

## Project Summary: "Cooking It"

Cooking It is an original musical play designed to facilitate healthy eating and address childhood obesity. The production utilizes adult and youth performers to provide nutritional education and healthy eating alternatives to elementary school children. The plot revolves around two primary puppet characters, Sprout, the Brussel Sprout and Brock Broccoli who don't understand why children don't like them. Why can't they be as popular as Refined Sugar and her grocery cart of sweets?

Cooking It, was conceptualized by Mary Best Bova, and Laura Pole based on both of their experiences in working with children and poor national health trends. In the last ten years alone, childhood obesity has increased by 300% and cancer, heart disease and type two diabetes – all traditionally associated with adults, are now appearing in children as young as twelve years of age. The nation's young are consuming a poor diet of processed foods, fast foods and sugar-packed sodas. Creating a theatre program that teaches and engages children in healthy eating habits is the goal of the interactive musical project, Cooking It!

### Anticipated audience for the project.

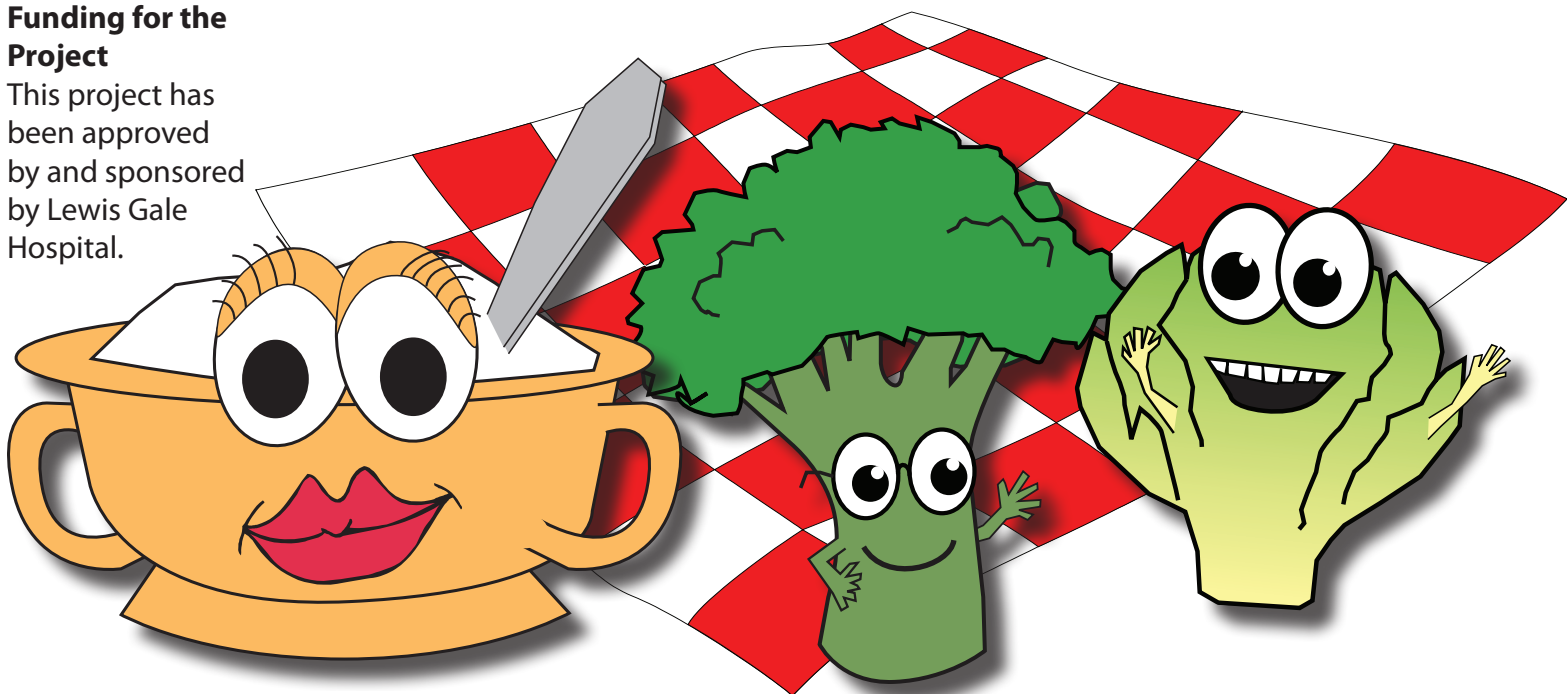
Targeted implementation would include elementary schools within Roanoke County during the first year of the project. Within a school a 5th grade health/physical education class or an art/music class will work with adult artists for one week in residence. Children will operate puppets, learn musical numbers and act out scenes that are not only fun but also educational. The targeted 5th graders will also learn cooking skills that find tasty alternatives to refined sugar and saturated fats through hands on activities lead by our nutritionist including creating health snacks and learning about healthy meal preparation and food choices. At the end of that week, the youth and adult artists will perform Cooking It for the entire elementary school. In addition with take home educational materials we seek to impact the families of those students reached to reinforce nutritional education and enact the entire family to make healthy food choices.

### Evaluation of the project.

Educational outcomes related to a gain in nutrition knowledge and healthy food choices will be key to our assessment of the success of the production to reach children within the schools. To be able to assess this impact, the teachers of the students who participated in the residency component and performed in the production would administer pre and post classroom evaluations. These evaluation measures would be designed in consultation with Laura Pole our nutritionist partner in the project, and several classroom teachers who would provide feedback on their ease of administration. In addition, we would ask teachers to provide feedback on what impact they have seen post the performance related to student comments and changes they may observe in student choices and behavior.

### Funding for the Project

This project has been approved by and sponsored by Lewis Gale Hospital.



# COOKING IT

The musical play, "COOKING IT" will be a week-long artist -in -residence program presented by Roanoke Children's Theatre. The actors from RCT will begin the rehearsal process with fourth grade students on a Monday and conclude with a performance by these fourth grade students and RCT actors for all the classes at the chosen school. The performance will be on Friday at time determined by the school Principal.

'COOKING IT" workshops will use the one hour each day allotted to the 'specials' instruction for preparation and rehearsal time. The actor/artists from Roanoke Children's Theatre will work closely in advance with the specials instructors so the art, music, P.E. and guidance components are integrated

## **Monday 10:00-11:00 am**

Introduction of the concept of play and healthy eating. This includes the reading of the script and introducing the songs. Music sheets will be given to each student and sing-a-long tapes.

## **Tuesday: 10:00-11:00 am**

Puppet work introduced: All students will learn how to use and "act" with the puppets. Staging of scenes that include groups of students will be completed. The 'COOKING IT" song and "CHEAP FILLS" dances will be learned.

## **Wednesday: 10:00-11:00 am**

the casting of students who will manipulate the puppets will be chosen. The making of on-site props such as signs, costume hats, etc.will be started A stumble-through of the play with music will conclude the last half hour of the workshop.

## **Thursday: 10:00-11:00 am**

The hour will be devoted to the rehearsal for the performance and discussion of the recipes introduced to the **student's through-out the week workshops.**

## **Friday: 10:00-11:00 am**

Final rehearsal before the actual performance later that day. If sponsorship allows: after the performance for the entire student body a table would be set up for tasting of the recipes introduced during the workshop week.

