

IMPACT REPORT

2025



ACTION
FOR HEALTHY KIDS

ENTERING THE INFRASTRUCTURE ERA OF SCHOOL HEALTH

As I reflect on last year's impact, I am deeply proud of what our team and partners have accomplished.



Together, we reached more than 20 million children nationwide. We strengthened nutrition programs, expanded mental health supports, advanced risk prevention efforts, and equipped educators with the tools to help students thrive. The results detailed in this report represent the dedication of school leaders, educators, community partners, and an extraordinary team committed to whole child health.

But as I look across nearly two decades in this field, I believe we are entering a new chapter. The school health field has proven what works for kids. The question before us now is impact sustainability.

For years, we have supported powerful programs that demonstrate measurable impact. Those efforts matter deeply. But lasting progress — progress that survives funding cycles, leadership transitions, and shifting priorities — requires something more. It requires systems and infrastructure.

Over the past several years, Action for Healthy Kids has increasingly focused on strengthening district-level infrastructure: operating models, leadership capacity, and institutional supports that embed whole child health into the fabric of school systems. This work may be less visible than individual programs, but it is what ensures that progress endures.

Our focus on systems change is taking a major step forward this year with the launch of Action for Healthy Kids' District Impact Network — a new model designed to partner with districts at the systems level. The Network will support long-term implementation, peer learning, and leadership development to ensure that whole child health is not episodic, but embedded and sustainable.

This systems focus also extends beyond individual programs. We are building what we call, even more broadly, the Action for Healthy Kids Network — a growing platform of aligned organizations, strategic alliances, and shared expertise working together to strengthen the national infrastructure for whole child health. By integrating capabilities and aligning leadership across the field, this Network is designed to accelerate scale, reduce fragmentation, and reinforce the systems that support children nationwide.

You will see in this report both the programs that deliver results today and the infrastructure that will carry those results forward tomorrow.

Our vision is clear: to move from isolated impact to enduring systems — from activity to permanence.

Thank you for standing with us as we—together with our partners—build what lasts.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rob Bisceglie". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Rob Bisceglie
CEO, Action for Healthy Kids

ABOUT ACTION FOR HEALTHY KIDS

Action for Healthy Kids is a national nonprofit that partners with school districts, families, and communities to create healthier learning environments where every child can thrive. Our evidence-based programs support nutrition, physical activity, mental health, and risk behavior prevention. To help schools put these practices into action, Action for Healthy Kids offers professional development, technical assistance, and communities of practice that build local capacity and drive lasting change.

*Kids need health.
Health needs action.
Action needs you!*

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THE CHALLENGE WE FACE

Students can't succeed at school unless they are healthy first.

Students in America face an education crisis driven by a preventable health crisis.

Chronic Absenteeism

Nearly one in four students (about 14.7 million) miss 10% or more of the school year, a rate that has doubled since the pandemic.

Declining Outcomes in Core Skills

National test scores show continued weaknesses in core skills. In 2024 NAEP results, only about 31% of fourth graders reached proficient reading levels, and recent assessments show high school reading and math scores at historically low levels, signaling persistent declines in core academic achievement.

Limited Access to Healthy Foods

Kids who eat breakfast every day are more likely to have higher test scores and fewer absences, but 1 in 5 kids are facing food insecurity.

Lack of Physical Activity

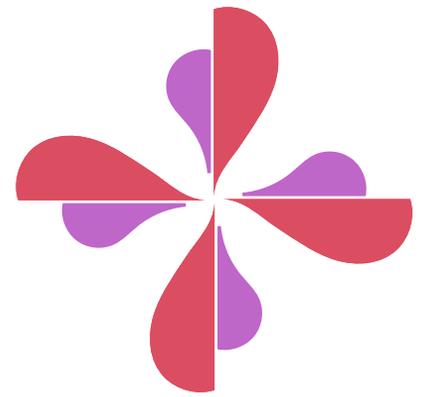
Students who get 60 minutes of physical activity each day achieve higher grades, yet 75% of kids do not achieve that goal.

Unstable Environments and Emotional Trauma

Anxiety, depression and mental health are top health-related drivers of absenteeism — and nearly 20% of young people ages 3–17 have a mental, emotional, developmental, or behavioral disorder.

These challenges affect not only individual students but entire school communities — and school leaders cannot address them in isolation.

At Action for Healthy Kids (AFHK), we promote health and wellness in schools by empowering districts to create healthier learning environments where every child can thrive. Through evidence-based programs, resources, and partnerships, we help schools and districts advance policies and practices that promote student health and well-being.



OUR MISSION IS TO FOSTER LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS THAT SUPPORT OPTIMAL CHILD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING, BECAUSE WE BELIEVE THAT HEALTHY CHILDREN MAKE A BETTER WORLD.



OUR PHILOSOPHY

Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child

To foster healthy children, we must create healthy schools and healthy communities. Addressing one without the other will not create lasting change.

WHOLE SCHOOLS

District and school staff lead schools to become comprehensive health hubs.

WHOLE COMMUNITIES

Parents and caregivers increase knowledge about child health and well-being. Family-school partnerships increase supportive collaboration.

WHOLE CHILDREN

Children increase participation in nutrition, physical activity, and social-emotional health programming and display improved knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors.

We believe that lasting whole child health requires more than strong programs. It requires district-level systems, leadership capacity, and institutional infrastructure that embed health into the fabric of how schools operate.



TODAY, ACTION FOR HEALTHY KIDS PROGRAMMING REACHES MORE THAN 20 MILLION CHILDREN NATIONWIDE — AND TOGETHER, WE ARE EXPANDING WHAT SCHOOL HEALTH CAN LOOK LIKE.

OUR FIVE PROGRAMMATIC PILLARS

Our model offers district-level infrastructure supports to improve policy, systems, and environments that foster health and well-being across educational settings. With our five program-specific pillars, we provide the tools, training, and resources necessary to ensure the well-being of the whole child.



Nutrition

We help schools expand access to healthy meals and nutrition education, ensuring students have the fuel they need to learn and grow.



Physical Activity

We support schools in creating active learning environments by enhancing physical education, recess, and opportunities for movement throughout the school day.



Mental Health & Wellness

We provide schools with resources, training, and strategies to create safe, supportive environments that foster resilience, emotional well-being, and positive relationships.



Risk Behavior Prevention

We help schools implement education and policy solutions to prevent tobacco and substance use and support students in making healthy choices.



Skills-Based Health Education

We equip educators with training and tools to deliver practical, skills-based health education that prepares students to make informed decisions about their well-being.



OUR WORK IN ACTION

How the AFHK model
comes to life for kids.

BUILDING DISTRICT INFRASTRUCTURE

Strong district infrastructure is essential to sustaining whole-child wellness and improving student outcomes. Action for Healthy Kids partners with districts to provide targeted training and technical assistance that strengthens local capacity, aligns systems, and helps teams move from isolated programs to coordinated, sustainable practices. By equipping district leaders with practical tools, coaching, and evidence-based strategies, AFHK helps build stronger school systems that create healthier learning environments and support long-term student success.

National School District Wellness Coalition

The National School District Wellness Coalition (NSDWC) brings district leaders together to advance whole child health by strengthening school wellness policies, programs, and systems. Through monthly virtual meetings, peer-to-peer learning, district-led presentations, external speakers, and shared problem-solving, members learn from one another while building sustainable wellness infrastructure in their own communities.

Coalition members represent district leaders committed to creating school environments where students have nutritious foods, opportunities for physical activity, and supportive spaces for social and emotional well-being. The NSDWC provides the structure, professional learning, and community that make this work possible — translating the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child (WSCC) model into action at scale across the country.

Program Participation

- 85+ districts represented
- 250+ individual district leaders engaged
- Monthly virtual meetings
- Annual in-person Convening (El Paso, TX – November 2024): Topics from 2024–2025 Convening included chronic absenteeism, nutrition challenges, and WSCC model components.



PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

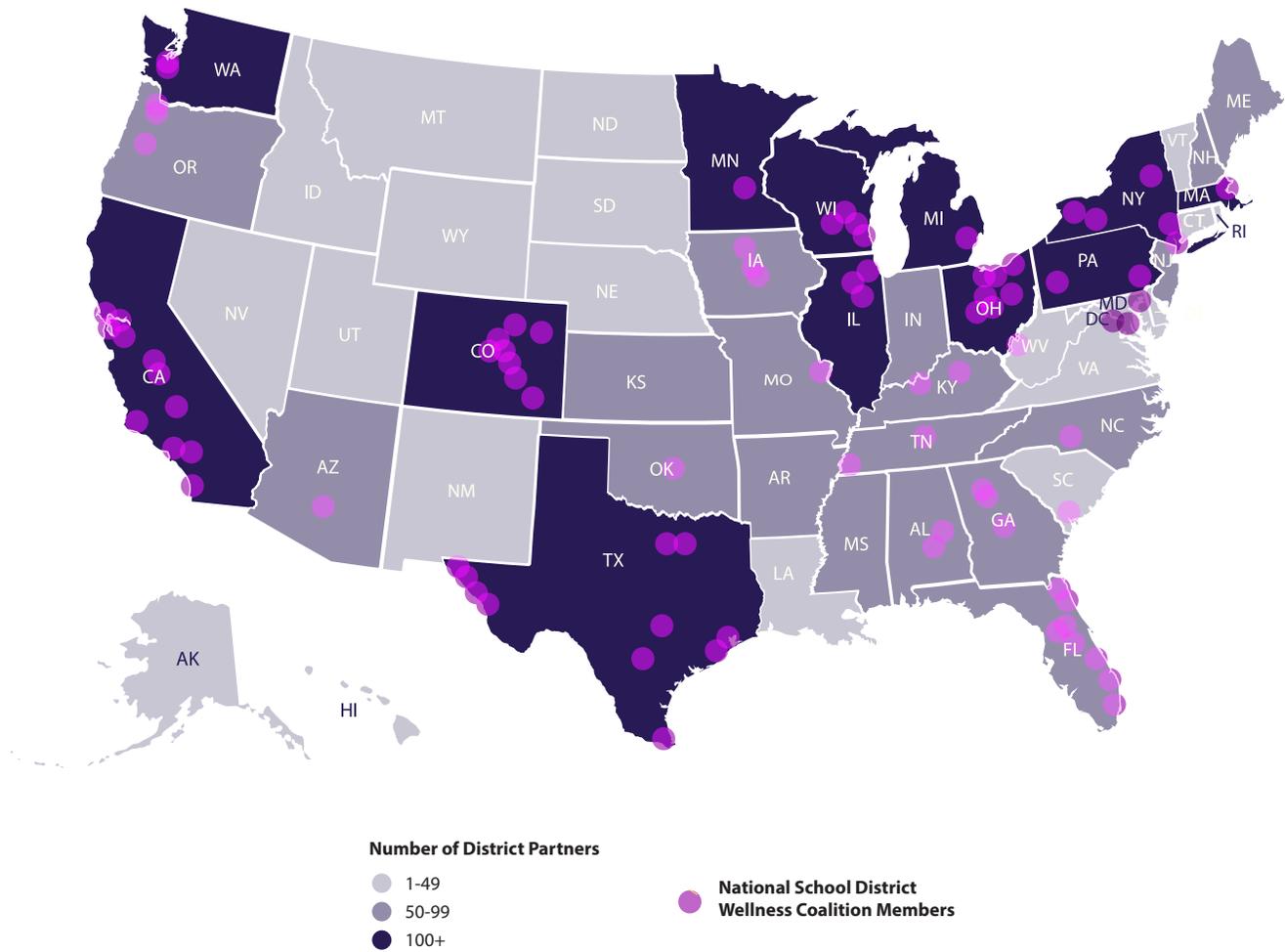
Peer Learning Exchange

District leaders regularly present their own strategies, share challenges and successes, exchange resources, compare approaches to policy implementation, and learn from one another in real time. This year's special Every Kid Healthy Week webinar — featuring a Superintendent Panel with over 700 registrants — exemplified the collaborative energy and demand for learning directly from other districts doing the work.

NATIONAL REACH

10,000+ schools represented
5.3+ million students reached

AFHK Nationwide District Partners



National School District Wellness Coalition Convening

School-Based Interventions

A five-year initiative to advance student health and improve academic outcomes and overall well-being of school-aged children and adolescents, these CDC funded school-based interventions allowed AFHK to partner with state education and health agencies, school districts and school communities to implement the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child (WSCC) model and strengthen coordinated, sustainable school health systems. During FY2025, AFHK advanced implementation in Alaska, Colorado, New Mexico and Texas. As a result, participating schools are better positioned to expand physical activity and nutrition supports, improve chronic disease management, strengthen social and emotional well-being and reduce health disparities through sustainable, system-level change.

STRENGTHENING SCHOOL HEALTH SYSTEMS THROUGH EVIDENCE-BASED PROFESSIONAL LEARNING, COLLABORATION, AND STATEWIDE INFRASTRUCTURE

Program Participation — Fiscal Year 2025

Geographic Reach: Texas, Alaska, Colorado, New Mexico

- Over 800 participants reached through statewide education
- 7 interactive online learning courses
- 9 evidence-aligned fact sheets
- 9 schools and 1 district-level advisory committee engaged



Through the CDC 2302 Cooperative Agreement, AFHK provided support to Alaska districts to strengthen and update local school wellness policies and move policy into practice. Districts used the School Health Index (SHI) data to identify priority areas and develop targeted action plans.

In rural communities, Comprehensive School Physical Activity Program trainings equipped teachers with practical strategies to incorporate physical activity throughout the school day, including classroom movement, active transitions, and low-resource approaches that fit remote settings. Culturally responsive fact sheets were also developed for Alaska, incorporating state-specific data and context to ensure resources reflected local communities and realities.

Together, this work strengthened wellness team capacity, improved data-driven planning, and expanded daily physical activity opportunities for students across Alaska.



NUTRITION

When kids are well-nourished, they learn better and feel better. Our nutrition work helps districts strengthen school meal programs and makes healthy eating habits a priority across classrooms, cafeterias, and communities.



Healthy Meals Incentives Initiative

Through a three-year, \$50M cooperative agreement with the USDA Food and Nutrition Service, AFHK led the Healthy Meals Incentives Initiative (HMI) to support, recognize, and elevate School Food Authorities (SFAs) that are improving the quality of school meals, engaging students and families, and modernizing operations.

Through the initiative, AFHK managed 264 subgrants totaling nearly \$30M to small and rural school districts across more than 40 states, administered a Recognition Awards program that recognized X high-performing districts, , and provided individualized training and technical assistance to help SFAs strengthen meal programs and promote innovative, sustainable change.

Virtual Summit

The Healthy Meals Incentives Virtual Summit, held November 5–6, 2025, brought School Food Authorities, school nutrition partners, industry leaders, and community organizations together for two days of learning and celebration. The event created a national space for connection, peer collaboration, and continued momentum to improve the quality of school meals.



HEAR DIRECTLY FROM HMI GRANTEES AND AWARDEES IN OUR CAFETERIA CHRONICLES SERIES ON YOUTUBE.



HMI ACTIVITIES	VALUE
Small and/or Rural School Food Authority Grantees	264
Recognition Awards Distributed	983
Funding Awarded	\$25.9M
Roundtable Stakeholders Impacted	597
States Reached Through Awards	50 + 1 territory
Healthy Meals Incentives Virtual Summit Registrations	760
HMI Virtual Summit Community Board Messages	1,564
HMI YouTube Video Views	286,666



Healthy Meals Incentives School Food System Transformation Challenge

AFHK supports one of USDA’s School Food Systems Transformation Grant cooperators, Michigan School Food System Innovation Hub, by delivering assessments, responsive training, and tailored technical assistance that strengthens school meal programs.

Program Impact

Tri-Annual Training & Networking Sessions

- 122 attendees

Individualized Technical Assistance

- 279 hours of 1:1 support provided in 2025

Stakeholders Engaged

- 16 funded grantee projects
- 8 project partner organizations
- 36 individuals engaged through trainings, focus groups, and technical assistance

A Community of Practice in Action

AFHK transformed the voices and experiences of school food leaders into a strategic blueprint for change. AFHK conducted a comprehensive mixed-method needs assessment reaching 37 school food professionals, farmers, producers, distributors, and community organizations across the region. Through interviews, focus groups, surveys, and research, the team identified 21 priority learning needs and 92 innovative ideas.

The resulting three interactive learning sessions—Engaging Students and Families, Value Chain Coordination, and Celebrating Innovation—helped grantees apply new strategies, learn from one another, and build confidence in navigating procurement and implementation challenges.

Through this partnership, AFHK and the Innovation Hub are strengthening a growing community of practice, one where school food leaders collaborate across districts and across state lines, experimenting with solutions, sharing wins, and advancing a shared vision for school meals that are more local, more nourishing, and more loved by students.



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Nutrition Impact Grants through Corporate Partnerships

District Impact Grants, supported by partners such as Cargill and Cargill Dairy, allowed districts to implement activities that made healthy eating visible and interactive — from salad bars and taste tests to healthy cooking classes, school gardens integrated into STEM, and campuswide “Rethink Your Drink” events.

Cargill Dairy funding helped districts upgrade equipment to increase access to dairy products and other nutritious foods. These investments encouraged healthier habits schoolwide and reinforced nutrition as a shared value among students, families, and staff.

Program Participation	Total Participation	Geographic Reach
<p>164 nutrition-focused activities and events across 10 districts</p>	<p>17,999 total attendees 15,656 students 1,642 parents/caregivers 701 district + school staff</p>	<p>CA, CO, MI, NY, TX (10 districts)</p>



SPOTLIGHT STORY

Madera USD

Madera USD surpassed its goals by offering nutrition education across multiple school and community touchpoints — including taste-testing events at Open Houses and Carnivals, STEM-integrated school gardens, infused-water and produce lessons in P.E., and bilingual berry-tasting activities in high school P.E. and Child Nutrition. Every Kid Healthy Week was celebrated across more than five campuses, reinforcing schoolwide wellness.



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Kellanova Family Meal Initiative

Action for Healthy Kids partnered with Kellanova to increase school meal participation by helping schools build trust, excitement, and community around school nutrition programs.

This partnership centered on two complementary strategies: the development of a **Family Meal Toolkit** to support schools nationwide, and implementation of a Family Meals mini-grant awarded to one district for planning and logistical support to host a featured family event.

The Family Meal Toolkit provides schools with practical guidance to plan and host engaging events that showcase the quality and taste of school meals while strengthening family engagement.

Together, this programming created both scalable infrastructure and on-the-ground impact to support increased participation in school meals.

Family Meal Toolkit Developed and Promoted Nationally

Toolkit components included:

- Event planning templates and logistics guidance
- Taste test ideas with embedded nutrition education
- Family and community engagement strategies
- Social media and promotional materials
- Post-event evaluation tools

FEATURED FAMILY MEAL EVENT IMPLEMENTED WITH DIRECT AFHK TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- Nearly 400 attendees
- Student-led recipe competition and taste testing
- Family engagement activities and live student performances



Watch Highlights from [Family Meal Night at Carrollton Exempted Village School District](#) on YouTube.



Building Trust Starts with a Taste

Carrollton Exempted Village School District in Ohio hosted “A Taste of Carrollton,” using the Family Meal Toolkit and receiving direct planning and logistical support from AFHK.

Students developed new recipes through a school-wide cooking competition, with finalists serving samples at the Family Meal Event. Families participated in interactive nutrition stations, taste tests of menu favorites, and student-led activities designed to highlight the quality of school meals.

I hope what you see here is actually a blueprint for what you can do at your school... You want to showcase the great food that you serve in your cafeteria.”

— Barbara Burns, School Food and Nutrition Director

Nearly 400 community members attended, including representatives from the Ohio Department of Education, Kellanova, and Action for Healthy Kids.

By pairing practical tools with hands-on activation, the initiative strengthened trust in school meals and created a replicable model for increasing participation nationwide.

RISK BEHAVIOR PREVENTION

Preventing risky behaviors starts with giving kids the tools, knowledge, and support to make healthy choices — not with punishment. Our prevention work equips schools with education, policies, and alternative to suspension strategies that reduce tobacco and substance use and help students feel safe and supported.



STEPP

The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment State Tobacco Education and Prevention Partnership (STEPP) engages youth, schools, and community partners in statewide efforts to ensure all young people in Colorado have access to healthy, tobacco- and nicotine-free lives. As a STEPP partner, AFHK helps prevent youth initiation and reduce use through evidence-based, youth-centered strategies that build awareness of health risks while expanding access to prevention and cessation resources. These efforts also focus on reducing disparities by strengthening school and community systems of support — from expanding Tobacco-Free Schools policies to introducing restorative alternatives to punitive discipline.



Program Highlights and Participation

- Geographic reach increased to 50 of Colorado’s 64 counties through STEPP implementation support, Second Chance program integration, and expanded professional learning opportunities.
- Technical Assistance: 119.25 hours logged across 116 TA sessions, reaching 178 individuals in 49 counties.
- Learning Community Calls: Reaching 90+ grantees statewide.
- Trainings: Attended by 100+ grantees and school staff.
- Lunch & Learns: 2 sessions reaching 59 individuals.
- Monthly Tobacco-Free Schools Newsletter distributed to 168 subscribers.



95% OF TRAINING PARTICIPANTS REPORTED THAT THEY WERE LIKELY OR VERY LIKELY TO IMPLEMENT WHAT THEY LEARNED IN THEIR WORK



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Second Chance

Second Chance is a free, web-based, interactive education program for middle and high school students designed to replace punitive consequences — particularly suspension — for tobacco and vaping policy violations.

Schools across Colorado increasingly use Second Chance as part of a comprehensive strategy that includes tobacco prevention education, staff training, and supportive student conversations.

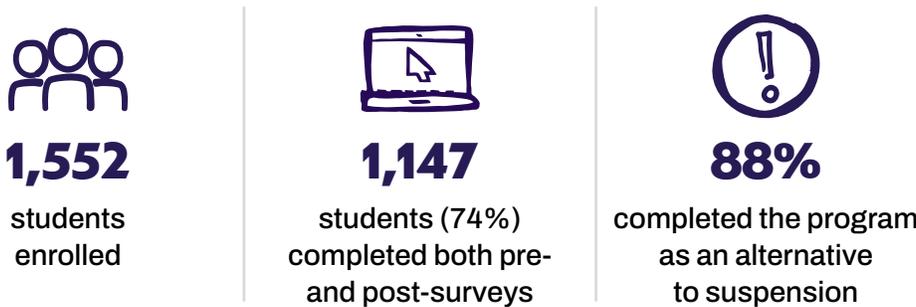
Leading by Example — Roaring Fork Schools

Roaring Fork Schools adopted Second Chance districtwide across all middle and high schools after learning about it from their local STEPP partner. Deans of Culture, administrators, and leaders within the local school district now implement Second Chance as part of their restorative disciplinary process, with onboarding support and ongoing technical assistance provided by Action for Healthy Kids.



A RESTORATIVE APPROACH TO TOBACCO AND VAPING VIOLATIONS THAT KEEPS STUDENTS IN SCHOOL AND BUILDS SKILLS FOR LIFELONG WELL-BEING.

Program Participation 2024–2025



Program implemented across:
128 schools in
58 districts, representing
35 Colorado counties


73%
of violations involved vape products


8
new administrators completed onboarding training in Q4



PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

Alternative-to-Suspension (ATS) in Action

A defining aspect of Second Chance is its role as a restorative alternative to suspension that prioritizes learning instead of punishment. By keeping students engaged in school rather than excluding them from class time, ATS reduces the likelihood of repeated violations, protects instructional time, strengthens relationships with school staff, and reinforces that adults believe in students' potential to make healthier choices.



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MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Every child deserves to feel safe, supported, and understood at school. AFHK mental health and wellness initiatives help districts build environments where students develop resilience, strong relationships, and emotional well-being.



TrustEd

Within the 2024–2025 school year, Action for Healthy Kids introduced TrustEd, a new program designed to help adults form strong, trusted relationships with young people ages 11–24. TrustEd supports educators, youth-serving professionals, and parents and caregivers with practical strategies that prevent vaping and promote healthy coping skills. The program teaches adults how to communicate with young people in ways that feel safe, respectful, and supportive — so youth are more likely to open up about stress, pressure, and mental health.

Laying the Groundwork With Youth at the Center

The project focused on building the program with direct input from young people. Youth consultants shaped every major component — including the needs assessment, the training outlines, focus group discussions, and scripts for instructional videos. Their voices ensured that TrustEd reflects the lived experiences, language, and relationship dynamics that matter most to today’s young people.

TrustEd

An ACTION FOR HEALTHY KIDS Program 

PRIMARY AUDIENCE

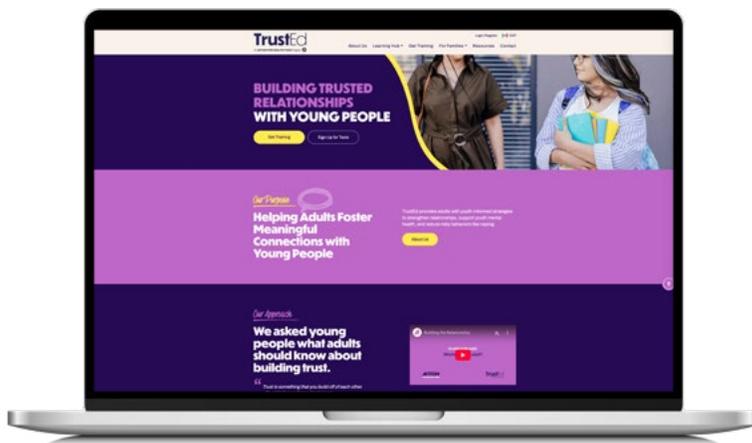
Adults who support youth ages 11–24

GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS

Colorado

PUBLIC RELEASE

Launched in 2025–2026 school year



trustededucation.org

A trusted adult will take their time to talk to you — to understand your interests, to understand you as a person.

— Focus group participant



Kaiser Permanente Staff Wellness

In May 2024, Kaiser Permanente collaborated with Action for Healthy Kids on a wellness room project, initiated through partnership with RMC Health, that explores how schools can build intentional, supportive spaces that protect and promote staff well-being. Through a multi-phased pilot project, participating sites received training and technical assistance to learn what contributes to successful, sustainable wellness spaces — not just physically, but as part of workplace culture. The project centers the belief that when adults in schools feel cared for, supported, and valued, their capacity to support students increases in lasting and meaningful ways.



CREATING SCHOOL SPACES THAT SUPPORT EDUCATOR WELL-BEING AND A POSITIVE WORKPLACE CLIMATE.

Pilot Participation: School Year 2024–2025

- 6 intervention sites
- Geographic reach: California and Colorado

Findings

- Staff who used the rooms at intervention sites experienced a more substantial reduction in stress.
- Intervention sites saw improvement in staff perceptions of accessible wellness spaces, increasing from 54% reporting spaces were “mostly” or “partially” in place in the pre-survey to 80% in the post-survey.
- Ninety-eight percent (98%) of staff found that the rejuvenation room contributed to school culture in the post-survey.
- 86% of staff who used the rooms self-reported a personal reduction in stress.



The Kaiser Staff Wellness pilot is helping schools learn not just how to create wellness spaces but how to sustain them in ways that strengthen staff morale, belonging, and organizational well-being. Early findings indicate that:

- Leadership support and clear expectations increase staff use of the space
- Dedicated time — not just a dedicated room — reduces stress and stigma around self-care
- Staff voice is essential in shaping the purpose and function of the space
- Implementation support increases consistency, sustainability, and positive workplace culture

These insights will inform ongoing analysis as the pilot evolves.



Metro Atlanta Youth Mental Health Project

From January–June 2025, Action for Healthy Kids launched the Metro Atlanta Youth Mental Health Project, an unprecedented effort to strengthen district-led mental health initiatives across the Atlanta metro region. Through support from the Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation/ Atlanta Falcons Youth Fund, AFHK engaged school district leaders to prepare for the implementation of youth mental health programming aligned to each district’s needs, priorities, and existing assets.

Program Model

- Tiered support for up to three school districts implementing youth mental health initiatives
- Joint assessment and action planning to ensure district-specific alignment
- Grant funding to meet individualized district needs and priorities
- Engagement in a national community of practice via the National School District Wellness Coalition

Potential funded strategies and initiatives include mental health literacy, trauma-informed practices, mindfulness and self-regulation spaces, SEL curriculum, youth voice and leadership, family engagement, healthy technology use, and evidence-based mental health programming.

Laying the Foundation for Impact

A foundational achievement of the first phase was AFHK’s partnership with the Director of Whole Child Supports at the Metro Atlanta Regional Educational Service Agency (RESA), which oversees all districts in the metro area. Working directly with Metro RESA accelerated district recruitment, strengthened local trust, and ensured district leaders received clear and equitable opportunities to participate in the project.

This groundwork positions AFHK to support meaningful student-centered mental health initiatives as districts move into the implementation phase in FY26 and beyond.



FUNDED BY THE ARTHUR M. BLANK FAMILY FOUNDATION / ATLANTA FALCONS YOUTH FUND

This project involves a community partner that is using gardening as a tool for building student resilience, social skills, and self-regulation.



Trauma-Informed Nutrition Pilot

In Fiscal Year 2025, Action for Healthy Kids launched the Trauma-Informed Nutrition Pilot in collaboration with district nutrition leaders across Michigan. This initiative explored how school nutrition programs can play a meaningful role in supporting student mental health and well-being — particularly for students impacted by trauma and toxic stress.

An ad-hoc advisory group of nutrition services directors co-designed the content and identified a need for professional learning that would help nutrition teams better understand how trauma can influence eating behaviors, food preferences, and mealtime engagement. The resulting training equipped school nutrition staff with foundational knowledge on the connection between trauma and nutrition, as well as strategies to create mealtime environments that foster safety, trust, and belonging for all students.

Program Impact

- Developed and delivered the first-ever Trauma-Informed Nutrition training for district nutrition professionals in Michigan.
- Increased understanding of how school nutrition programs can serve as protective factors for student mental health and emotional well-being.
- Demonstrated the power of collaboration between AFHK’s Mental Health & Wellness and Nutrition program pillars — establishing a model for future cross-pillar initiatives.



SUCCESS HIGHLIGHT

During the pilot session delivered to Muskegon ISD staff in June 2025, 100% of participants reported that they are likely to implement something they learned — underscoring that the training is both relevant and actionable for district teams seeking to create more supportive, trauma-informed nutrition environments.



SKILLS-BASED HEALTH EDUCATION

In 2025, Action for Healthy Kids strengthened district capacity to deliver high-quality Skills-Based Health Education (SBHE) — a proven approach that supports students in maintaining healthy behaviors, changing unhealthy behaviors, and delaying the onset of risky behaviors.

Trainings focused on explicit instruction, guided practice, and performance-based assessment — ensuring educators could confidently introduce, reinforce, and measure mastery of health skills in real classroom settings.



Building Capacity for Real Classroom Practice

A central focus of this year’s Skills-Based Health Education (SBHE) initiative was ensuring that educators were prepared to use the skills acquired during training and immediately put them into practice. AFHK hosted two training series for teachers in collaboration with New Mexico Public Education Department. The first was a two-part Introduction to Skills Based Health Education. The second was a 6-part series called “Practice, Practice, Practice.” We also hosted three trainings for teachers at Prince George’s County Public Schools (in Maryland). Over 100 attendees participated in the training sessions. Participants shared that opportunities to see skills modeled, practice instructional strategies with peers, and receive real-time feedback increased their confidence to teach SBHE with impact.

WHY IT MATTERS

When educators gain the confidence and skills to deliver SBHE effectively, school systems gain sustainable capacity to support students’ physical, mental, and emotional well-being through evidence-based health instruction.

I liked the use of breakout rooms — enough for us to interact without being overwhelming. It was helpful to go over the standards while also learning how to apply them in the classroom.



RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

Turning evidence into action to improve child health at scale.

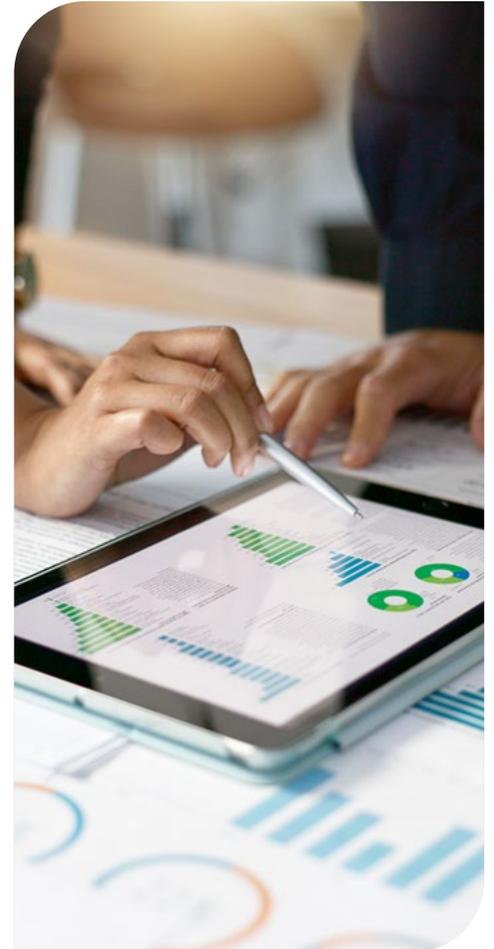
Research and Evaluation (R&E) is a core driver of AFHK’s mission — transforming data into insights that strengthen programs, guide strategy, and position school districts as catalysts for whole child health. Grounded in a mixed-methods approach that blends quantitative indicators with stakeholder voice, R&E delivers services and tools – from program evaluation and data analysis to tailored training and practical resources – that partners use to improve school health policy, practice, and environments, shaping priorities, strengthening implementation, and advancing continuous improvement across the school health ecosystem.

Program Impact — 2024–2025

- **22 research and evaluation products developed**, including case studies, fact sheets, success stories, reports, conference presentations, and other external-facing materials
- **Journal of School Health publication**, representing AFHK’s growing contribution to the national evidence base
- **Conference presentations delivered across the country**, elevating AFHK programs and district successes to the broader school health community
- **Evaluation models, blueprints, and tools built and adopted across AFHK programs** to guide continuous improvement and strengthen implementation
- **Cross-team data collaboration** to inform program design, resource allocation, and strategic decision-making
- **Knowledge translation and resource sharing with partners and districts**, helping the field apply evidence to advance practice and policy

Looking Ahead

R&E is deepening evaluation infrastructure and expanding applied research with partners nationwide to build capacity, strengthen implementation, and accelerate sustainable improvements in whole-child health.



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Thank you!

We tell our kids they can be anything they want — astronauts, advocates, inventors, mentors, presidents. For them to become any of these, their minds must be as strong as their bodies, and their opportunities as full as their dreams.

Thank you for helping us build school environments where every child has the support, the nutrition, the safety, and the love they need to imagine any future — and believe it's possible.

*Kids need health.
Health needs action.
Action needs you!*

ACT!ON
FOR HEALTHY KIDS