

Press Release

Hamilton County Health Department

Web: health.hamiltontn.org



****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****

December 30th, 2025

The Hamilton County Health Department was Recognized as a Recipient of a Gold “Bright Spot Award” for the Little Sprouts Program.

HAMILTON COUNTY, TN— The Hamilton County Health Department, under the Health and Social Services Division, has been named a recipient of the prestigious Gold Bright Spot Award from the Tennessee Department of Health’s (TDH) Office of Primary Prevention for its Little Sprouts Educational Series. The Bright Spot Award, presented by the TDH Office of Primary Prevention, recognizes local programs that demonstrate innovative, prevention-focused approaches to improving health across Tennessee.

Little Sprouts is an early childhood education initiative led by the Health Department's Step ONE Program. This public health program introduces key prevention concepts during a critical stage of child development. It aims to help young children build a foundational understanding of nutrition, connections to nature, and safety. The curriculum is designed to align with the way children think, move, and engage with the world around them.

“Little Sprouts challenges the traditional way we think about public health education for young children,” said Christopher Marinello, MS, Public Health Representative with the Hamilton County Health Department. “Instead of taking adult or adolescent health education and scaling it down, the program was designed from the outset for early learners. Each lesson is built around hands-on, developmentally appropriate experiences that reflect how young children actually learn through play.”

The Little Sprouts Educational Series consists of several modules, including Honey Bees and Pollination, Gardening, Safe Sprouts (which focuses on traffic and pedestrian safety), and Special Sprouts. These modules are designed to enhance early health literacy, problem-solving, and decision-making skills. By introducing public health education earlier in a child's life, Little Sprouts aims to support long-term prevention efforts and demonstrate how developmentally appropriate interventions can lead to healthier outcomes for children and families.

Additional resources

- Questions? Call the Health Department at 423-209-8000.
- Free interpretation services are available at all Health Department clinics.
- For Health Department information, visit: Health.HamiltonTN.org
- To read this information in Spanish, visit the Health Department’s Spanish Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/SaludHamiltonTN>