

# HEALTHY JUVENILE JUSTICE



The Alliance for a Healthier Generation (Healthier Generation) invites you to join us to realize our **vision of healthier outcomes** for youth residing within justice system facilities.

## OUR VISION

We believe the young people detained or committed within more than 2,000 juvenile residential placement centers across the United States on any given day<sup>1</sup> deserve the chance to live healthier lives. We envision a day when all young people have full access to nutritious meals and high quality physical activity opportunities, instilling healthy behaviors that serve them not only while residing in an institutional setting, but also serve them when they leave, supporting better overall life outcomes.

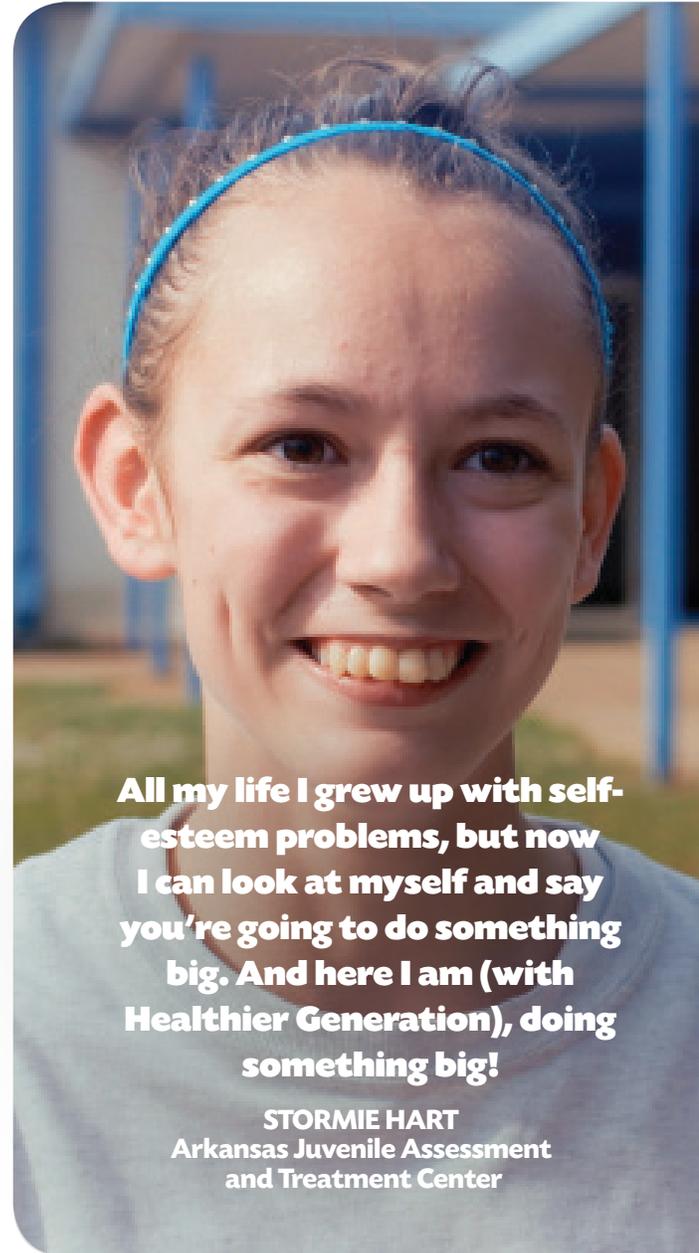
## THE OPPORTUNITY

Based in research that shows a strong link between a young person's practice of healthy habits, including a good diet and regular physical activity, and an improvement in their overall life outcomes, Healthier Generation has successfully transformed school environments. We have developed a proven approach to improve the health and well-being of young people in schools that is also being utilized within out-of-school time (OST) environments.<sup>2</sup>

Healthier Generation believes every child deserves a healthy future. For more than a decade, we have been empowering kids to develop lifelong healthy habits by ensuring the environments that surround them provide and promote good health. Driven by our passion that all young people deserve a chance to live healthier lives, our work has helped up to 28 million kids across the country.

We are also very encouraged by our efforts to adapt our science-based frameworks for healthier eating and increasing physical activity in school and out-of-school time environments to the juvenile justice setting.

In that relatively short time, our Healthy Juvenile Justice pilot initiatives in Arkansas and California demonstrated that our model is working to promote healthier juvenile justice facilities in those states.



**All my life I grew up with self-esteem problems, but now I can look at myself and say you're going to do something big. And here I am (with Healthier Generation), doing something big!**

**STORMIE HART**  
Arkansas Juvenile Assessment  
and Treatment Center

## JOIN US

**We are seeking additional state and county level juvenile justice agencies to partner with us and become part of this growing effort.**

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<sup>1</sup> Hockenberry, S. (2014). *Juveniles in residential placement, 2011*. Juvenile Offenders and Victims National Report Series Bulletin. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. Retrieved from <http://www.ojjdp.gov/pubs/246826.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Madsen KA, Cotterman C, Crawford P, Stevelos J, Archibald A. Effect of the Healthy Schools Program on Prevalence of Overweight and Obesity in California Schools, 2006–2012. *Prev Chronic Dis* 2015;12:150020. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5888/pcd12.150020>

## Where We've Made an Impact

- State of Arkansas, Department of Human Services, Division of Youth Services
- State of California, Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, Division of Juvenile Justice
- County of Santa Clara, Probation Department, Juvenile Institutions

The results from the pilot period validate initial opinions that there is enormous opportunity for the application of Healthier Generation's policy, environment and systems change approach in juvenile justice settings. Preliminary market research and a comprehensive literature review conducted by an independent research and evaluation firm, RTI International, point to a significant role for Healthier Generation in juvenile justice health promotion and as part of juvenile justice reform efforts. There are promising process results and preliminary staff and youth benefits.

## KEY STEPS AND TIME FRAME

Juvenile justice state and county administrative and site level staff are guided through Healthier Generation's Six Step Process for continuous quality improvement by the Healthy Juvenile Justice Manager.



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## Today, too many youth confined in juvenile justice settings:



- **Consume diets high in fat, cholesterol and sodium and low in fresh fruit and vegetables.**
- **Do not participate in recommended physical activity amounts and quality levels.**
- **Are minorities and from low-income communities and experience significant health disparities.**
- **Have mental health disorders, behavioral challenges and psychological trauma that a healthier lifestyle can help mitigate.**

## Research indicates:



- **Healthy youth development requires proper nutrition.**
- **Improved diet and nutrition education have reduced disciplinary problems and improved morale.**
- **Violence and anti-social behavior have been reduced after implementing nutrient-dense diets.**
- **Exercise can ameliorate anxiety and depression induced by an adverse early-life environment.**
- **Physical activity is associated with higher grade point averages, lower drop-out rates, and fewer disciplinary problems among students.**