit juice less than 2 times per day and 28.8% drank a can, bottle, or glass of soda at least one time per day. Only 23.8% were physically active for a total of at least 60 minutes per day and 19.7% did not participate in at least 60 minutes of physical activity on any day, and 37.7% watched television 3 or more hours per day on an average school day.

What 4-H Did:
In April 2013, Delaware 4-H was awarded the Wal-Mart Youth Voice Youth Choice grant by National 4-H Council. This program was to directly impact 3000 youth to receive 6–10 hours of the Up for the Challenge: Lifetime Fitness, Healthy Decisions fitness and nutrition curriculum. To reach this goal, Delaware 4-H partnered with EFNEP reaching 1500 youth over the summer of 2013 at 40 locations using 4-H teen educators and EFNEP nutrition assistants as instructors. During the fall and winter, a Public Ally (Americorps) was assigned to the project. The Public Ally and other 4-H healthy living staff reached the remaining youth. This was done by conducting programs at an additional 24 new locations that included elementary, middle and high schools throughout the state.

Accomplishments:
A sample of the evaluation data shows the following progress:
- 27% improved response to “eat vegetables”
- 22% improved response to “eat fruits”
- 30% improved response to “ask someone to buy low-fat milk”
- 22% improved response to “do physical exercise”
- 69% improved knowledge necessary to choose foods consistent with Federal Dietary Guidelines.

Delaware 4-H has also hosted 11 brush-and-touch events throughout the state demonstrating how much sugar is in soda versus water, taste testing of “Up for the Challenge” healthy drink recipes, and scavenger hunts with recipes pertaining to home salsa and healthier chips.

As a result of this work Delaware 4-H has reached over 3900 youth with at least 6 hours of programming and another 1500 youth with a one lesson experience at the brush and touch events. Requests come weekly for continued programming to schools and after schools in Delaware. Delaware 4-H will be participating in the 4-H Food Smart Families program partially as a result of the success of the Up for the Challenge program to teach nutrition and fitness to the youth of Delaware and thus reducing childhood obesity.