

Act
MO



YOUTH AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

EMERGING PREVENTION LEADERS

25-26



The Youth Ambassador Story

The Youth Ambassador Program collects the enthusiasm and drive of Missouri's youth leaders and empowers them with

- Foundational prevention knowledge
- Advocacy competencies
- Transferable leadership skills

Since founding in 2010, the Youth Ambassador Program has served as a catalyst for change in the lives on dozens of youth, inspiring a new generation of prevention leaders to ask the question

How will I change the world?

Program Overview

5

Trainings and meetings each year on prevention topics

2

Annual events hosted by Youth Ambassadors

9

Youth selected each year, one from each MSHP Troop

1

Year-long prevention project for youth

1

Annual programmatic fundraising event

12

Years of shaping young minds for youth prevention



Annual Events

Speak Hard Youth Rally



The pinnacle event for Missouri's youth prevention leaders, Speak Hard is a day-long event filled with workshops, speakers, networking, and activities all centered around youth prevention and leadership. Held each spring in Jefferson City, this event encourages collaboration among youth on relevant prevention topics.

Youth Safety Summit



The Youth Safety Summit will serve as the catalyst event for change each fall with a focus on traffic safety and distracted driving. Youth will engage in a one-day event with presentations and guest speakers that highlight state- and nationwide initiatives and programs.

What We Do

Regular Meetings & Trainings

Youth Ambassadors receive immersive trainings and engagement experiences that reflect the diversity of Missouri, meet student needs, and develop core competencies needed to build the next health generation. Trainings regularly include the sharing of data, modules provided by partners like EVERFI and Taking Down Tobacco, and leadership development activities design to build skills reflected in the needs of a modern workforce like critical thinking, collaboration, and communication.

Statewide Youth-Centric Project

Each year, Youth Ambassadors are given the freedom to create a project the addresses a need they determine related to you youth safety. These projects are funded and support by Missouri SADD and ACT Missouri. Youth Ambassadors receive guidance and support from industry leaders to execute their project. Previous projects have included creation of a children's book that builds resiliency skills, a streamed musical to address the consequences of purchasing controlled substances, and a comic book series highlight the dangers to your body from vaping.

Speak Hard

Speak Hard is one of Missouri's premier events for students with a passion for building health young lives. Youth Ambassadors help to craft the content for the event, including workshops and activities. Youth Ambassadors also act as the event host, speaking at opening and closing session, leading lunch and learns, and handing out annual Youth Awards to outstanding students in prevention.

Youth Safety Summit

The 2025-26 class of Youth Ambassadors will be instrumental in developing the Youth Safety Summit. This event, focused exclusively on traffic safety initiatives like increasing seat belt usage and ending both distracted and impaired driving, will feature multiple interactive sessions and experience. Youth Ambassadors will both host the event and craft the content for students.

Supporting National & Missouri SADD Initiatives

Youth Ambassadors are responsible for implementing both Missouri and National SADD programs in their schools and communities. Missouri programs are crafted and updated annually by Youth Ambassadors to reflect new concerns and make improvements over previous years.

Program Information & Application

Application Process

Applications open each spring via ACT Missouri and Missouri SADD. Students are encouraged to complete the application process via an online form at <https://actmissouri.org/youth/youth-ambassador-program/>.

Students will need to answer general application questions and have a school photo, list of activities and accomplishments, and answer a short essay on drug and alcohol prevention. A parent or guardian will need to sign off the application.

Applications are due October 1. Selected students will be informed of their selection by October 6.

Application Questions

- *Basic Contact Information*
- *Basic Academic Information*
- *Headshot*
- *Student Agreement*
- *List of Activities & Accomplishments*
- *Essay (max one page): Why is drug and alcohol prevention important to your and your community?*
- *Parent/Guardian Consent & Agreement*

Selection & Term of Service

One youth leader is selected each year from the counties served by each of Missouri's nine MSHP Troops. If multiple students apply from one Troop, they may be assigned a different Troop to observe during their tenure. Each of these nine students will serve a one-year term as a Youth Ambassador, beginning October 6 and concluding July 31.

Program Contact

For more information, please contact SADD Coordinator Chris Dzurick at cdzurick@actmissouri.org.

Additional Information

Youth Ambassadors are required to travel with a school/program chaperone or a parent/guardian. All travel related expenses are covered for students in the program including mileage, overnight lodging, and meals.