



## Knox County Health Department

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### **KCHD's Service Spotlight: Childhood Nutrition Promotion**

*Knoxville, Tenn.*—The Knox County Health Department (KCHD) Nutrition Education Activity Training (N.E.A.T.) is a nutrition education program in the county's Healthy Weight division that partners with after-school programs to teach and promote healthy behaviors for elementary school students.

In Spring 2021, N.E.A.T. reached more than 2,000 elementary school students at 53 after-school sites by offering programming that teaches evidence-based topics such as the USDA's MyPlate and Go, Slow, and Whoa! Foods and other health messages.

"Nutrition education is especially important for kids as they establish food patterns that carry into adulthood. Teaching students about the benefits of food in an interactive way can help promote healthy eating from a young age," said Abigail Ford, nutritionist with KCHD's Healthy Weight program.

According to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC), about 7.7 million US children are served by after-school programs. Research shows that some Out-of-School Time (OST) programs can support student academic achievement and may play a role in reducing health disparities.

N.E.A.T. supports its partner agencies through the N.E.A.T. Approved awards, which are given to after-school programs that have created healthy spaces for their students. Each of the award tiers—bronze, silver, gold, and platinum—focus on achieving nutrition, physical activity, and family engagement goals.

N.E.A.T. Approved sites provide meals and snacks to their students that follow nutrition guidelines, which can help reduce food insecurity and improve overall diet quality. These sites also offer students the opportunity to be physically active every day.

Through N.E.A.T. University, four trainings a year are offered to after-school staff. The trainings cover a variety of health topics, including healthy ways to manage stress and how to create a culture of health. As an added benefit, the program meets requirements to fulfill continuing education credits from the trainings. To learn more about N.E.A.T., visit our [website](#) or call 865-215-5612.

### **About Knox County Health Department**

The first health department in Tennessee to achieve national voluntary accreditation by the Public Health Accreditation Board, the Knox County Health Department (KCHD) is dedicated to ensuring the conditions in which every resident can be healthy. As a chief health strategist for the community and with more than 240 team members, KCHD's broad scope of work includes convening partners to improve community health, identifying community health threats, investigating disease outbreaks, conducting extensive outreach and education, preparing for public health emergencies, providing and connecting the public with medical care, enforcing food safety and air quality laws, and more. For more information, visit [www.knoxcounty.org/health](http://www.knoxcounty.org/health).

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