

**Benton-Franklin
Health District**
www.bfhd.wa.gov

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7102 West Okanogan Place

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412 West Clark Street

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Benton-Franklin Health District Teams Up with Kids for Urban Trees Enhancing Playground Safety and Community Well-Being

August 18, 2023
Media Event: August 21, 2023

KENNEWICK, WA. – The Benton-Franklin Health District (BFHD) is thrilled to announce its partnership with Kids for Urban Trees (K4UT) which is part of the [Mid-Columbia Community Forestry Council](#). K4UT is an inspiring group of elementary school students dedicated to enriching urban communities by fostering green spaces. K4UT's remarkable work in enhancing Eastern Washington with trees has earned them recognition, including the esteemed 2023 Presidential Environmental Youth Award for EPA District 10.

The effects of direct sunlight and high heat on playgrounds can pose risks such as burns, heat-related illnesses, and worsening respiratory conditions due to reduced air quality. BFHD's Climate Effects Program, in conjunction with the School Environmental Health & Safety Program, will collaborate with K4UT to explore innovative strategies for improving shade coverage on playgrounds.

"Teaming up with BFHD is essential as it brings continued expertise to our mission. Their support helps us improve playground safety, combat heat-related issues, and create a healthier urban environment, all benefiting our community's well-being." - Heather Nicholson, Mentor, Kids for Urban Trees

BFHD is hosting a playground safety presentation with K4UT on Monday, and we invite the media to join. This event focuses on important safety aspects like heat and air quality, aiming to enhance outdoor play spaces for kids through our partnership.

- **Event: K4UT and BFHD Safety Workshop**
- Date/Time: August 21, 2023, at 11:00 a.m.
 - Interactive student activity and interview opportunities
- Location: 7102 W. Okanogan Place Kennewick, WA 99336
 - Rm. Mission Peak
 - *Note: This event is open to media but not the public*

"With an increase in hot weather events predicted in the near future, it's essential to understand how rising temperatures can impact children's safety on playgrounds and to support groups like Kids for Urban Trees in developing solutions!" -Erin Hockaday, Senior Manager for Surveillance & Investigation, Benton-Franklin Health District

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**Benton-Franklin Health
District Website**
www.bfhd.wa.gov

**Washington Department
of Health**
www.doh.wa.gov

**Centers for Disease
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www.cdc.gov

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Kids for Urban Trees (K4UT) is working diligently to secure the Department of Natural Resources Urban and Community Forestry Grant. This grant is essential for their project of planting trees around school playgrounds, creating safe and shaded spaces for children. They are also seeking matching sponsorship funds and actively looking for corporate partners who share their vision of a greener urban environment.

For more information about the Benton-Franklin Health District's initiatives and programs, please visit [School Health and Safety - Benton Franklin Health District \(wa.gov\)](http://www.bfhd.wa.gov). To learn more about Kids for Urban Trees and their inspiring work, please visit www.Trees4You.org.

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