

School Health Profiles

Highlights 2010

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What are the School Health Profiles?

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

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 Spring 2010.

How can this help my school?

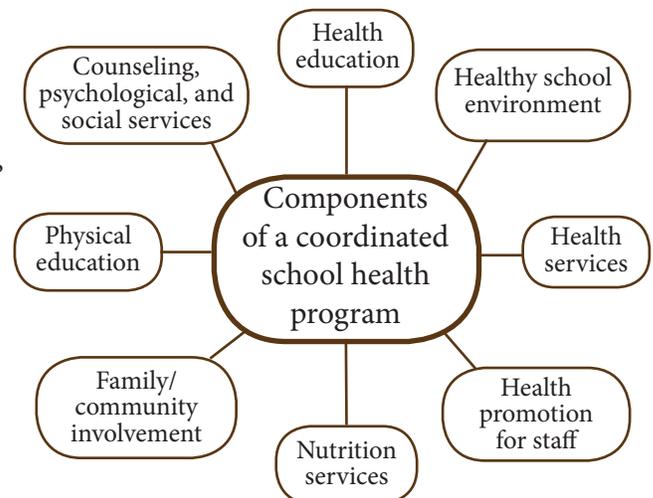
Data from School Health Profiles can be used to plan and enhance school health programs. The Utah Department of Health has compiled key findings and recommendations schools can use to guide their efforts to improve health programs.

16.6% of schools have a group that helps plan and implement school health programs, with representation from at least 10 different areas of school staff, community members, community organizations, local government organizations, or businesses

Coordinated school health programs are **designed to improve the health and well-being of all students** so they can participate fully and be successful in school. The process involves bringing together school administrators, teachers, other staff, students, families, and community members to assess health needs, set priorities, and plan, implement, and evaluate health-related activities.

Recommendation:

- Establish a coordinated school health program that includes these eight components in your school. For more resources visit <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/cshp/index.htm>



Physical Activity, Nutrition, and Obesity

46.9% of schools prohibited advertising and promotion of candy, fast food restaurants, or soft drinks in all locations

91.7% of schools sold less healthy competitive foods and beverages outside the school food service programs

45.3% of schools did not exempt students from taking required physical education for certain reasons



Recommendations:

- Schools should **strengthen wellness policies**. Find resources and model school wellness policies at: <http://www.schoolwellnesspolicies.org/> and <http://cspinet.org/marketingguidelines.pdf>
- CDC has prepared information for school administrators, staff, parents, and students to **implement national recommendations for nutritional standards for foods in schools** at <http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/nutrition/standards.htm>
- Action for Healthy Kids has a wellness policy tool and additional resources at: <http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/school-programs/our-programs/wellness-policy-tool/>
- It is recommended that **students should not be exempt from taking and participating in physical education due to medical or other reasons**.
- Modification to participation requirements can be accommodated for certain limitations, but should only be given if required by the student's physician.



Asthma

28.5% of schools require that all staff members receive training on recognizing and responding to severe asthma symptoms



60.3% of schools identify students with poorly controlled asthma

49.8% of schools have an asthma action plan on file for all students with asthma

45.3% of schools have a policy permitting students to carry and self-administer asthma medications

Recommendations:

- The Winning With Asthma program provides **free training for coaches** at <http://www.winningwithasthma.org/>. Have your staff and coaches trained yearly.
- The Asthma Program provides **free 20-minute trainings for school staff**. To request a training, send an e-mail to asthma@utah.gov



- Assign school office staff to **keep a list of students with asthma on file**.
- Work with school nurses to **have an asthma action plan completed yearly** by parents of children with asthma.
- Work with nurses to **keep forms on file at school readily accessible** in case of emergency.

- Utah law allows students to carry and self-administer their asthma medications. Read and implement Utah Code 53A-11-602, available at http://le.utah.gov/~code/TITLE53A/htm/53A11_060200.htm
- Access the self-carry and administer form available on the Asthma Program website at http://www.health.utah.gov/asthma/pdf_files/Schools/SelfAdministration_English.pdf.

Tobacco Prevention

57.4% of schools follow a policy that mandates a “tobacco-free environment”

46.5% of schools taught 15 key tobacco-use prevention topics in a required course

77.1% of schools required participation in an assistance, education, or cessation program when students were caught smoking cigarettes

68.6% of schools posted signs marking a tobacco-free school zone

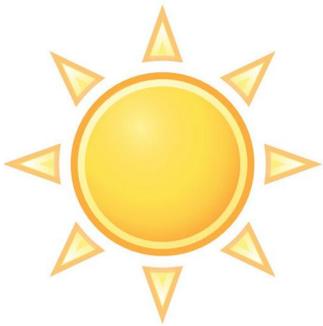
Recommendations:

- Implement a **comprehensive tobacco policy** in your school or district. Visit <http://www.tobaccofreeutah.org/schoolguide.pdf> or contact your local health department for information on how to create a comprehensive tobacco policy.
- Encourage teachers to **teach the Prevention Dimensions curriculum** found at <http://www.utahpd.org>. These lessons **teach important tobacco prevention topics and meet core curriculum requirements** for health.
- 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 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.
- **Signage is a key part of enforcement**; it is an easy, non-threatening way to inform parents and visitors that school property is a tobacco-free zone. For free signage contact the Utah Department of Health at TheTRUTH@utah.gov or contact your local health department.



School Health Policy Recommendations

Cancer



A few serious sunburns during childhood can significantly increase a person's chance of getting skin cancer. Some things schools can do to help protect students from the damaging effects of the sun include:

- Adopting a **sun safety policy** which includes allowing students to wear hats, sunglasses, and sunscreen when outside.
- Installing **shade structures on school property**. These may be shade-providing trees, canopies, or other structures.
- Avoid scheduling outdoor classes and activities when ultraviolet rays are strongest (between 10:00 am and 4:00 pm).

Diabetes

- Youth with diabetes may experience dangerous hypoglycemic episodes as a side effect of using insulin. **Schools should have a policy in place that outlines recruitment and training of school staff in the administration of glucagon.**
- Schools should have **written policies that allow students, staff, and faculty with diabetes to administer self-care** as needed in a clean, private environment.
- People with diabetes may benefit from having access to refrigeration for insulin and juice.

Injury Prevention

In 2008, 694 emergency department visits in Utah were for head injuries from organized or recreational sports activities. Of these, 429 (62%) resulted in a diagnosis of a concussion.

- In 2011, the legislature passed a **law requiring schools and amateur sports organizations to adopt and enforce a concussion and head injury policy.**
- Schools should implement a policy to require that a **child will be removed from a sporting event when suspected of having a concussion or traumatic head injury** until that child receives written medical clearance from a qualified health care provider.

