



Mental Health Through Culinary Arts

Program Overview

The *Mental Health Through Culinary Arts* program is a 12-week curriculum designed to support youth ages 10–17 through an innovative blend of culinary arts, mindfulness, mental health education, and creative expression.

Launched in partnership with **Envision Youth Services, Inc., I'nJoy Catering, JR. TECH CHEF, and Raw Suga Shack Studios**, this program provides participants with hands-on culinary training while cultivating emotional resilience, self-expression, and cultural awareness. Youth will learn essential cooking techniques and kitchen safety, explore identity and family culture through food, and practice mindfulness tools to manage stress, emotions, and personal growth.

Each session integrates:

- **Culinary Training** – foundational cooking skills, nutrition, and safe food practices
- **Mindfulness Practice** – meditation, breathing, and grounding techniques
- **Creative Expression** – journaling, art, and storytelling connected to food and identity
- **Group Discussion** – safe space for reflection, emotional awareness, and peer support

By the end of the program, participants will earn their **California Food Handler Certification** and demonstrate their growth at a **Celebration Showcase Dinner**, where they prepare and serve a meal for family and community members. This capstone event highlights the confidence, teamwork, leadership, and wellness skills that youth have developed throughout the program.

Program Objectives

The program helps youth strengthen emotional literacy, self-awareness, mindfulness, and stress management while using food and creative arts as tools for healing and identity exploration. Participants also gain practical culinary skills, food safety certification, and opportunities to build teamwork, leadership, and peer support, culminating in a community showcase celebration.

