



ANNUAL REPORT

BUILDING HEALTHY YOUTH
TO BUILD A HEALTHY TEXAS



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<https://healthytexas.tamu.edu/youth-ambassadors/>

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

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State Coordinator



Building Healthy Youth to Build a Healthy Texas



JULIE GARDNER, PHD
STATE COORDINATOR

"The foundation of success in life is good health: that is the substratum fortune; it is also the basis of happiness. A person cannot accumulate a fortune very well when he is sick."

--P. T. Barnum

Who would have thought that advice related to health would come from a famous circus founder! The truth is, P.T. Barnum was more than a circus showman; he was a politician and businessman who recognized that his success was based on his ability to take of the most important thing in his life....his health. As we reflect on Barnum's words, we must realize that those words still ring true today. Failure to take good care of one's self prevents them from taking the steps necessary to be successful and happy in their personal, professional, academic, and spiritual lives. Moreover, without good health, one is unable to function normally under daily circumstances which hinders not only physical health, but emotional health as well.

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension and Texas 4-H Youth Development values health. More importantly, improving the health of others is our key mission and goal. Although, a variety of methods are used to provide health education in our

agency, the Healthy Texas Youth Ambassador program has proven to be one of the most successful means to teach others, especially young people. Peer education has shown to be successful for many years; it is for this reason that we annually recruit and train responsible young people who have a passion and motivation to live a healthy lifestyle. More importantly, these young people have a passion to help others live a healthy life as well.

In 2018-2019, the Healthy Texas Youth Ambassador deployed 190 ambassadors throughout the state in an effort to decrease chronic disease, improve safety practices, and be the voice of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension. Throughout this report, the evidence is shown that these young people were beyond successful in their endeavors. The Healthy Texas Youth Ambassador program is setting an example for others to follow; an example that will be key to the health of future generations.

A Call to Action

Youth across the state were challenged to make a difference in their community...

For many, wealth means large houses, fast cars, and great clothes; however, true wealth is found in a healthy body, mind, and spirit!

Welcome to the Healthy Texas Youth Ambassador program. Not only does the program give you the power to change the lives of others but has the power to change your life as well. During the next year, you will learn more about what is affecting today's world in terms of health risks, chronic disease, and safety practices. Most important, you will have the opportunity to showcase what you have learned through educational programs which will help others improve their health and life. As a Healthy Texas Youth Ambassador, you will teach others, both young and old, how to decrease their risk of disease through healthy eating and increased physical activity. You will also learn about safety practice and how you can encourage others to practice safety in the home, the car, and in their community....in other words,

YOU will CHANGE lives!

I want to challenge you to live each day to the healthiest ability possible. Remember to always practice what you preach and be a role model for health!



About Our Program

Healthy Texas Youth Ambassadors are high school students who have a passion for health! Youth are trained to deliver health messages and education to peers, communities, and schools.

Our Mission

This program is designed for high school age youth who have a passion for health and wellness. Youth will be trained at the local & regional level to become youth health experts who can motivate others to make a change in their lifestyle so they can improve their health. More importantly, these ambassadors will assist local county extension agents with program efforts, project activities, and much more!



Our Vision

During the summer, ambassadors will attend one of the Healthy Texas Summits. These Summits will lay the foundation for ambassadors to implement health, wellness, nutrition, and safety programs. Once training is complete, youth ambassadors will provide 50 hours of service to their community. Hours can be earned through peer-to-peer education, school programs, community programs, and service learning opportunities.



TRAINED

to help improve the health of others

KNOWLEDGEABLE

in healthy lifestyles

CONFIDENT

in changing the health of others

Outreach

In 2018 we enrolled 190 Ambassadors in 61 Counties across the state.

They hit the ground running and worked hard all year to educate and motivate individuals in their community to make healthy lifestyle changes!

1,307

Programs Completed

Ambassadors provided educational programs related to nutrition, health, and safety throughout their communities. Programs are conducted at local schools, churches, community centers, libraries, and any location where education is requested. Ambassadors partner with their county extension agents and local agencies to impact the health of their neighbors!

9,054

Hours Served

Ambassadors must provide 50 hours in service to their communities. These hours are spent not only on program delivery, but research, professional development, and program planning. The hours provided by ambassadors allow county extension agents to extend their health outreach to all areas of the community.

104,769

Individuals Reached

Both young and old are reached through the HTYA program. Our ambassadors are trained to deliver the most up-to-date, research based information to people of all ages, stages, and walks of life. The program enables them to appreciate others and value differences among people within their counties.

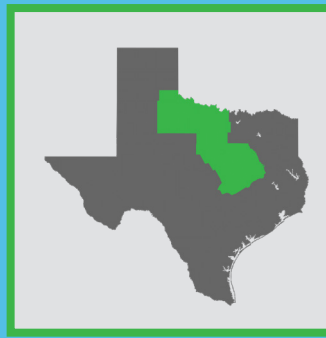
Service Area

Texas A&M AgriLife is a grassroots organization which uses a network of professionals to improve the lives of Texas. Serving all 254 counties, county educators seek out traditional and non-traditional means to educate youth and adults. These means often include the use of volunteers, both adult and youth. The Healthy Texas Youth Ambassador program is vital to our agency's mission of providing quality, relevant outreach and educational programs and services to the people of Texas.



North

Castro | Deaf Smith
Hemphill | Lamb | Potter
Randall | Sherman
Swisher



Central

Bell | Erath | Hill | Hood
Leon | McLennan | Milam
Wichita | Williamson



East

Anderson | Angelina | Cass
Cherokee | Dallas | Harrison
Red River | Rockwall
San Augustine | Shelby
Trinity | Wood



Most importantly, the Healthy Texas Youth Ambassador program takes a peer education approach to achieving this mission which increases the knowledge gain and intended behavior change of the youth served by this program. The Healthy Texas Youth Ambassador program has youth educators in 61 counties across the state.



West

Coleman | Concho | Crockett
Jones | Lampasas | Mason
McCulloch | Tom Green



South

Bandera | Bastrop | Bexar
Cameron | Comal | Gonzales
Hidalgo | Jim Wells | Kleberg
Starr | Travis | Webb
Wilson | Zapata



Southeast

Aransas | Brazoria | Brazos
Goliad | Lavaca | Matagorda
Nueces | Refugio
San Patricio



Regional Program Leaders

Regional Program Leaders provide support to county educators in that they guide and direct programming efforts that impact the health of our state. In addition, the Regional Program Leaders provide a regional connection between county and state coordination of the Healthy Texas Youth Ambassador program; a connection which inspires the youth to go above and beyond serving others!



Angela Burkham

NORTH
1 & 2



Dana Tarter

CENTRAL
3 & 8



Paula Butler

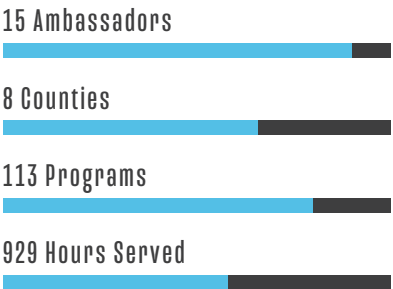
East
4 & 5

“Healthy Texas Youth Ambassadors in the North Region have been very engaged in the program through education, service and outreach. Ambassador’s have had great success in reaching both youth and adults with a healthy living and eating message. They are a valuable resource to their communities as they deliver a healthy preventative message and improving the quality of life for all ages. “

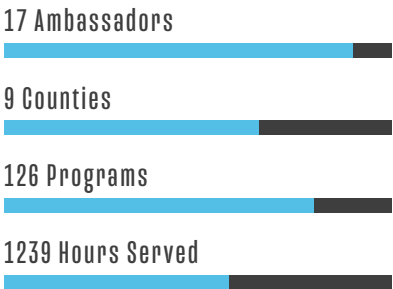
“The Healthy Texas Youth Ambassadors have been so helpful in extending our outreach in the Central Region. They have engaged with audiences of all ages. From Path to the Plate to 4-H foods and nutrition projects, their volunteer efforts continue to have a positive impact on the lives of others. This is an awesome opportunity for our youth to help in creating change for better health.”

“Healthy Texas Youth Ambassadors have participated in focused programming across the region. They have provided health and wellness educational exhibits along with distracted driving programs for both youth and adult audiences. These efforts have helped to increase awareness and knowledge for all citizens and will continue to increase Extension outreach and program impact at the county and regional level.”

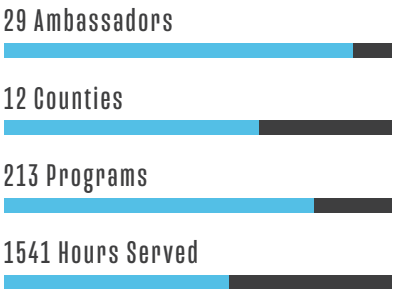
METRICS



METRICS



METRICS





Mandi Seaton

West
6 & 7



Jana Osbourn

South
10 & 12



Erika Bochat

Southeast
9 & 11

"It is exciting to see the impacts of the HTYA program over this first year. The Ambassadors have grown in their leadership skills and confidence in delivering the healthy lifestyle messages. The real impact is seeing their passion for the project grow. They truly see the benefits of the message and the need for reaching their peers. They have grasped the impact they can make in helping others and have an urgency to do it."

METRICS

11 Ambassadors

8 Counties

81 Programs

541 Hours Served

"Great things are happening in the South region and the Healthy Texas Youth Ambassadors have played a huge role in that. These youth have a passion for improving the health and wellness of their communities and they are actively engaged in educating their peers and others through hands-on programming. This program truly is building a healthier Texas by building healthy youth."

METRICS

56 Ambassadors

14 Counties

496 Programs

2992 Hours Served

"No doubt, the HTYA Program has been an overwhelming success for the counties here in the Southeast Region. Through continued training and support from their local county Extension offices and the state office, Ambassadors are enhancing their own learning about living a healthy, happy lifestyle and also enriching the lives of those around them as we all work together to Help Texans Better Their Lives"

METRICS

35 Ambassadors

9 Counties

278 Programs

1812 Hours Served

Ambassador Spotlight

Central Region



McLennan County

DRIVING SIMULATOR

In May, I brought the distracted driving simulator to my high school. We had a great turnout reaching about 170 seniors that day and letting over 50 use the simulator. A few of the students were extremely moved by the videos and real-life stories in the presentation.

"While the seniors had fun using a high-tech gaming system. Many commented afterwards that the simulation was an eye-opening experience about how easily something unexpected can happen".

Claire Crow, HTYA, McLennan County

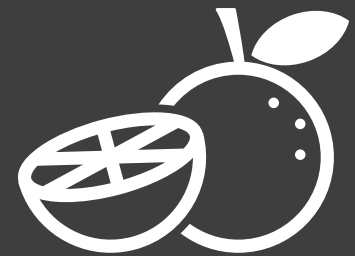


Bell County

Catarina Salazar-Canales and Margaret Wood helped with a Health and Wellness Day during the summer of 2018. They provided information on MyPlate and demonstrated a smoothie recipe. Together these two HTYA provided a session for the Coryell County 4-H Foods and Nutrition workshop. Catarina also assisted with a Bell County TEEA event and a Child Care Conference in Waco.

Hood County

The focus of the HTYA team this year was to provide education on healthy snacks. They led Healthy Snack Clubs at 5 Hood County Elementary Schools and they also made smoothies with Walk Across Texas participants. Throughout the year they participated in a variety of other activities and events provided by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension and reported approximately 270 hours of volunteer service.



Wichita County

In February, *Rachel Brockriede and Kelsey Thomas* manned the Path to the Plate table at the Wichita Falls Arts Alive! Home and Garden Show. Participants were able to spin the prize wheel with questions about Texas agriculture and the connection to health. Several Path to the Plate publications were available and photos were shared on FaceBook. Kelsey also assisted at the Montague County Dinner Tonight Healthy Cooking School.

Milam County

Abbigail Miller spoke at Milano Elementary about nutrition and presented a program called “Go, Slow, Whoa” to 187 students. The kids learned what foods are good to “go” and eat, what foods are good to eat but you need to “slow” down and not eat as much, and what foods you need to stop and “whoa” to eat because they are not healthy options. The kids had fun picking out foods they like to eat and find the category they belonged in. She also organized a water contest for the duration of Every Kid Healthy Week. For the water contest she collected data each day on the number of students in each grade level that brought a refillable water bottle filled with water to school and she found that the number increased over the week. “I achieved my goal of improving my community’s health. I learned my actions can be the catalyst for change and my words can impact my community’s point of view. That’s when you know you’re **“making the best better!”** *Abbigail Miller* – Milam County

Ambassador Spotlight

South Region



Barbie Wymore | Jim Wells County Agent

"I know there are no awards for HSTYA but I would like to send a special shout out to one of our HSTYA, Sabastian Chapa. He graduated last week, assisted with the 2019 Food Challenge Awards, and has given countless hours to help me and teach kids at our LGEG gardens at Premont Early Childhood Academy. Even though his time as an ambassador is over, he is still teaching during summer school in Premont 4 days a week for 3 weeks for 5 hours per day. At the end of the year, he had 76.5 hours but the impact that he made on the students was huge and they have learned so much from Sabe. I just wanted to share this with you because he is a super star."



Sebastian Chapa | Jim Wells County

"As a Healthy Texas Youth Ambassador, it has helped me teach younger kids how to eat and snack healthy, how to grow their own food, and how healthy snacks can be fun and easy to make. Being an Ambassador has also helped me choose a career in education."

TEACH



EDUCATE

LEAD



Ambassador Spotlight

West Region



Jacque Behrens | McCulloch County Agent

Healthy Texas Youth Ambassadors from McCulloch County, pause for a quick picture before the McCulloch County Chef Camp last August where they were getting ready to help participants “build” the ingredients for their own Bread in a Bag. They showed how fiber can be added by replacing some of the white flour with whole grain. That same day they also demonstrated how to make Apple Ring Pancakes and gave a talk about the basic functions of vitamins and minerals found in fruits and vegetables that are so important for so many specific ways to keep our bodies working at their best.



Taylor Babb | Crockett County

Taylor was active in many Healthy Texas Youth Ambassador programs held throughout the year. She is shown here sharing information about the importance of physical activity at the Ozona Health Fair. She also played a key role in conducting recipe demonstrations at the Texas Sheep and Goat Expo.

Kasi Andrews | Lampasas County

Kasi is shown here giving a presentation to Dinner Tonight Junior participants on meal preparation. Later she led the kids in a meal prep activity so they could practice what they had learned. Dinner Tonight Junior is part of an after school ACE program at Lometa School where all ages can attend.



Taylor Limbaugh | McCulloch County

Taylor was a leader at Chef Camp this year. She is shown here talking to participants about easy ways to add fruits and vegetables to their diet. She is guiding the volunteers in the picture as they make apple ring pancakes. Every kid at the workshop got to dip their apple ring (cored apple, cut into rings) in the pancake batter and lay it on the griddle, flip it and eat it! The volume of apple is about 50 % apple and 50% pancake. They were a huge hit!

Hannah Rose | Coleman County

Hannah was invited to attend Coleman Elementary School and teach Kindergarten classes about MyPlate and nutrition. She read "The Whole Grain Choo-Choo Train" and students learned the importance of eating whole grains in their diets. Class participants discussed what foods had whole grains. Students received a small portion cup containing whole grain Cheerios as a snack.



Future Goals

The Healthy Texas Youth Ambassador program will continue to serve the people of Texas. Specifically, program goals include:



01

Increase the number of Healthy Texas Youth Ambassadors throughout the state



02

Provide in-depth training in specific health issues affecting youth and adolescents



03

Empower youth ambassadors to take on leadership roles among health entities within our state



Thank You

Youth are our future. This statement is common, but what is not common is the approach that youth are our future health educators. They are the one's who will impact chronic disease and illness in the future; providing preventative education to decrease the risk of disease. The Healthy Texas Youth Ambassador program not only makes an impact on the health of their local communities and schools, but has the potential to impact the health of Texas. The youth are improving their knowledge and sharing that knowledge with others in an effort to decrease the burden of disease for future generations.