

TSET's Youth Action for Health Leadership Builds Partnerships with Oklahoma Schools and Organizations

Schools and community organizations have an opportunity to provide leadership and health policy experience for students

OKLAHOMA CITY (October 14, 2021) – Youth Action for Health Leadership (YAHL), a new statewide youth-led initiative, is partnering with schools and organizations to train and equip teens with leadership skills to address real health issues in their communities, like preventing tobacco and vape use, improving nutrition and increasing physical activity.

The initiative is funded by the Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust (TSET).

The YAHL Partner Program is currently accepting applications from high schools and organizations across the state. Partners can earn incentives for their organization while providing a unique opportunity for teens. As a YAHL partner, schools and organizations work directly with the YAHL staff to recruit and empower young leaders. Currently, there are more than 18 partner schools and community organizations throughout Oklahoma.

“I am so excited that our students have the opportunity to participate in the Youth Action for Health Leadership program,” said Carmen Harkins, a teacher and YAHL advisor at Wilburton High School. “Students need to feel that they are an important part of the community and that they are also in charge of their own health, I believe this program is going to help them see how important they are and that they can make a difference in not just their lives but others lives as well.”

Teens participating in YAHL gain life-long skills, community service hours and other incentives while working to better the health of Oklahomans.

YAHL staff visit each partner school or organization to provide a hands-on interactive training for teens which equips advisors to directly lead initiatives in their communities across Oklahoma. Teens can be involved on many levels—from leading events and collecting community surveys, to meeting with their principal, school board and other key decision makers to create and support healthier communities. YAHL provides in-depth training to youth, ongoing support for partners and all the materials needed for activities.

“The YAHL staff support is great. A lot of programs like this leave you to figure it out, but I can see how much support [they] give to the students and advisor in the program. I can't wait to get started,” said YAHL Advisor Christine White, a teacher at Hugo High School.

Potential partners, teens and educators can learn more about YAHL and apply to become a partner at [YAHLOK.org](https://yahlok.org).

YAHL is part of the TSET Healthy Youth Initiative.

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The **TSET Healthy Youth Initiative** is a statewide program focused on preventing and reducing tobacco use and obesity for Oklahomans ages 13-18. The initiative promotes healthy lifestyle choices for teens and gives parents resources to support their children in maintaining or developing healthy habits for a lifetime. Visit [TSET Healthy Youth Initiative](#) to learn more.

The Oklahoma Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust (TSET) serves as a partner and bridge builder for organizations shaping a healthier future for all Oklahomans. TSET provides leadership at the intersections of health by working with local coalitions and initiatives across the state, cultivating innovative and life-changing research, and working across public and private sectors to develop, support, implement and evaluate creative strategies to take advantage of emerging opportunities to improve the public's health. To learn more, visit [TSET.ok.gov](https://tset.ok.gov).

TSET – Better Lives Through Better Health.