



The Walmart Foundation has partnered with 4-H Health Living Programs to support 4-H Youth Voice: Youth Choice to help address issues of nutrition, physical fitness, obesity and food insecurity among America's young people. The goal is to provide promotional and educational resources for grantees to deepen their community impact.

Since 2011, Walmart 4-H *Youth Voice: Youth Choice* Healthy Living programs were implemented through 15 grants to Cooperative Extension 4-H Programs in 14 states and Puerto Rico for programming occurring between October 2011 – September 2014. Each grantee received \$55,500 to reach thousands of youth and their families and to utilize teens as teachers in all stages from planning programs to educating youth, other teens, and adults to address nutritional choices and food security challenges. Many programs focused on high-impact direct reach (long-term intentional programming, i.e. residential camp, *Teens as Teachers*, gardening) while also engaging the general public (low-impact indirect reach) through health/county/state fairs. The 2014-2015 programming produced significant impact. **Over 45,000 youth and adults** were reached and given opportunities to empower themselves by learning how to achieve healthier lifestyles. Over **one million people were reached** through media outreach. In addition to grantee state program media attention, the Walmart 4-H *Youth Voice: Youth Choice* initiative conducted a successful radio media tour in the targeted 15 grantee states.

Through an expansion during the 2014-2015 programming year, the *Youth Voice: Youth Choice* program is expected to reach 74,000 youth and their family members in 23 states by focusing on intentional collaborations within the unique infrastructure of the land-grant university Cooperative Extension System.

The ten participating counties in Texas are: Brazos, **Cass**, Cameron, Dallas, Harris, Maverick, Nueces, Tarrant, Travis, and Waller. The program here in Cass County under the name “*Heroes 4-Health - JMG – Youth Voice: Youth Choice Ambassadors Campaign*” has been using the Junior Master Gardener (JMG) as lead program to raise public awareness and to reach 500 youths. The youth ambassadors are given an opportunity to present their campaign plan to the public. They will explain the overall plan as directed by the Prairie View A&M University - Cooperative Extension Program and sponsored by the Walmart Foundation. Some schools are currently being engaged, and recruitment of new ambassadors is being conducted. Health and nutrition newsletters and flyers will be used to inform the public of each event. Participants may be engaged in a health and nutrition or fitness game – recognition and incentives are usually provided.

The program seeks to promote the following:

- ✿ Growing of good kids through an interdisciplinary program combining academic achievement, gardening, nutrient-dense food experiences, physical activity, and school & family engagement.
- ✿ · Improve dietary choices and increase physical fitness.
- ✿ · Improve attitude toward and understanding of healthy foods.
- ✿ · Increase family participation in eating at least one meal together daily.
- ✿ · Improve knowledge of local resources available to underserved youth and their families that support and provide further information on healthy living
- ✿ Reduce health risk in adopting a healthy lifestyle.

Extension programs serve people of all ages regardless of socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, religion, disability, or national origin. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas cooperating.