



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 access 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 the alcohol in the United States; 15.2 million people 12 years or older take a prescription pain killer or stimulant for non-medical purposes each year. Abuse of alcohol is the third leading cause of preventable death in the United States and is a risk factor for many health problems.

The Solution:

Through 4-H Healthy efforts, youth will...

- Improve their understanding of the effects of substance use, risk-taking, personal responsibility, and media influences in targeting youth and young adults through advertising and promotion.
- Teach and promote the use of refusal skills when challenged with ATOD use opportunities, even during peer pressure.
- Reduce the use of ATOD among 10-17 year olds.
- Reduce the times they drive drunk or ride with a drunk driver.
- Reduce the proportion of youth who engaged in regular drinking.
- Increase the proportion of youth who remain alcohol, tobacco, and drug free!

The Partnerships:

The following are examples of how partnerships add to the work of 4-H Healthy Living goals.

- **National Institute on Drug Abuse/National Institute of Health (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services):** Their work to fight drug abuse and addiction includes planned support, research, and the fast, successful spread and use of information to improve prevention and treatment. 4-H youth have contributed data to aid research and 4-H youth are trained to support and promote ATOD use prevention.
- **Office of National Drug Control Policy (White House):** The President's public health approach includes drug prevention to make drug treatment/rehab services more accessible for people that use/abuse drugs. 4-H is a partner in national awareness campaigns that demonstrate how to successfully use youth to call to action and lead communities to change social problems.

The Results:

- Supported by funding from National 4-H Council (private partner), [Health Rocks!](#) is curricula that targets young people ages 8 to 14. Taught by teens and adults, the program uses 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 refusal skills; and 96 percent of youth participants said that they do not approve or support the use 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. R2017