



MEET THE SUPERCHEFS BY EAGRANIE YUH

In the spring of 2009, Michelle Obama planted a vegetable garden on the south lawn of the White House. The following year, she launched Let's Move!, a program aimed at combating childhood obesity through healthy lifestyle choices. And around the same time, **Dr. Greg's SuperChefs Cookery for Kids** got started in Surrey, BC.

The core of the non-profit society is a one-day session where kids prepare a dish from start to finish and then enjoy the meal with their classmates. "For some of our kids, that is the only opportunity they have to sit down at a table for a meal," says Greg Chang.

Greg grew up cooking. "My grandparents and my mom used to teach cooking to neighbours in our kitchen," he says. So it's little surprise that one of the pillars of SuperChefs is to connect kids to traditional foods. For example, a group of Italian kids might learn how to make fresh pasta. Chinese kids might wrap wontons. "[At SuperChefs,] we feel that if people ate what they traditionally ate in the family home, they wouldn't be lured into fast food."

The other pillar of SuperChefs is to make cooking fun, and that's where Greg's lesser-known circus skills come in handy. He'd dabbled in theatre in high school, but it was Expo '86 that caught his attention, with its street performers from all over the world. Greg attended an antic workshop and made fast friends with the members of a travelling theatre company, where he met world championship jugglers.

"I've done a bit of everything: juggling, balance, trapeze, balloon twisting, that kind of stuff," he says. And it comes in handy. "Whatever we can use to catch the kids' attention, we'll do."

As for the Dr. Greg part of Dr. Greg's SuperChefs Cookery for Kids, it's bona fide. By day, Greg is a dentist in Surrey, and he sees a lot of kids in his chair. (Fun fact: he's also the team dentist for the BC Lions.) He saw an opportunity to connect oral health with overall health. "Dentistry is a healthcare profession that deals with prevention," he says, "and the only real way of treating childhood obesity is through prevention."

Since launching, SuperChefs has expanded to include live cooking demonstrations that offer program alumni the chance to show off their skills. "It's one thing to teach the kids cooking, but then what can they do with it? I wanted to find [a way] for them to show their proficiency," says Greg. The SuperChefs Showcase is now a regular fixture at **EAT! Vancouver** and the **Surrey Fusion Festival**. "The kids can be part of it and help inspire other kids as well."

He's also partnered with Basketball BC to offer a combined cooking and basketball camp: SuperChefs cooking classes in the morning, followed by basketball camp in the afternoon. "That's the key to battling obesity. Eating well and being active." It's a partnership that emerged because Greg's two sons are nationally certified basketball coaches—and funny enough, his daughter teaches trapeze classes in the Dominican Republic.

If it's family that started Greg on this path, it's family that keeps him there. "I couldn't have done this without family support. My wife does a lot of the photography, and [SuperChefs] is something we've been able to move forward with the help of my kids and their friends." **604-951-0530. superchefs.tv**