

Press Release

Hamilton County Health Department

Web: health.hamiltontn.org



****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****

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Health Department's Step ONE Program Announces the Ten Organizations Selected for the 2025 - 2026 Teaching Garden Grants

HAMILTON COUNTY, TN – The Hamilton County Health Department's [Step ONE program](#) under the Health & Social Services Division is pleased to announce the ten organizations selected for the 2025 - 2026 Teaching Garden Grants. Step ONE received a remarkable number of applications this year for the ten \$1,000 awards. It was a difficult decision, as community organizations presented creative and well-thought-out plans for their garden programs. The Step ONE program selected the ten grantees based on which organizations best fit the criteria, such as the strength of garden vision and design, plans for sustainability, identified leadership, educational goals, creativity, and geographic diversity.

2025-2026 Step ONE Garden Grantees:

1. AIM Center
2. Bayberry Apartments/Wesley Living
3. Bridge Outdoors
4. East Ridge City Library
5. SEED Chattanooga
6. SilverTree Seniors
7. Snow Hill Elementary
8. Special Kids TN
9. STEPS/St. Timothy's Episcopal Preschool
10. Treehouse Therapy

"Each garden represents more than just plants in the ground – it's a hands-on investment in the health, education, and resilience of our community. This year's grantees have crafted incredible, community-driven visions that connect individuals of all ages and abilities to the food they grow and the habits that will nourish them for a lifetime. We're proud to help bring those visions to life, says Christopher Marinello, Step ONE Public Health Representative.

The Step ONE Teaching Garden Grants Program focuses on creating involvement and awareness of the connection between the quality of diet and the quality of health for children and their families. In addition, teaching gardens offer opportunities to learn valuable skills such as communication, responsibility, teamwork, and leadership. With this year's grant awards, the Step ONE program has invested in 94 teaching garden programs throughout Hamilton County since its inception in 2004.

Additional resources

- Questions? Call the Health Department's Step ONE Program at 423-209-8247.
- 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>