



TAG in Action: National 4-H and Molina Healthcare

As part of its national call to action, **Adolescent Health, Think, Act, GrowSM (TAG)**, the Office of Adolescent Health, in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Service has identified a number of successful strategies for improving adolescent health throughout the country.



The Goal

The National 4-H Council and Molina Healthcare collaborated to have teen viewpoints inform their health-related programs for adolescents.



The Game Plan

The private, non-profit National 4-H Council works in close partnership with 4-H National Headquarters at USDA and the Cooperative Extension System at the land-grant universities to fund, lead, and implement the 4-H program. Molina Healthcare provides health services in 11 states for 2.1 million members. Molina serves people enrolled in government-funded health insurance programs such as Medicaid and the State Children's Health Insurance Plans, including many adolescents.



Together 4-H and Molina partnered to create *Teens Take on Health*, a form of opinion research to help their organizations understand and respond to the needs of teens. 4-H's goal was to shape its Healthy Living programs as part of its broader positive youth development work and Molina wanted to learn how to expand and enhance programs that reach low-income families.



4-H adolescent members were invited to articulate the definition of health for themselves, their families, their schools and their communities. The partners sought insights in three ways with strong appeal to teens — a survey on Facebook, a national video contest, and a series of town hall-style conversations. Four top health concerns for teens emerged from the research: 1) obesity; 2) sleep, stress, and mental health; 3) health care access and cost; and 4) personal, family, community, and public policy action.



The Winning Plays

More than 600 teens participated in the meetings, which used methods designed to engage teens such as rapidly prioritizing ideas as a group and using storyboards to plot plans of action. These approaches deepened engagement and helped the youth think in fresh, unconventional ways. Based on the feedback, 4-H is developing and enhancing programs to address mental and emotional health; providing more leadership opportunities; and modeling and reinforcing healthy behaviors at all 4-H events. Molina Healthcare will keep working with teens to develop health education and social media materials that inspire teens toward healthier behaviors; increase focus on adolescent socio-emotional issues, especially stress and sleep; and develop train-the-trainer materials on positive youth development for Molina's community engagement work.



Learn More

National 4-H Council Health Living Program
<http://www.4-h.org/youth-development-programs/kids-health/>

