

# 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:**

**Warren and White County Health Department**

### **Initiative Name:**

**12 Steps to a New You!**

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

**Physical Activity and Nutrition**

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

**Kaitlin Parker**

**[Kaitlin.Parker@tn.gov](mailto:Kaitlin.Parker@tn.gov)**

**931-473-8468**

# Bright Spot Award Questions

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

In the Summer of 2022, staff wanted to create a program to help improve and change the overall health of Warren and White County Health Department patients and staff. We wanted to create a meaningful program to help improve physical activity, nutrition, mental health, and create healthier lifestyles. We wanted to focus on overall health rather than solely on numbers on a scale. Weight is often the primary focus when most people think of being healthy. Still, we wanted to educate our patients that although being a healthy weight is essential, there are also many other important factors. It was also important that we developed a lifestyle change, not just short-term. The program 12 Steps to a New You was born with this passion.

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

This program is helping to change the environments of our participants. It is expanding their horizons about where they shop for healthier foods and where they can get physical activity. Each month when a new challenge begins, we offer suggestions and tips on how to be successful with that individual challenge, along with giving them a gift incentive to aid them in reaching that goal. In addition, each month is added on top of the other, so the challenge you begin with continues throughout the program, and it builds up healthier habits as they go along. We also tried to consider the time of year when we were picking out healthy challenges to make the goal more attainable and not difficult to accomplish. For example, one of the summer months was aimed at increasing fruits because there is a wider variety during the summer months, we also encouraged them to shop locally at the farmer's market, and farm stands rather than just the grocery store. Another example was spending more time outdoors; this challenge began in May when the weather was more enticing, which helped them to reach their goal for the month rather than introducing it during winter months when it most likely would not be attempted. The hope was that if they began the specific challenge more conveniently, they would be more apt to stick with it during the more difficult times. It makes them more aware of their food/drink intake and overall lifestyle habits.

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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/PPW/PSE%20Change.pdf>)

**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 October 2023, participants will have developed twelve healthy habits to help improve physical activity and nutrition. Our purpose for the 12 Steps to a New You program is to improve the overall health and well-being of our patients and staff. 12 Steps to a New You is a yearlong program. The program is about commitment, accountability, lifestyle changes, encouragement, and relationships. Each month participants receive a new challenge to achieve. Each challenge builds upon one another. At the end of the twelve months, participants will have 12 new healthy habits. We started the program with a big kick-off event where participants weighed in and calculated their BMI. Each participant received a folder with monthly tabs to keep up with challenge information and tracking sheets to keep up with their progress on each challenge. Every month participants come in to weigh in at the health department, receive a new challenge, discuss their progress with previous challenges, and get an incentive to help them achieve the new challenge. They also receive all tracking sheets from previous months to continue reaching those goals. The staff calls each participant biweekly to check their progress and areas they may need help in. At the end of the 12 months, participants will be able to look back and see their progress through all the data we collect.

**Challenges:**

October: Drink at least 64 ounces of water

November: Walking 30 minutes a day

December: Eat three servings of vegetables a day

January: Keeping a food journal

February- Eating health portions

March- Eat less processed food

April- Reduce sugar

May- Spend more time outside

June- Eat lean protein

July- Eat two servings of fruit a day

August- Best times to eat

September- Get better sleep

**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)**

Each county budget/ PPI funds are used for this program to purchase monthly incentives and participant folders. Informational flyers/ trackers are free and created by staff.

**Monthly incentives:**

October- Water Bottle

November- Fit Bit

December- Cutting Board

January- Planner

February- My Plate

March- Portion containers

April- Lunch box/ thermos

May- Sunscreen

June- Deck of cards to measure meat size

July- Fruit Basket

August- Magnet with mealtimes

September- Sound machine

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

In White County, the local YMCA has let participants in the program come and use their facilities at no cost.

**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)**

The staff has been involved in every step of this program. We had many planning sessions to develop the 12 challenges and make informational flyers and healthy tracking sheets. Each month staff members get materials together for each challenge, help weigh in, calls biweekly to check in on participants to see how everything is going, and participate in the program. At each weigh-in, a staff member talks to each participant to see if they need anything and how each challenge is coming along. We offer advice and help in any area needed to make the program more successful.

**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)

12 Steps to A New You is a yearlong program. Most worksite wellness programs only last for 12 weeks. With this program being for a year, it requires more commitment and holds our participants accountable to improve their lifestyles. More data has been collected, more beneficial health information is being shared, and most importantly relationships have been formed. One aspect that we think makes explicitly this program different is that we divided the participants among the staff so that the participant would get comfortable speaking with the same person each time and develop a one-on-one relationship so they would know that the program was essential to us as well and that we wanted each individual to succeed. Each participant knows our staff now and feels comfortable sharing their journey to improve their health. While creating healthier habits was the main focus, we also put effort into building these relationships with each individual. Hence, they felt more comfortable sharing their successes and downfalls. The newly developed one-on-one relationships built a critical factor that makes this program stand out from similar programs. Another factor that makes this program different is that instead of focusing solely on weight loss, we intentionally stressed the importance of overall health and made it more than just about the numbers. This is often overlooked in other "healthy" programs and can sometimes decrease the success because the participant can get discouraged when they focus so intently on the weight part. Cheering the participant on and pointing out the positive changes they have made towards their overall health is essential so that they can realize even the most minor step in the right direction is something to celebrate.

**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)

In Warren County, physical inactivity is at 36%, and White County is at 34%, with Tennessee at 29%. 12 Steps to A New You is helping to improve this inequity by lowering the physical inactivity rate and increasing healthy habits. If the participant changes their lifestyle by increasing healthier habits, they are more likely to become physically active. If they feel better, they are more likely to get moving, which in turn helps them become healthier overall. Suppose we can help them change poor behaviors that make them more tired and feel less energetic by changing how they look at and treat their bodies. In that case, we can make changes that, when passed along, will decrease the physical inactivity numbers across the state.

**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)

We have an information folder that has each participant's individual information. Staff members keep track of weights and biweekly call information to ensure participants are on track with their goals. A note is added to each participant's file that describes what was discussed in the call and how they are doing with their challenges. If they are doing great and not having difficulty with the challenge, they are congratulated and encouraged to continue the great work. On the other hand, if they are struggling with a challenge, we talk it out and try to determine what barriers may be in the way and offer suggestions and tips to help them overcome them. We also look back at the folder to talk about it with them at the next contact time and be sure they have been able to resolve anything that may have become an issue along the way. This folder is kept locked up each day for participant privacy.

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

Lack of participation may be an obstacle others may face. Warren started the program with 30 participants and is now down to 11. White started with 22 participants and is now down to 11. We are working to improve participation in our 23/24 program by opening the program to the public and tweaking the timeframe. If we cut the time frame to six months rather than 12 months, we may have a higher participation rate with those who sign up. Although we want the goal to be long-term healthy changes, it can be overwhelming to think of trying to change so many things in years' time. If we cut it back to six months and focus on higher priority changes in a shorter time frame, we can keep more participants on board throughout the program. We have already begun discussing ideas to make this change with the next round of participants to increase the participation rate.

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

12 Steps to A New You can be sustainable with any agency that wants to recreate it under the correct parameters. Knowing and understanding the target group is essential, as some changes may need to be implemented to match a specific group better. You must be creative and willing to adjust as you find things that may not work for your intended group. It is also essential to consider the funding needed for it. It is not very costly, but a budget is needed to ensure each participant receives the appropriate incentive to help reach the challenge each month. Commitment is needed by the participant and the staff that will be implementing the program. However, it is very doable; you need passionate people to achieve it!