

Pioneers of Growth

Enriching children's health across Kansas



Kansas Health Foundation

GROW Healthy Kansas

In 2000, the Kansas Health Foundation invited community foundations across Kansas to participate in an initiative to expand their resources and impact the health of their communities more than ever before. The first phase of this initiative, GROW I (Giving Resources to Our World) Healthy Kansas, was designed to build the capacity of these community foundations from 2000 to 2010, and allowed the Kansas Health Foundation to partner with the 12 participating foundations to achieve three main goals:

- To increase philanthropy in Kansas
- To improve the health of children in Kansas
- To develop a network of local partners that can participate in future Kansas Health Foundation initiatives

To help foster growth, each community foundation was offered the opportunity to earn grants from the Foundation, awarded as a matching percentage of money raised locally in each community. In total, the Kansas Health Foundation awarded more than \$14 million in children's health endowments to the community foundations. The foundations now have funds available to empower those who understand what's needed in their specific communities to make decisions that can impact the health of children now, and for generations to come.

The community foundations, organizations and people within each of the 12 participating communities are doing great things to improve the health of children. The grantees spotlighted in this report exemplify the goals of GROW I: a Greensburg teen with a philanthropic spirit, a Larned PRIDE group committed to getting children active and a park in Scott City that came together because of community collaboration.

The Kansas Health Foundation is proud of all of the communities that participated in GROW I and is excited to see the difference being made by these community foundations.

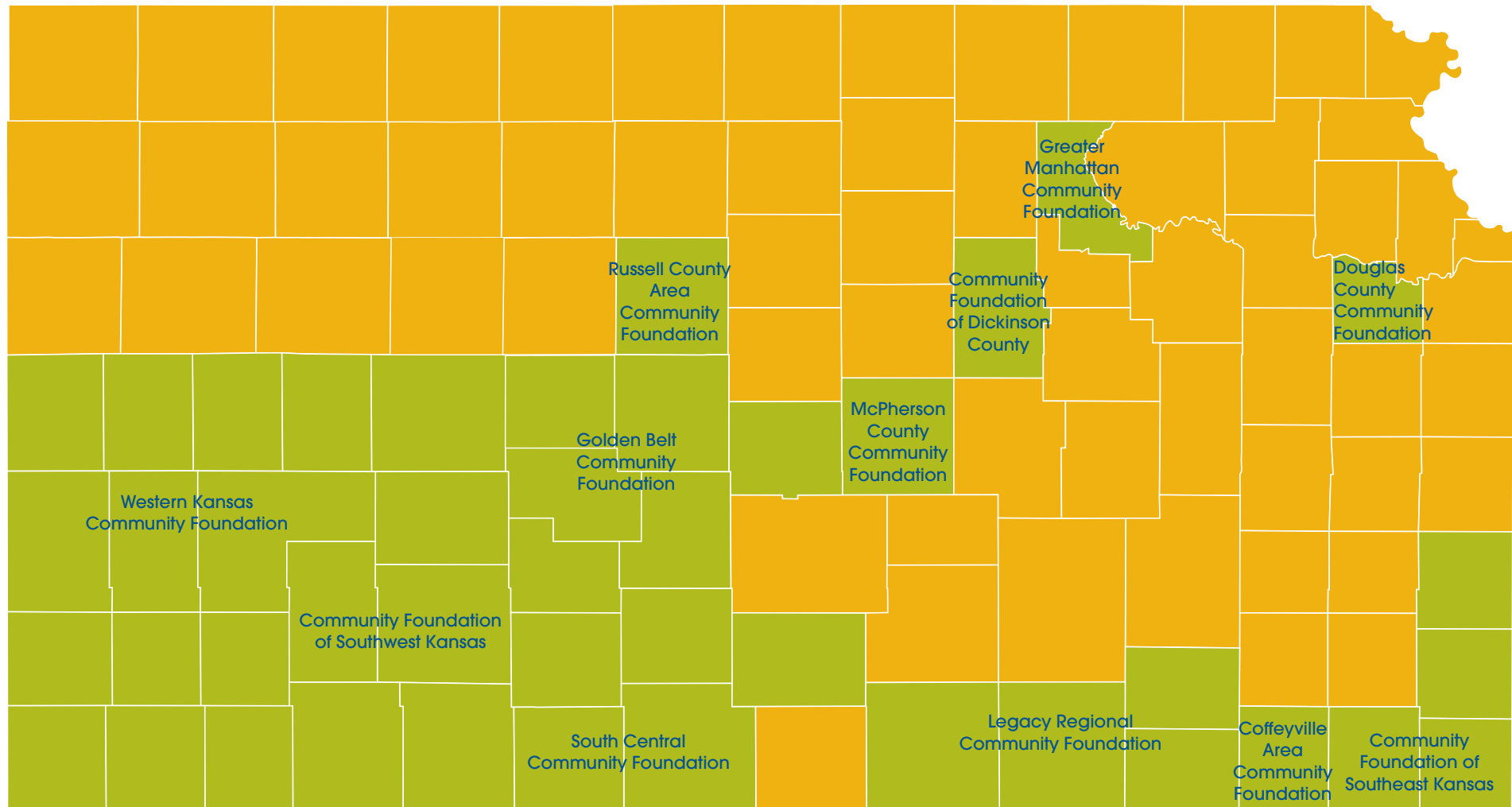
Since the completion of GROW I, the Kansas Health Foundation began GROW II, which has expanded our support even further throughout the state by working with 39 community foundations. To see the reach of GROW II, visit www.KansasHealth.org/GROW for the updated state coverage maps.



Kansas Health Foundation

GROW I Community Foundations

This map highlights the 12 community foundations across Kansas that successfully participated in the GROW initiative from 2000 to 2010.



The Kansas Health Foundation awarded more than \$14 million to these community foundations, empowering them to make strategic decisions regarding children's health in the areas they serve.



Health on wheels

Music blares from a radio tucked away in the corner of the gym as children lace up their skates and get rolling. Some skate with natural grace, while others spend more time on the floor than on their feet.

"Down I go, down I go," one boy says, laughing.

The Larned Community Center has been transformed into a skating rink for the afternoon. Children arrive after school for the opportunity to hang out, have fun and get active.

"In a town the size of Larned, your options for activity are kind of limited," says Angle Murray, a member of Larned PRIDE. "A big concern is childhood obesity."

Murray helped write the grant to the Golden Belt Community Foundation that purchased more than 400 pairs of roller skates for the Larned Community Center. The Center now hosts skate nights, birthday parties and special events.

"This is an awesome opportunity to get families out and active together," Murray says.

A healthy connection

On any sunny day in Scott City, you'll find lots of activity at the Park on the Plains. This playground is a popular place for both children and their parents to come and play.

The Park on the Plains is unique as one of Western Kansas' most accessible parks to people with disabilities. But if you look a little closer at the network of swings, bridges and slides that make up the playground, you'll see what truly makes this park extraordinary.

Each piece of the playground, including the climbing wall, grain elevator and tractor, was purchased and/or donated by businesses and individuals in the community, and was built entirely by local volunteers.

According to the Western Kansas Community Foundation, "more than 1,000 community volunteers came together to place all the pieces of the puzzle together to make a wonderful playground for the Scott City community."

In 2010, an accessible rumble bridge was purchased with a grant provided by the Western Kansas Community Foundation.

The Scott City Park on the Plains is a playful testament to the possibilities of solid partnerships, and to what can be achieved when a community works together toward a healthy goal.



"More than 1,000 community volunteers came together to place all the pieces of the puzzle together to make a wonderful playground for the Scott City community."



A taste of health

Eating healthy isn't always a top priority for high school students, who tend to choose fast and tasty over nutritious. But at Kiowa County High School in Greensburg, all students have easy access to healthy, delicious foods, courtesy of a former student.

In 2010, Brandon Taylor was a junior in high school. He noticed that during the school's "nutrition break," his peers were more interested in donuts and snack cakes than nutritious foods. Brandon also realized that his peers didn't have many other options.

"With obesity rates increasing," Brandon says, "I wanted to be the opposing force that stopped it in my high school."

That year, Brandon wrote a grant to the South Central Community Foundation to purchase a vending machine filled with healthy snacks for his high school. Once it was installed, the students had easy access to delicious, nutritious treats. Brandon realizes the impact of his initiative and is happy that "the machine will be in the school for years to come, to serve future students."



"With obesity rates increasing, I wanted to be the opposing force that stopped it in my high school."

"A park is one element in a community that keeps families coming back again and again."



"This is an awesome opportunity to get families out and active together."

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