

Blaine County
Blaine County Community Health Action Team
Established 2002

At a Glance

Blaine County Community Health Action Team (BCCHAT) held their first Youth Listening Luncheon, also known as Youth Speak Out, in November of 2004. The youth who spoke did a wonderful job describing the issues they have to face as teens in Blaine County. One young lady in particular described the activities the youth were taken part in after ball games, on weekends and after school. Many, if not most, of these activities were very risky and could have a devastating impact on these teens' lives. The teens were asked to not only present their issues but they also had to discuss ideas they had for solutions to the problems they spoke of. In this teen's mind, one of the primary reasons these risky activities were taking place was because the teens had nothing better to do. According to her, there was nothing to do in Blaine County in terms of a bowling alley, movie theatre, recreation center, etc. Her solution was simple – a recreational center. Luckily, the right people were attending the Youth Listening Luncheon and heard her message. As a direct result, BCCHAT approached the Watonga City Council in January 2005 to propose that they provide the youth in the county with recreational and enrichment activities by opening a "rec center". Activities proposed by BCCHAT include but are not limited to: social skill building, drug/alcohol prevention and awareness, peer counseling, tutoring, community awareness development and general recreational and leisure activities. By offering such a place for youth, BCCHAT proposes the following direct benefits: decreased juvenile delinquency, reduced teen drug and alcohol usage, reduced traffic violations, increased social skills, increased educational skills and increased community awareness and involvement.

BCCHAT asked the Watonga City Council to participate in this project by providing a habitable building. The City of Watonga did not stop at just providing a building. They have stepped up and become one of the leads in this endeavor. They have also taken on some of the fiscal responsibilities by providing utilities, property insurance and repairs to the building. The BCCHAT youth advisory committee and other teens in the community were primarily responsible for the design of the rec center. We also solicited input through a breakout session during our Adolescent Health Conference we had a breakout session. After months of planning and lots of hard work the Blaine County Recreational Center opened its doors the weekend of the Watonga Cheese Festival, October 2005.

Key Activities of 2005

- Approval of our 501 (c) 3 status, establishing us as an official non-profit organization
- 2nd Annual Youth Listening Luncheon
- Opening of the Blaine County Youth Recreation Center
- 24/7 Tobacco-Free School Campuses passed by 2 school districts (Okeene and Geary), making Blaine County the only county in the state to have half of its school districts Tobacco-Free campuses
- The Countywide 8th Grade Health Conference

Priorities of the Partnership

- To enhance the quality of life for children living in Blaine County
- To inform the community of the needs of the youth of Blaine County
- To advocate for the health of all citizens living in Blaine County

Partners

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Blaine County Health Department• Blaine County OSU Extension• Blaine County Sheriff's Office• Blaine County Sooner Success | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Blaine County youth and adult volunteers• Blaine County Youth and Family Services• Canton Public Schools |
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- CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates)
- Chisholm Trail Technology Center
- City of Watonga
- Diamondback Correctional Facility
- Geary Public Schools
- Office of Juvenile Affairs
- Okeene Public Schools
- Opportunities, Inc.
- Red Rock Behavioral Center
- Sooner SUCCESS
- The Blaine County DHS
- The Blaine County District Attorney's Office

- The Oklahoma Commission on Children and Youth
- The Watonga Police Department
- The Watonga Republican
- Watonga Christian Church
- Watonga Indian Health Services
- Watonga Kiwanis
- Watonga Lions
- Watonga Ministerial Alliance
- Watonga Public Schools
- Youth and Family Services
- YWCA Crisis Center

For More Information:

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