

2018-2019 Bright Spot Award Nomination Form

The Bright Spot Awards are an effort to recognize examples of meaningful Primary Prevention initiatives taking place across our state. Here are the steps to nominate your initiative:

- 1.) All nominations must be submitted by July 1, 2019. One nomination form must be completed per initiative nominated. Email completed nominations to Matt Coleman (Matthew.Coleman@TN.gov)
- 2.) All nominations received are redacted so that the review committee will not know the exact location and persons involved with the initiative. The review committee is made up of individuals from each region of the state. They will review, score, and discuss each submission. An average of the final scores given by the review committee will be used to determine the award level earned.
- 3.) Award levels include Platinum, Gold, Silver, Bronze, and Honorable Mention.
- 4.) Awardees will be announced in the fall of 2019.
- 5.) Each nomination will be presented with a comprehensive feedback report from the committee, which will include strengths of the initiative and opportunities for improvement.

Application:

County: [Carter](#)

Initiative Name: [Storybook Trail](#)

Primary Prevention Focus Area(s): [Physical Activity](#)

Primary Contact Name, Email, Phone: [Ashley Davies, Ashley.e.davies@tn.gov, 423-979-4648](#)

Introduction to the Project:

[Grow Carter County is a community based campaign that is part of the Healthier Tennessee initiative through the Governor's Foundation for Health and Wellness. Grow Carter County seeks to increase the number of Tennesseans who are physically active, promote a healthy diet, and reduce tobacco use. The Storybook Trail is an interactive trail that allows children and their families to read a story with about 10 stops along the way; each stop contains multiple pages of a book. The trail is open year round on a section of the Tweetsie Trail in Elizabethton and the stories are changed out quarterly.](#)

Bright Spot Award Questions

Please explain why you think this initiative should be considered for the TDH Bright Spot Awards.

(150 words max); (10 points available) The Storybook Trail is a low cost, “low hanging fruit” project that can easily be replicated by any community. The goal of this initiative directly aligns with priorities of the Department of Health as it encourages youth and their families to get outside and be physically active. This is a simple, sustainable project that builds community partnerships, engages youth and their families, and encourages kids to get excited about reading. The Storybook Trail is a unique built environment opportunity that engages the community to enhance overall health and wellness.

Formatted: Indent: Left: 0"

Why is this initiative important to your community? Is this initiative contributing to a policy, systems, and/or environmental change¹ in the community? (300 words max); (75 points available)

The Storybook Trail is an important initiative in the community because it combines exercise, the outdoors, and reading. Thirty-two percent of adults in Carter County are obese and 34% are physically inactive. The percentage of public school youth in Carter County who are overweight/obese is 41.7%, which is significantly higher than that of the nation. Literacy rates, based on the percentage of students in the 3rd through 8th grades are considered “On Track or Mastered” in the subjects of English and Language arts, are only 28.2%. We need to step up as a community to combat these startling statistics and create a culture of health; a culture that makes access to healthy choices easy. This particular project is located next to a school, and is easily accessible to students and staff. Library staff at the school are hoping to make walking the trail part of their curriculum and get multiple classes out on the trail to check out the book each quarter. This project is currently being implemented in two other communities to promote increased physical activity and a love for reading!

What are the SMART objective goals and major purpose(s) of this initiative? (SMART objectives are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time Bound. Example: By May 2019; all soft drink machines in Lauderdale County Schools will be turned off during the school day, per school board policy.) (300 words max); (10 points available) By December 2020, at least 200 youth will have participated in the Carter County half mile Storybook Trail.

¹ Policy, systems and environmental change is a way of modifying the environment to make healthy choices practical and available to all community members. By changing laws and shaping physical landscapes, a big impact can be made with little time and resources. By changing policies, systems and/or environments, communities can help tackle health issues like obesity, diabetes, cancer and other chronic diseases (<http://www.cookcountypublichealth.org/files/CPW/PSE%20Change.pdf>)

By June 2020, at least two school libraries will integrate the Storybook Trail into their curriculum to get students outdoors, active, and reading.

By June 2020, at least two more Storybook Trail initiatives will have occurred in the Northeast Region.

What is the annual budget and funding source for this initiative? If no funding is available, how have you implemented or sustained the initiative? (150 words max); (5 points available) The cost of the Storybook Trail is approximately \$1,000. Ten poster shelters=\$700, 4x4 posts and concrete fillers=\$200, Quarterly books=\$100. Grant funding through the Healthier Tennessee Communities group funded this project, along with material donations from community partners (Lowe's). Work to install the trail was donated with Parks and Rec and the trustee group (inmates). Local high school students painted the 4x4 posts with healthy messages. Expert volunteers are recruited quarterly to read the healthy book.

Have community partners helped with the initiative? What are the roles of these partners? (300 words max); (20 points available) YES!!!

Grow Carter County Healthier Tennessee Communities: \$1,000 grant funding and support and man power

Elizabethon Parks and Rec and Trustees Group: Labor

Elizabethon/Carter County Library: Supply books/expertise

Carter County High School students: labor/creativity/artwork

Lowes: donated materials

Describe your staff's involvement, including the interdisciplinary team approach taken with this initiative? Begin with the planning process; explain staff roles in planning and implementing the initiative. Discuss how you foster creative scheduling so that clinical staff can lend their expertise? (350 words max); (20 points available) This initiative grew out the Grow Carter County Healthier Tennessee group which included many different sectors of the community. The group wanted to create a sustainable project that would have a lasting impact on the community. Health department staff and the Elizabethon/Carter County Library took the lead for the project. A project proposal was created and presented to the Parks and Recreation department to get the green light. The librarian and Healthy Development Coordinator conducted lots of the "behind the scenes" work and then members of the Grow Carter County group participated in and supported the planned events (opening and quarterly book switch out). We hope to include topic experts (clinical staff) from the health department to read the books during the quarterly switch out events and possibly provide participants with relevant information on the health topic of the selected book. The quarterly events could be scheduled during a lunch break or wellness break to allow health department staff participation.

In what way is this initiative especially innovative? How is this initiative different from other similar programs? Is there a specific idea tested with this approach? Is this work informed by relevant literature or research studies? (400 words max); (20 points available) This initiative is especially innovative because it incorporates the built environment and is an example of a long term project that can be utilized for years. It is a low cost, sustainable project that can be produced with little effort, maintenance, and time.

A UT Extension article on Storybook Trails states that “Studies show that when children spend time outdoors, they reduce feelings of anxiety and depression, concentration and performance at school improves, and they gain an appreciation and love of nature.” They article also states “Research links nature deficit with some disturbing child outcomes, such as increased rates of obesity, attention disorders, and depression, as well as diminished use of one’s senses. We can reverse nature deficit disorder in ourselves and our children if we work on getting kids outside with activities like the Storybook Trail.”

Source: <https://web.extension.illinois.edu/state/discover.cfm?DiscoverID=177&override=1>

How are you evaluating the effectiveness of the initiative? Is the initiative on track to achieve stated goals or has it achieved stated goals? (350 words max); (20 points available) At this point we are only getting counts of participants at the organized Storybook events. Feedback/personal experiences from staff, students, and community members could be documented as well. Social Media “likes” and “shares” can be counted. There is additional data that has previously been collected about overall use on the Tweetise Trail, and we could look into getting the user counts to see how many trail users were exposed to the section of the trail that the Storybook Trail occupies. The goal is to get at least 200 youth exposed to the trail by 2020—this goal will be reached.

What limitations or obstacles might be expected if others wished to replicate this initiative? (300 words max); (50 points available) The largest obstacle that we faced was getting Parks and Rec approval, not because of backlash, it was simply finding a time to present our proposal. Another obstacle that may be encountered is the space for the trail. While we worked with the existing linear trail to form a “U” shaped storybook trail, a looped walking path would be ideal for the layout.

Is this initiative sustainable without the resources of the local health department being involved? (250 words max); (20 points available) Yes. Minimal funding and effort is needed to sustain the project. I would recommend locating the trail next to a school or other organization that houses youth. Having your target audience next to the trail would ensure sustainability of the program and use of the trail as long as school staff or other organization have buy in and support.