

Blue Health Initiatives

Transforming Kansas Communities

We are Kansans serving Kansans. By building and strengthening Kansas communities, Blue Health Initiatives works to make Kansas a healthier place to live, work and play. Our core values help guide our work:



Dependability – By providing community coalitions with tools and resources needed, we are helping communities remove barriers to healthy living.



Growth and Progress – Helping to pilot innovative solutions will help address the unique needs of our state.



Service – Through encouraging healthy lifestyles, our goal is to inspire healthy behaviors for life.

Our investment in communities and partnerships through Blue Health Initiatives is improving health and quality of life in Kansas.

Since its inception, Blue Health Initiatives has invested over \$33 Million across Kansas.





Dependability: – Pathways to a Healthy Kansas

The *Pathways to a Healthy Kansas* initiative, known as *Pathways*, is the largest community grant initiative ever funded by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas. It combines community-wide, evidence-based solutions and practices to help Kansas communities improve active living, healthy eating and commercial tobacco prevention. The initiative provides community coalitions with the tools and resources needed to engage their communities and remove barriers to healthy living.

Pathways started in 2016 with eight communities and expanded to 16 in 2017. In 2020, the *Pathways* initiative started a second phase of work with a total of 24 communities – 12 new and 12 returning communities from across the BCBSKS service area.

Pathways addresses the social determinants of health (SDOH), which are the conditions in the environments where people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age that affect a wide range of health functioning, and quality-of-life outcomes and risks. SDOH can be grouped into 5 domains: economic stability, education access and quality, health care access and quality, neighborhood and built environment and social and community context.



“The *Pathways* Initiative is literally changing lives in Wilson County, and although it might look like one step at a time, to the person who is taking that step, it is not small at all.”

-Stacie Ray, Coordinator, Live Long Stay Strong Wilson County



Growth and Progress: Trailblazers

The NXTSTAGE Community Health and Vibrancy Competition

Twelve leading startups were matched with Kansas communities for 21 pilot projects aimed at improving access to mental health and addiction treatment, enhancing services for seniors aging in place and providing systems to help local micro businesses thrive. In 2022, 94 percent of the startups were led by minority or female founders.



Kansas Community Network

The Kansas Community Network is a system of healthcare and social service organizations who provide whole-person care and improve health outcomes for the most vulnerable members of the community. The network is supported by WellSky and is dedicated to removing social barriers and closing health equity gaps through social service delivery.

30+ community-based organizations
1,147 referrals made
836 clients with referrals
2,593 services referred

Top five services referred are financial support, social support, health, food and housing.

NetWorked

NetWorked is a network of networks working together to boldly solve community challenges. We support this through our anchor sponsorship of the Kansas Community Investment Fund.

“NetWorked unites the 'Do-Gooders' - people who are working diligently in multiple, but different, organizations to generate long lasting change.”

-Christina Long, NetWorked Director



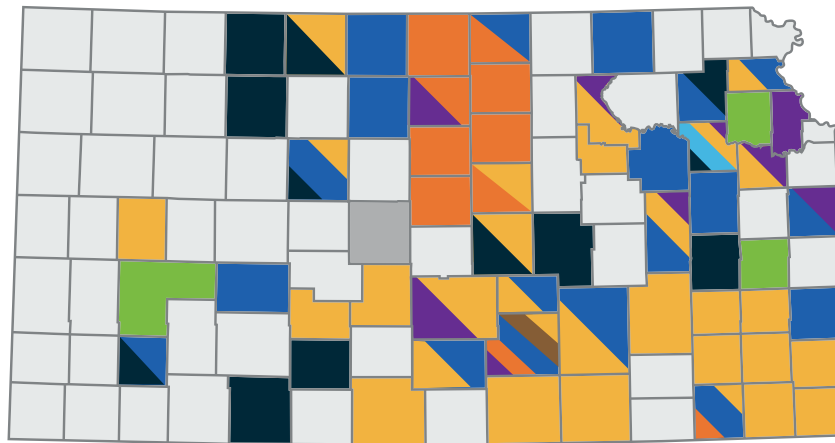


Service: - Healthy Lifestyles

Healthy Lifestyle grants are a collection of statewide initiatives that engage people of all ages. The grants promote healthy habits and active living and are designed to meet the unique needs of each community. An example of meeting these community needs occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020-2021. We partnered with Topeka Rescue Mission on Operation Food Secure to ensure that healthy food made it into the hands of our neighbors. During this time, 44,422 people were served in Northeast Kansas.



Healthy Lifestyles Grants



- Be the Spark
- Bike Share
- Trail
- Double Up Food Bucks
- Giving Grove
- National Fitness Court
- Walk with a Doc
- YMCA 360
- KS Interscholastic Cycling League



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Scan to learn more.