

Summer 2026

Students show gains in social and emotional learning

Healthy NewsWorks reporters gain even more than health knowledge and writing and research skills through participation in our school-based newspaper program.

Surveys with teachers and students show that our student reporters have become more confident, empathetic, and community-minded. Teachers said on average 91 percent of students deepened their social and emotional learning (SEL) during the 2025–26 school year.

“I think Healthy NewsWorks has helped students realize the benefits of group activities and has helped them improve their relationship skills and friend-building,” one fourth-grade teacher wrote.

Another fourth-grade teacher said students “developed an ability to listen to others and empathize with them.”

The survey marked the first time Healthy NewsWorks included the SEL question for teachers in grades 4 to 8 who bring our health journalism program into their classrooms. In the same survey, the teachers also said that on average their students gained academic skills in three areas: research (87 percent), writing (84 percent), and health knowledge (86 percent).

“The evaluation continues to demonstrate the range and depth of student learning that takes place through Healthy NewsWorks,” said Moriah Hall, a Healthy NewsWorks board member who oversees evaluation for the organization. “By measuring social-emotional learning alongside writing, research and health knowledge for the first time, we’re gaining a more complete understanding of how the program helps students grow both academically and personally.”

(Please see **Students** Page 2)



Healthy NewsWorks reporters interviewed dozens of people this year including Philadelphia Union soccer player Quinn Sullivan. See story on Page 3.

You made this possible

Our heartfelt thanks go out to everyone who helped us surpass our three-year goal of raising \$1 million in individual contributions and pledges during our **Building a Healthy Future** campaign, which concluded in June.

Your generosity is making it possible for more children to learn to distinguish facts from misinformation, find trustworthy sources, gain writing skills, and deepen their health knowledge. And their learning doesn’t stop there. They become community messengers of public health, sharing fact-based information with their schools and families through print school newspapers, videos, and digital media.

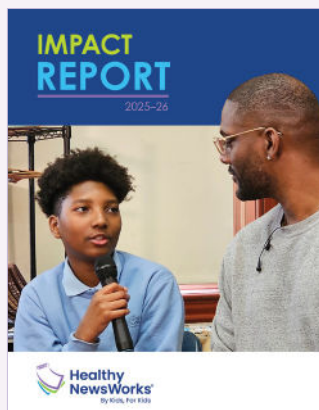
Since the start of the Building a Healthy Future campaign, the number of students reached by our three programs increased by 57 percent to 2,244 total during the 2025–26 school year. More than 600 students participated this past year in our

flagship Core Reporter program (grades 4 to 8), up from 474 three years ago—in 22 schools, including five in Camden.

(Please see **We** Page 4)



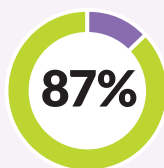
Read our 2026–26 Impact Report



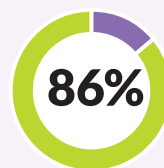
In our 2025–26 Core Reporter Program survey, teachers expressed, on average:



84% of students gained writing skills

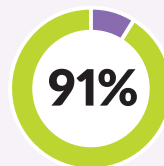


87% of students gained research skills



86% of students gained health knowledge

For the first time, we surveyed our Core program teachers to gauge what percentage of students benefited from social-emotional learning such as self-management and relationship skills by participating in Healthy NewsWorks.



91% of students gained social and emotional skills

Reporters gain social and emotional skills

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Student reflections echoed these outcomes. Although students were not directly asked about social and emotional learning, 71 percent of the 258 student reflections referenced at least one social-emotional skill described in the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) Framework. CASEL identifies five core competencies that support student success: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. CASEL is widely used by school districts across the United States to implement SEL frameworks and curricula.

Students frequently described learning to communicate, collaborate, solve problems, and build meaningful relationships through reporting. “Interacting with others and helping get the job done was something I’d take to heart,” one seventh grader wrote. “It was fun talking to everyone and solving complex problems.”

Another seventh-grade student reflected on the importance of connection through journalism, writing, “Reporting can help people connect. Your social connection can get better by also communicating and bringing others along.”

Read our Impact Report online for a snapshot of program accomplishments and financial highlights.



On the health beat with Dr. Vivek Murthy

In June, eight Healthy NewsWorks reporters had a sit-down interview with former U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy about ways to combat loneliness.

Dr. Murthy put a public health spotlight on the problem during his years as surgeon general and now chairs The Together Project, which is an initiative to help people reduce loneliness and improve their overall health by strengthening relationships and building community.

Dr. Murthy told the reporters that he recommends three things that everyone can do every day to feel more connected to other people:

- Spend five minutes a day reaching out to someone you care about.
- Spend five minutes helping somebody.
- Spend five minutes in solitude without using technology.

The students' interview, their reflections, and a five-minute video are now available on the Healthy NewsWorks website (healthynewsworks.org/dr-vivek-murthy/). The media will be incorporated into our 2026–27 reporting theme, **How We Heal: Caring for Our Minds and Bodies**.



Healthy NewsWorks reporters interview former Surgeon General Vivek Murthy about his work to reduce loneliness and build community.

Each year, Healthy NewsWorks reporters explore a timely theme that is relevant to themselves and their community. The new reporting theme expands on the How We Heal theme reporters explored during the second year of the Covid-19 pandemic. Topics this year include how kindness can boost your health, how to handle changes and challenges, how spending time in nature is beneficial, and why getting enough sleep is important.

Student interviews like the recent one with Dr. Murthy are used as instructional material in Healthy NewsWorks curriculum. The curriculum, which is refreshed annually, is aligned with Common Core State Standards and National Health Education Standards.

Scan to view our Dr. Murthy articles and video



Key topics in 2025–26: Teamwork, empathy, humor, and more

Healthy NewsWorks reporters interviewed a wide array of experts—inside and outside their school buildings—on topics related to our program's 2025–26 reporting theme, **Making Healthy Connections**.

The experts fielded questions about how people can bond through art, volunteering, food, sports, and humor. The reporters also explored how empathy helps build social connections, why showing gratitude makes everyone feel better, and how people can help someone deal with anxiety.

The reporters interviewed school counselors and principals, community librarians and leaders like Mary Carpenter with ComedySportz in Philadelphia,

Tia Mathiesen with Playworks PA, and Michael O'Bryan with humanature, a management consulting firm.

They also learned how anime art requires a team when they spoke to Reet Starwind, a Camden-based artist and poet. Teamwork was also a focus in interviews with Philadelphia Union soccer player Quinn Sullivan and the Philadelphia-based hip hop group ILL DOOTS. Doctors shared their expertise too, including Dr. Daniel Taylor with St. Christopher's Hospital for Children and Dr. Kenneth Ginsburg with Children's Hospital of Philadelphia.

The reporters gained insights not only about the interviewee, but about themselves.

"An experience I had on the newspaper that meant the most to me was when we interviewed professional soccer player, Quinn Sullivan," wrote a fifth grader. "It was a very fun experience meeting him. He told us how it felt playing on a team with much older players than him and gave us advice on how to cope if we were ever in that situation."

And the interviews that made the greatest impression are often people whom they already know.

"Interviewing parents about volunteering was very cool because we got to see how volunteering made a big impact in the real world and how adults and kids can help the community," wrote a sixth grader.

What we do

Healthy NewsWorks helps elementary and middle school students develop skills to be successful as students and in life. Through our program, they learn how to ask questions, identify factual information, write accurately, and share what they learn.

Their work is published in health-focused newspapers, magazines, and digital media that are distributed in their schools and in the broader community.

Our young reporters are empowered as public health messengers, educators, and role models for their peers, schools, families, and communities.

Meet our board

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 Marian Uhlman, Executive Director,
 Ex-officio Member

Get involved

Healthy NewsWorks deeply appreciates the contributions and in-kind support we receive from individual donors, foundations, community groups, volunteers, and corporations. Keep an eye on our website at HealthyNewsWorks.org to stay informed about program news and upcoming events. We'd appreciate hearing your questions and ideas: editor@HealthyNewsWorks.org



Thank you to our community partners

Healthy NewsWorks reporters learned about the benefits of forming personal and community relationships as part of our program focus on Making Healthy Connections.

We could not be more grateful for our connections that have enabled more students and schools to participate in our unique student health media program. It's through the help of individuals, foundations, and businesses that we can fulfill our mission of empowering children to be health communicators for their community.

For several years, we have partnered with businesses and community organizations who support Healthy NewsWorks through sponsorships, providing experts for interviews, volunteer

activities, and in-kind contributions. Special shoutouts to our community partners for the 2025-26 school year:

St. Christopher's Hospital for Children, Troutman Pepper Locke, Chickie's & Pete's, Enon Tabernacle Baptist Church, Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, FourHorse Digital, EMSDC, Woods System of Care, The Wawa Foundation, and Bradley & Bradley/One Digital.

To learn more about becoming a community partner, contact Diane Davis, Healthy NewsWorks outreach manager, at ddavis@healthynewsworks.org.

To see all our 2025-26 supporters, please visit: healthynewsworks.org/our-supporters/

We are grateful for everyone's generosity

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We've also made inroads in our community outreach, delivering 20 family workshops in schools and organizations on such topics as healthy snacking, stress management, and social media.

To achieve this growth, we have expanded our staff to include a full-time chief of staff and part-time communications associate, additional teacher, and a manager of new initiatives.

The Building a Healthy Future campaign has laid the groundwork for us to keep this momentum going, to dive deeper into our partner schools with programming, and to distribute student work even more broadly in our communities.

Again, thank you for helping us reach this important milestone. We look forward to sharing more highlights of our students' progress as we move forward.

—Marian Uhlman
 Executive Director

Scan to help keep the momentum going!

