

# 2022-2023 Bright Spot Award Nomination Form

The Bright Spot Awards are an effort to recognize examples of meaningful Primary Prevention initiatives taking place across our state. Here are the steps to nominate your initiative:

- 1.) All nominations must be submitted by July 14, 2023. One nomination form must be completed per initiative nominated. Email completed nominations to Matt Coleman ([Matthew.Coleman@TN.gov](mailto:Matthew.Coleman@TN.gov))
- 2.) All nominations received are redacted so that the review committee will not know the exact location and persons involved with the initiative. The review committee is made up of individuals from each region of the state. They will review, score, and discuss each submission. An average of the final scores given by the review committee will be used to determine the award level earned.
- 3.) Award levels include Platinum, Gold, Silver, Bronze, and Honorable Mention.
- 4.) Awardees will be announced in the fall of 2023.
- 5.) Each nomination will be presented with a comprehensive feedback report from the committee, which will include strengths of the initiative and opportunities for improvement.

**Application:**

**County:** Knox

**Initiative Name:** Knox County Youth Health Board

**Primary Prevention Focus Area(s):**

Substance misuse; physical inactivity

**Primary Contact Name, Email, Phone:**

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# Bright Spot Award Questions

**Why is this initiative important to your community?** (150 words max; 10 points available)

The Knox County Youth Health Board is a collaborative effort between the Knox County Health Department (KCHD) and Coordinated School Health that serves as an opportunity for youth to gain skills and to affect the health and well-being of our community. This youth-driven effort provides opportunities to partner with health professionals from the Knox County Health Department and other community groups to explore and act on a variety of primary prevention health issues.

This initiative is important because youth will shape the future of our community, and engaging youth in public health fosters an interest and engagement that will hopefully lead to a strong public health workforce and healthy community in years to come. We know that the youth voice is a powerful voice, and we want to give the opportunity for youth to make a difference in the public health of our community.

**Is this initiative contributing to a policy, systems, and/or environmental change<sup>1</sup> in the community?** (300 words max; 75 points available)

Students have the unique opportunity to engage in a variety of systems and environmental changes in our community. For example, students assist with compliance checks of tobacco retailers, measure walking routes at local parks, volunteer at a community farm serving low-resource families, and more. Students also work to understand the value and impact of PSE changes by participating in monthly presentations from public health professionals working to implement these changes in our community.

**What are the SMART objective goals and major purpose(s) of this initiative? (SMART objectives are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time Bound. Example: By May 2023; all soft drink machines in Lauderdale County Schools will be turned off during the school day, per school board policy.)** (300 words max; 10 points available)

By August 31, 2023, recruit at least 2 students from at least one underrepresented school.

By April 28, 2024, all volunteer experiences and meetings will be connected to at least one of the ten essential services in public health.

**What is the annual budget and funding source for this initiative? If no funding is available, how have you implemented or sustained the initiative?** (150 words max; 5 points available)

Community Health contributes about \$1500 annually for meeting expenses. Other grants, such as Project Diabetes, TAPPP, and Tobacco Prevention and Control, along with Coordinated School Health contribute as funds are available

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<sup>1</sup> Policy, systems and environmental change is a way of modifying the environment to make healthy choices practical and available to all community members. By changing laws and shaping physical landscapes, a big impact can be made with little time and resources. By changing policies, systems and/or environments, communities can help tackle health issues like obesity, diabetes, cancer and other chronic diseases (<http://www.cookcountypublichealth.org/files/PPP/PSE%20Change.pdf>)

for supplies, food, student incentives, and student experiences.

**Have community partners helped with the initiative? What are the roles of these partners? (300 words max; 20 points available)**

The Knox County YHB has a strong partnership with Knox County Schools, particularly the division of Coordinated School Health. This partnership has enhanced recruitment efforts and buy-in across area high schools.

Partners who provide service learning and education to students include the Metro Drug Coalition, Office of Homelessness, United Way of Greater Knoxville, Beardsley Community Farm, Knox County Forensic Center, and other public health professionals.

**Describe your staff's involvement, including the interdisciplinary team approach taken with this initiative? Begin with the planning process; explain staff roles in planning and implementing the initiative. Discuss how you foster creative scheduling so that clinical staff can lend their expertise? (350 words max; 20 points available)**

YHB is one of the strongest examples of interdisciplinary teamwork in KCHD. The group is facilitated by 3 public health educators across three program areas (Adolescent Health, Tobacco Prevention and Control, and Physical Activity). This group holds regular facilitator meetings to plan group activities and meetings, recruitment strategies, and student experiences. The YHB steering committee includes the facilitators and their program managers and is facilitated by KCHD's Workforce Development Program Manager. The steering committee meets to discuss upcoming events, challenges, and group priorities. Each year when YHB recruitment takes place, applications and recruitment materials are shared at KCHD staff in-service and all staff are asked to distribute and assist with recruitment as they are able.

**In what way is this initiative especially innovative? How is this initiative different from other similar programs? Is there a specific idea tested with this approach? Is this work informed by relevant literature or research studies? (400 words max; 20 points available)**

This initiative constantly seeks to innovate by increasing utilization of technology, engaging new partners, and examining evidence for effective strategies to engage and lift youth voices. A unique aspect of YHB is that many ideas can be tested. Each facilitator has their own program and grant goals, and they work to engage students in meeting some of these objectives. For example, students are able to weigh in on outreach campaigns related to adolescent health, participate in built environment improvements, and more. Facilitators are trained on Positive Youth Development approaches and integrate those into their practice.

**Is this initiative considering or addressing an inequity in your community? What is that inequity and how are you addressing it? (350 words max; 20 points available)**

The group centers their work around the 10 essential services of public health of which equity should be at the center. The group facilitators work to provide a variety of speakers and experiences who can speak to various inequities in our community from food insecurity to homelessness. The service-learning volunteer projects the students complete are then tied into the most recent presentation topics and provide students with the opportunity to witness this work firsthand.

The group has also worked to increase a more diverse YHB by offering more strategic outreach to schools who historically have not been represented. They've also worked to increase accessibility of the group by making applications online that can be shared more broadly.

**How are you evaluating the effectiveness of the initiative? Is the initiative on track to achieve stated goals or has it achieved stated goals?** (350 words max; 20 points available)

Students receive an evaluation after each service-learning opportunity and at the end of each school year. This helps facilitators evaluate the impact of the programming and experiences for students. Other metrics of success included the number of schools represented in the application process, the number of applications received, and participation at meetings and events. These metrics are on a positive trajectory.

**What limitations or obstacles might be expected if others wished to replicate this initiative?** (300 words max; 50 points available)

This initiative relies on a variety of partners who are willing to provide service-learning opportunities, speak to students, and support the group in other ways. The YHB team has spent many years growing these partnerships and identifying which experiences are most valuable, engaging for students. Others wishing to replicate this may experience challenges in the beginning to develop these partnerships. Working alongside the school system, accommodating student schedules, and equally recruiting students from across the district are other potential challenges.

**Is this initiative sustainable without the resources of the local health department being involved?** (250 words max; 20 points available)

Ultimately, as the local public health agency, KCHD is best suited to facilitate this group. While this initiative relies largely on KCHD staff time to facilitate this group, work has been done to share the workload across program areas and to effectively engage community partners to increase sustainability. Since this group is facilitated by a variety of program areas, which may experience changes in grant priorities, staff turnover, and other disruptions, the group has worked to develop well documented policies and procedures. The group facilitators have developed organized recruitment plans and materials, service-learning partnerships, meeting agendas, and other organizational components that ensure sustainability and consistency throughout changes to staff, funding, and the partner landscape.