Safe and Supportive Schools: Health Risks

Health Risks, Behavior, and Practices

The indicators below, drawn from the SALT Survey, provide a sense of the extent to which students in this school have begun to experiment with behavior that risks or compromises their physical or mental health. If persistent or habitual, such behaviors can interfere with or even damage a student’s education, health, or both. (Only students in 4th grade and above take the SALT Survey.)

Student risk behaviors and attitudes

Percent of students who say that within the last 30 days:

- They smoked at least one day.  
- They used chewing tobacco or snuff.  
- They used illegal drugs (such as marijuana, uppers, downers, inhalants).  
- They drank alcohol at least once.

Percent who say their close friends would approve or not care if:

- They smoked marijuana regularly.  
- They had 5 or more alcoholic drinks once or twice each weekend.

Student health practices

Percent of students who say that:

- They felt they had problems with one of the following: acne, overweight, underweight, too tall, too short.  
- They did not eat any vegetables or fruits in the past day.  
- On a typical night they get 7 hours of sleep or less.  
- During the past week they ate breakfast 2 days or fewer.  
- On an average school day, they watch TV at least 2 hours or more.  
- On an average school day, they Instant Message (IM), check their e-mail, or visit chat rooms at least 2 hours or more.

Students’ primary care

Where students say they usually see their regular doctor or nurse when they are sick:

- I have no regular doctor or nurse.  
- Emergency room/Hospital  
- Community health clinic  
- Doctor’s office  
- Elementary-school principals statewide  
- Elementary-school teachers statewide  
- Other health-care facility  
- Providing on-site health or social services  
- Providing access/linkages for students and parents to health and social services or counseling  
- Providing health-promoting environment and wellness programs for students (e.g., fitness days, health messages)  
- Policies that support positive health practices and wellness for teachers and students (e.g., smoke-free environment, eliminate vending machines with junk food, reduce fat in lunch-room meals).

Teacher and principal attitudes

Percent who agree or strongly agree that the following practices are essential to effective education:

- Teachers at this school  
- Elementary-school teachers statewide  
- Community health clinic  
- Doctor’s office  
- Elementary-school principals statewide  
- Providing on-site health or social services  
- Providing access/linkages for students and parents to health and social services or counseling  
- Providing health-promoting environment and wellness programs for students (e.g., fitness days, health messages)  
- Policies that support positive health practices and wellness for teachers and students (e.g., smoke-free environment, eliminate vending machines with junk food, reduce fat in lunch-room meals).