



Media Release

For Immediate Release
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For more information contact:
JD Raucci @ 309-929-0395

36th Annual Tazewell County Teen Conference Scheduled for January 9

A New Year tradition is once again on the way for students at Tazewell County schools. Tazewell County Health Department (TCHD) and the Tazewell County Youth Board (TCYB) are proud to host the 36th annual Tazewell County Teen Conference on **Thursday, January 9, 2025**, at Illinois Central College (ICC) in East Peoria. As always, this year's edition of Teen Conference aims to get Tazewell County students interacting with students from other communities and learning about topics relevant to their lives as teenagers. In accordance with that goal, the high school portion of the conference will have the theme "Kindness Sticks" while the junior high portion reminds students about the importance of communication with "Oh Snap, Let's Chat."

Throughout the day, an expected 400 students from 20 area schools will participate in workshops designed to educate, inform, and inspire. These workshops will be hosted by area experts including, but not limited to, representatives from the Tazewell County Sheriff's Office, OSF Healthcare, and Tazewell County Health Department. This year's workshop topics include CPR, distracted driving, first job tips, team building, fitness and nutrition, animal therapy, and more!

While not in workshops, students will hear from 2025 Teen Conference keynote speaker Kate Garnes in the Performing Arts Center at ICC at 9 a.m. and 12 p.m. Garnes is a speaker, choreographer, tap dancer, and all-around normal girl just trying to leave the world a tiny bit brighter than when she came into it. Originally from Missouri, she grew up smaller than others her age and always felt the need to chase perfection. In working with youth for over 10 years, she has recognized the same feeling in today's teens. In her keynote talk, "Sound Your Battle Cry: Stop Making Excuses and Take Your Life Back," Garnes uses her story of being told she was never good enough to becoming a performer at Walt Disney World to show teens that you don't need anyone to save you to become great, you can learn how to save yourself.

MEDIA: Please RSVP prior to the event with your interest to attend to JD Raucci at 309-929-0395

INTERVIEWS: Available with keynote speaker Kate Garnes and Tazewell County Youth Board President Kamden Garman and Vice President Sydney Goebel, following Garnes's first keynote speech from approximately **10 a.m.-11 a.m.** Media are invited to attend Garnes's talk at **9 a.m.**

WHERE: Performing Arts Center at Illinois Central College – 1 College Dr., East Peoria, IL 61635

The Tazewell Teens Unlimited Teen Conference is sponsored by the Tazewell County Health Department, the Tazewell County Youth Board, Tazewell County Schools, and the Tazewell Teen Initiative.

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