

Utah School Health Profiles Highlights 2014

What are the School Health Profiles?

School Health Profiles provide a snapshot of health-related education, policies, and programs in Utah schools. The profiles help state and local education and health agencies monitor and assess characteristics of school health programs. They include information on policies related to physical education, tobacco-use prevention, nutrition, asthma management, health services, and violence and injury prevention.

How are the data collected?

Data are collected from school principals and lead health education teachers. Two questionnaires were mailed to 258 secondary public schools containing any of grades 6 through 12 in Utah during the spring of 2014.

How can this help my school?

Data from School Health Profiles can be used to plan and enhance school health programs. The Utah Department of Health has compiled key findings and recommendations schools can use to guide their efforts to improve health programs.

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School Health Index

The School Health Index (SHI) is an online self-assessment and planning tool. It helps schools identify the strengths and weaknesses of their health and safety policies and programs, develop an action plan to improve student health, and engage teachers, students, and the community in promoting healthy behaviors. It is recommended that schools use the tool available at <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/shi/index.htm> to strengthen their policies and programs. The Utah Department of Health offers a free training to help schools complete the SHI. Please contact Sarah Roundy at saroundy@utah.gov for more information.

The percent of schools that have used the School Health Index to assess policies, activities, and programs in the following areas are:

- 35.5% Physical activity
- 36.6% Nutrition
- 44.9% Tobacco-use prevention
- 21.7% Asthma
- 38.8% Violence and injury prevention
- 25.6% HIV, STD, and teen pregnancy prevention



Physical Activity and Nutrition

52.8% of schools prohibit advertisements for candy, fast food restaurants, or soft drinks

80.8% of schools sell less healthy foods and beverages (e.g. soda, candy, baked goods, etc.) outside of the school lunch program

Outside of P.E., 63.9% of schools do not participate in physical activity breaks in classrooms

5.3% of schools have implemented the Comprehensive School Physical Activity Program (CSPAP)

Recommendations:

- Implement the *School Health Guidelines to Promote Healthy Eating and Physical Activity*. These guidelines can be used as a foundation for developing, implementing, and evaluating school-based healthy eating and physical activity policies and practices for students.
- The health of students is linked to their academic success. Create environments that support the recommended 60 minutes or more of physical activity each day for children and adolescents aged 6-17, and offer healthy eating options wherever food is sold.
- Use the *School Health Index (SHI): Self-Assessment and Planning Guide* to identify strengths and weaknesses of school health policies and programs, create an action plan, and encourage the community in promoting better health.

Resources:

- The School Health Guidelines (SHG) serve as the foundation to create school-based healthy eating and physical activity policies and practices for students. For more information visit <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/npao/strategies.htm>.
- Find resources and tools to help your school meet nutrition standards at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/healthierschoolday/tools-schools-focusing-smart-snacks>.
- The Comprehensive School Physical Activity Program (CSPAP) enables students to participate in daily physical activity. Find the step-by-step guide at <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/physicalactivity/cspap.htm>.
- Ensure that the district has a comprehensive wellness policy. For policy requirements, resources, and help, please visit <http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/local-school-wellness-policy-requirements>.
- The Alliance for a Healthier Generation's Healthy Schools Program is an evidence-based initiative that will help create and sustain healthy environments. See how your school can adopt this framework by visiting <https://schools.healthiergeneration.org/>.



Asthma



7.7% of schools record when a student's absence is due to asthma

32.8% of schools provide referrals to any provider for students diagnosed with or suspected to have asthma

21.7% of schools have used the School Health Index to assess their asthma policies and programs

Recommendations:

- Assign school office staff to keep a list of students with asthma on file. Track absenteeism for all students with asthma and refer to primary care providers when students with asthma have excess absences.
- Work with school nurses to have an asthma action plan completed yearly by parents of children with asthma.
- Periodically assess your school using the School Health Index for asthma related policies and programs.



Resources:

- Utah law allows students to carry and self-administer their asthma medications. Read and implement a school policy in accordance to Utah Code 53A-11-602, available at <http://le.utah.gov/xcode/Title53A/Chapter11/53A-11-S602.html>.
- Access the self-carry and administration form available at http://health.utah.gov/asthma/pdfs/schools/SelfAdministration_English.pdf.
- The Combined Asthma School Form combines all of the forms a student needs to manage asthma at school. It serves as an asthma action plan, medication authorization, and self-administration form. The combined form can be found at: <http://health.utah.gov/asthma/pdfs/schools/AsthmaSchoolForm.pdf>.
- The Winning With Asthma program provides free training for coaches at <http://www.winningwithasthma.org/>. Have your staff and coaches trained yearly.

Tobacco Prevention



76.6% of schools prohibit electronic cigarette use as part of their tobacco policy

49.3% of schools require participation in a cessation program for students caught using regular cigarettes and 81.0% require participation for students caught using e-cigarettes

56.9% of schools have a tobacco-free school environment and 72.1% of schools post signs marking a tobacco-free zone

42.6% of schools teach 18 key tobacco-use prevention topics in a required course

Recommendations:

- Implement a comprehensive tobacco policy which includes e-cigarette use in your school or district.
- As part of a comprehensive policy, schools should require that students or staff caught violating the tobacco policy be referred to cessation services for help quitting.
- A key part of enforcement is signage; it is an easy, non-threatening way to inform parents and visitors that school property is a tobacco-free zone. For free signage, including e-cigarette signage, contact the Utah Department of Health at waytoquit@utah.gov or contact your local health department.
- Encourage teachers to teach the Prevention Dimensions curriculum. These lessons teach important tobacco prevention topics and meet core curriculum requirements for health.

Resources:

- Visit <http://www.tobaccofreeutah.org/pdfs/schoolguide.pdf> or contact your local health department for information on how to create a comprehensive tobacco policy.
- Free phone-based and online-counseling cessation services are available at <http://waytoquit.org/behavioral-treatment>.
- A cessation class for youth called Ending Nicotine Dependence (END) is available through local health departments, is generally free of charge, and gives youth the tools they need to quit tobacco and e-cigarettes. For more information visit <http://waytoquit.org/behavioral-treatment>.
- To obtain your copy of the prevention dimensions curriculum go to <http://schools.utah.gov/utahpd/>.

School Health Services



15.0% of schools include Health Services in their written School Improvement Plan (SIP)

5.8% of schools have a full time registered nurse

58.1% of schools record medical reasons for student absences

Recommendations:

- Include goals for health services in your school improvement plan (SIP). Poor health is a known barrier to learning and a frequent cause of underachievement. The greatest impact on student health and academic success is achieved through a collaborative and comprehensive whole school, whole community, whole child (WSCC) approach.
- Improve your school nurse to student ratio. A school nurse is an essential component of a healthy school. Healthy People 2020 aims for a nurse to student ratio of 1:750 well students.
- Identify student absenteeism related to medical reasons. Schools can help meet the needs of students with chronic conditions to improve attendance and educational outcomes. A multidisciplinary student services team (SST) can aid the student with chronic health issues by assisting with access to care and student medical insurance. The SST is in place to assure the student is evaluated for the following needs:
 - Individualized Health Care Plan (IHP)/Emergency Action Plan (EAP)
 - Individual Education Plan (IEP) or
 - Section 504 Plan

Resources:

- “Whole school, whole community, whole child (WSCC): a collaborative approach to learning” can be found at <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/wsc/index.htm>.
- The Healthy People 2020 school nurse ratio goal (ECBP-5.1) can be found at http://www.healthypeople.gov/node/4258/data_details.
- H.R. 1857 (113th) Student to School Nurse Ratio Improvement Act of 2013 if passed will help schools reduce their nurse to student ratio. Read more at <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/113/hr1857>.
- See <http://nursingworld.org/DocumentVault/GOVA/Ruler-FAQ.pdf> for FAQ about and benefits to hiring school nurses.
- Attendance Works is a national and state initiative that promotes better policy and practice around school attendance: <http://www.attendanceworks.org/>.

Violence and Injury Prevention



90.9% of schools have a policy that addresses concussions during sporting events

94.4% of schools use the Student Injury Reporting System (SIRS) to collect data on injuries that occur at school

71.2% of schools have procedures to inform students, parents, coaches, school nurses, and teachers about the school's concussion policy

98.4% of schools have a policy that requires parental notification if a student threatens to commit suicide or was involved in an incident of bullying, cyber-bullying, harassment, hazing or retaliation

Recommendations

- Adopt a concussion policy. Utah law (<http://le.utah.gov/~2011/bills/hbillenr/hb0204.htm>) requires schools to adopt and enforce a concussion and head injury policy and to get written approval of the policy by parents before their child participates in a sport activity. A child who gets a head injury must be removed from play and may return only after written clearance from a qualified health care provider.
- Require coaches, trainers, officials and student athletes to be trained on recognizing and responding to concussions.
- Replace damaged equipment promptly, especially helmets and other protective head gear. Some helmets require replacement after any impact, even if there are no visible signs of damage.
- Participate in the Student Injury Reporting System (SIRS). The SIRS allows schools to track injuries that happen on school grounds during school-sponsored activities.
- Require all school personnel to receive yearly training in suicide prevention (e.g., QPR, Mental Health First Aid, etc.).
- When notifying parents about incidences at school, such as bullying or threats of suicide, also provide them with resources (educational material, list of providers, etc.) to get additional help if needed.

Resources:

- HEADS UP online training and educational materials for parents, coaches, youth athletes, and schools are available at <http://www.cdc.gov/headsup/youthsports/training/index.html>.
- To enroll your school in the SIRS visit <https://sir.health.utah.gov/>.
- Schools can receive funding from the State of Utah to adopt and implement evidence-based or emerging best practice suicide prevention training practices and programs for students and staff. Learn more at <http://www.schools.utah.gov/prevention/Suicide-Prevention.aspx>.
- The Utah Department of Health Violence and Injury Prevention Program website is available at <http://health.utah.gov/vipp/>.