



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

National Institute  
of Food  
and Agriculture

4-H National  
Headquarters



# 4-H Healthy Living: ATOD\* Prevention

(\*Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs)

Mission of 4-H:

A world in which youth and adults learn, grow and work together as catalysts for positive change.

## The Challenge:

Early substance use in childhood/adolescence affects later drug use. Youth with more access and availability to alcohol and drugs are more likely to use them. Substance use is affected by social norms: 12-20-year-olds drink 11 percent of alcohol in the United States; 15.2 million people 12 years or older have taken a prescription pain killer, tranquilizer, stimulant, or sedative for non-medical purposes annually. Excessive alcohol is the third leading cause of preventable death in the United States and is a risk factor for many health and societal problems.

## The Solution:

Through 4-H Healthy Living strategies and programming, youth will...

- Improvement their understanding and communication of the consequences of substance use, risk-taking, personal responsibility, and media influences in targeting youth and young adults through advertising and promotion.
- Increasingly use refusal skills when confronted with ATOD use opportunities.
- Reduce their use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs among 10-17 year olds.
- Reduction the proportion of youth who drove drunk or rode with a drunk driver and reduce the proportion of youth who engaged in binge drinking.
- Increase the age and proportion of youth who remain alcohol, tobacco, and drug free.

## The Partnerships

- **National Institute on Drug Abuse/National Institute of Health (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services):** Their work to combat drug abuse and addiction includes strategic support and research and the rapid and effective dissemination and use of information to improve prevention and treatment. 4-H youth have contributed data to aid research and 4-H youth are trained as advocates for ATOD prevention.
- **Office of National Drug Control Policy (White House):** The President's public health approach includes drug prevention programs and support for expanding access to drug treatment for people with substance use disorders. 4-H is a partner in national awareness campaigns and demonstrates how to effectively use a *youth call to action* to lead community change on social issues.

## The Results:

- Supported by funding from National 4-H Council (private partner), [Health Rocks!](#) is curricula for a healthy living program that targets young people ages 8 to 14. Teen and adult facilitators share hands-on activities that educate youth on the consequences of tobacco, alcohol, and drug use. Results show: 96 percent of youth participants increased knowledge of the risks and consequences associated with tobacco usage; 93 percent of youth participants increased knowledge about other risky behaviors; 95 percent of youth participants learned personal, social and/or resistance skills; and 96 percent of youth participants said that they disapprove of tobacco products.

The 4-H Youth Development Program is the youth outreach program from the land-grant institutions' Cooperative Extension Services, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). 4-H serves as a model program for the practice of positive youth development. 4-H National Headquarters is housed within the Division of Youth and 4-H at USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture. Additional support for 4-H programming is provided through National 4-H Council. For more information email [4Hhq@nifa.usda.gov](mailto:4Hhq@nifa.usda.gov).