



Tahlequah B.E.S.T. Community Coalition

Cherokee County

2014

About Us...

Tahlequah B.E.S.T Community Coalition formed in 2004 to establish and strengthen collaboration in the Cherokee County community with the goal of reducing substance abuse among youth. Initially funded through the Drug Free Communities Grant, the coalition focused primarily on reducing underage drinking and tobacco use.

The purpose of this partnership is to engage a wide variety of partners with common goals, to foster awareness of community resources, to promote communication and collaboration between community agencies and individuals, and to identify and address unmet needs in the community.

In recent years the coalition has expanded its focus to a more broad-based approach to community wellness. This includes a partnership with the Cherokee Nation to implement strategies through a Community Transformation Grant. This grant focuses on the impact of nutrition and fitness on obesity as well as tobacco prevention through policy.

This year the coalition celebrated many successes in their efforts to impact the wellness of the community. One great success was a "Farm to School" event that brought the Tahlequah Farmers' Market to several 3rd Grade classes. Each 3rd grader was given "Veggie Vouchers" to use at the Farmers' Market. The coalition also provided support to the local Tobacco Control program as they successfully asked the Tahlequah City Council to add e-cig and vapor language to the current tobacco ordinance. Also, through the CTG grant the coalition helped coordinate a local active transportation study by nationally recognized "Livable Community" expert, Dan Burden.



BIKE SAFETY EVENT

Partnership Priorities

- Underage Drinking Prevention
- Tobacco Control
- Prescription Drug Prevention
- Farm to School
- Safe Routes to School

Mission

To bring together different individuals and sectors in the Tahlequah community to work together to build a safe healthy and drug free community .

Activities

- Alcohol compliance checks
- RBS training for retailers
- Law enforcement training on alcohol laws
- Drug testing at high school
- Tobacco compliance checks
- Tobacco prevention in high school health classes
- Training provided to area doctors on prescription drug abuse
- Prescription drug abuse prevention education in high school health classes
- Prescription drug take back events
- Farm to School “Veggie Bucks”
- Bike Safety event
- SWAT
- “Kick-Butts” event
- Tobacco-free park events
- National Walk to School Day

Outcomes/Impacts

- ◇ *City of Tahlequah Tobacco ordinance updated to include e-cigs*
- ◇ *Tahlequah Public Schools policy to include e-cigs/provided model language to other schools*
- ◇ *Completed “active transportation” study for Tahlequah*
- ◇ *Farm to School training for Tahlequah Public School nutrition staff*
- ◇ *Funded school gardens*

Partnerships

Cherokee Nation, Healthy Nation
 Cherokee County Health Department
 OSU Extension Service
 Tahlequah Police Department
 ABLE Commission
 Tahlequah Farmers Market
 Department of Human Service
 CREOKS Mental Health
 Tahlequah Public Schools
 Cherokee County Health Services Council
 Northeastern State University
 Kibois Community Action
 Communities of Excellence Tobacco Control Program
 NEO Health
 Tahlequah Daily Press
 Boys & Girls Club of Tahlequah
 Tahlequah City Hospital
 Chamber of Commerce
 Help In Crisis
 The City of Tahlequah
 Oklahoma Healthcare Authority

Contact Information

Val Dobbins
 (918) 458-4100
dobbinsv@tahlequahschools.org

- Workgroup Meets Monthly on the 2nd Tuesday @ 10am
- Community Meeting held Quarterly on the 2nd Tuesday @ 11am

Armory Municipal Center
 Tahlequah, OK

Funding

Community Transformation Grant
CHIO—Initial Project Grant
Drug Free Communities Grant

Sarah Johnson
Regional Turning Point Consultant
sarahjj@health.ok.gov