



Youth-Led Projects Grant

2025 – 2027 Overview

The Youth-Led Projects Grant is designed to support activities that reduce mental health stigma and promote school-based health center (SBHC)¹ access. With a focus on prevention efforts, the Youth-Led Projects Grant provides students an opportunity to build community and strengthen leadership skills while addressing health topics that matter to them.

Youth-Led Projects grant funding typically supports a core group of students to partner closely with SBHC staff to coordinate at least one mental health focused project and at least one SBHC focused project. Students may be part of a club (Student Health Advisory Club, Youth Action Council, etc.), a class, a peer education program or, in some cases, employed as student interns. Funding may be used for staff salaries, stipends for youth and costs associated with projects.

During the 2023-2025 biennium, the SBHC State Program Office distributed \$800,000 to 10 SBHC sponsoring agencies to implement the Youth-Led Projects Grant. In alignment with Governor Kotek's priorities for improving Oregon's behavioral health system, the Youth-Led Projects Grant received an additional investment in the 2025 – 2027 biennium. The State Program Office will now be able to distribute a total of \$1.3 million dollars to 15 SBHC Sponsoring Agencies. Grant funding will reach forty-two schools across 12 Oregon counties as part of the Youth-Led Projects Grant.

¹ To learn more about Oregon's certified SBHCs visit the Oregon Health Authority SBHC State Program Office website: www.healthoregon.org/sbhc.

Funding in the previous (2024-2025) grant cycle supported:

Impact:

- 29 SBHCs in 9 Oregon counties received Youth-Led Projects Grant funding
- Over 10,000 students participated in activities or accessed resources through the grant
- Nearly 400 students were closely involved in planning or leadership roles in projects

Grant activities:

- School and Community Events
 - Distributed wellness kits or led activities to reduce stress during finals week
 - Organized a youth mental health summit
 - Coordinated learning opportunities for students interested in health-related careers
 - Collaborated with other school clubs to host events that promote community building, suicide prevention and mental health awareness
- Health Education
 - Presented in classes about specific health topics and local health resources
 - Hosted a series of Stop the Bleed trainings
 - Coordinated a vaccine awareness campaign
 - Received training in suicide prevention and peer support
 - Hosted discussions on topics such as bullying, nutrition, healthy relationships and body image.
- Media Projects
 - Recorded and released a mental health podcast
 - Published “Adulting 101” book
 - Created collaborative art projects focused on topics such as gratitude and healthy relationships
 - Hosted middle school poster making parties to promote suicide prevention resources and address school climate issues like bullying and gossip
- SBHC Promotion and Improvement
 - Created informational videos for individual SBHCs (location, hours of operation, introduction to SBHC providers, overview of services, etc.) that were shared via school communication networks
 - Tabled at school and community events; presented in classrooms about SBHCs

- Developed a Patient Advisory Board to implement changes to SBHC policies and practices
- Hosted listening session to elicit feedback from students on proposed SBHC changes
- Coordinated tours and collected feedback from students using an assessment tool
- Displayed student art in SBHC – framed on the wall and as murals
- Distributed student art as stickers, buttons and other promotional materials

What did Students and SBHC Staff say about their youth-led work:

- “I have not seen an opportunity like this for people my age. I am excited to make the health center even better [through the Patient Advisory Board].” – Student
- “This year we had more students engaged in our Student Health Advisory Clubs than ever before.” – SBHC Staff
- “More students at each school know about the School-Based Health Centers this year than any year in the past due to the continuous work to promote them.” – SBHC Staff
- “The grant not only empowered students to take the lead in health education efforts but also strengthened the visibility and integration of the SBHC within the school community.” – SBHC Staff
- “[The grant activities] helped spark conversations about mental health and promote the centers as approachable spaces. It also helped SHAC members build confidence in leading projects and connecting with peers, which created a more inclusive and supportive school environment.” – SBHC Staff
- “This type of work helps break down stigma around mental health and help seeking behavior.” – SBHC Staff