



Friday Beat

December 15, 2023, Edition

The newsletter that takes a [Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child](#) approach. The *Friday Beat* is a free publication of the Texas Department of State Health Services. It is edited and compiled by the [School Health Program](#).

Announcements

Happy Holidays

The Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) School Health Program wishes everyone a happy and safe winter break. Thank you for your service to Texas students and families! The Friday Beat will not be published on December 29th and will resume January 12, 2024.

SHAC Guide is Now Available in Spanish

The [DSHS School Health Program's](#) School Health Advisory Councils (SHAC) guide is now available in [Spanish](#). View information on starting a SHAC, assembling a committee, drafting bylaws, creating agendas, and other resources on the [School Health Program SHAC webpage](#).

Start with Hello Program

The [Texas School Safety Center \(TxSSC\)](#) is partnering with [Sandy Hook Promise](#) to launch the virtual [Start with Hello](#) training program, which teaches students to be more socially inclusive and connected to each other. With activities and programs available for all ages, students are empowered to end social isolation in three steps: see someone alone, reach out and help, and start with hello. The training is 2.5 hours and will consist of a wide range of activities and resources to ensure training integration within the school culture. [Register](#) for the next training on January 23, 2024 from 9:30am-12:00pm.

Funding Opportunities

Partnerships for Local Agriculture and Nutrition Transformation in Schools (PLANTS)

[Chef Ann Foundation's The Lunch Box](#) was awarded \$7.8 million by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food & Nutrition Service Healthy Meals Incentives Initiative and will provide sub-grants of \$500,000-\$600,000 to eight awardees in 2024. These [PLANTS](#) grants will support regional efforts to expand scratch-cooked meal programs, increase access to healthy foods, foster a resilient supply chain, and create accessible and sustainable change for school districts. [Applications](#) are due January 22, 2024.

2024 Asthma Scholarship Award

The Texas Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology Society (TAAIS) Memorial Foundation is pleased to announce the [2024 TAAIS Memorial Foundation Asthma Scholarship](#)

[Award](#). This \$3,000 one-time award will be granted to up to five qualified Texas high school seniors who suffer from Asthma and plan to go to college. The deadline to apply for the award is March 1, 2024. Visit the [TAAIS webpage](#) for additional information.

Farm to School Grant

[The United States Department of Agriculture \(USDA\) Food and Nutrition Service](#) is accepting applications for their [FY 2024 Farm to School Grant](#). In 2024, USDA will award funding up to \$500,000 to each grantee through a competitive process that is designed to improve access to local foods in eligible schools, activities such as training, supporting operations, planning, purchasing equipment, developing school gardens, developing partnerships, and implementing farm to school programs. USDA invites all eligible and interested organizations to apply by January 12, 2024. Visit [Grants.gov](#) for more information.

Reaching for Excellence Grant

DSHS invites public and charter schools to apply for the [Reaching for Excellence \(RFE\) in Texas School Health Grant](#). Two \$10,000 grants will be awarded for the 2024-2025 school year. The goal of the RFE grant is to fund projects that inspire students to live healthier lives. Projects must focus on at least one key component of the [Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child model](#). Applications will be accepted until 11:59pm CT on January 22, 2024. Email schoolhealthawards@dshs.texas.gov or call 512-776-7279 for questions.

Health Education

Truth Initiative's Report on Better Approaches to On-campus Student Tobacco Use

[Truth Initiative published a resource](#) with suggestions on how educators can respond if they find students vaping nicotine. View the [Texas Tobacco Prevention and Control Program's Texas Youth Tobacco Awareness Program \(TYTAP\)](#) program for individuals under age 21 who are cited for possession of tobacco products. TYTAP classes provide youth with the information and skills necessary to quit tobacco and avoid tobacco products in the future.

Physical Education and Physical Activity

Move Your Way

The [U.S Department of Health and Human Services](#) and [Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion](#) recently updated the [Move Your Way resources](#). Parents can calculate how their children can reach the recommended 60 minutes of physical activity before school, during school, after school, and in the evenings through the interactive webpage.

Family Engagement

Navigating the Holidays with Allergies and Asthma

[The Allergy and Asthma Network](#) recorded a webinar regarding [Navigating the Holidays with Allergies and Asthma](#). Allergies and asthma are a challenge to manage on a regular day and the holidays may create new obstacles to plan around. Participants will learn practical, everyday tips and tricks on managing allergies and asthma during the holiday season.

Making a Feel Good Plan

[Alliance for a Healthier Generation](#) published a resource parents can use with their children to create a [Feel Good Plan](#) children can follow if they start feeling stressed or upset at school. There are two worksheets available based on the child's age group. Once completed, parents can share the Feel Good Plan with the child's teachers and caregivers. Follow this guide to help children and teens identify stressful feelings and address them with healthy, calming strategies.

Community Involvement

Managing Asthma with Sesame Workshop

[Sesame Workshop](#) shares [information and activities to help kids manage asthma](#).

Teach children about asthma with some of their favorite Sesame Street characters. Find articles, printable activity sheets, and videos designed according to your child's age. Share this resource with parents, families, and students with asthma.

Child Screen Time Toolkit

[Michael and Susan Dell Center for Healthy Living](#) released a [Child Screen Time Toolkit](#) for schools, parents, and the community. The Screen Time Toolkit consists of resources, data, tools, and guides to learn about child and adolescent screen time in Texas. This toolkit can be used to impact the state's health as a parent, school, or community member.

Quote to Note

"Kindness is like snow – it beautifies everything it covers." –Kahlil Gibran

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