

**H1. State-level Recruitment Script for the Youth Risk Behavior Survey Supplemental Documents
- State Letter of Invitation**

STATE LETTER OF INVITATION

{DATE}

{FIELD}1

Dear {FIELD}2 :

I am writing to inform you that ___ schools in your state are among the 200 schools randomly selected across the United States to participate in the national 2009 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), a survey of the priority health-risk behaviors among students in grades 9 through 12. The YRBS is sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and was designed in 1991 in cooperation with 19 Federal agencies and 75 state and local departments of education.

Your support for the survey would help ensure the voluntary participation of schools in your state. A letter of support from you that we could distribute to the selected schools would be extremely helpful. I have enclosed a list of the counties, schools, and grades selected in your state, and the estimated number of students per school. Data collection will be scheduled for February through April 2009.

The YRBS has widespread support. The survey is supported by many major national organizations interested in the health of youth. The American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Association for Health Education, the American Association of School Administrators, the American Cancer Society, the American Medical Association, the Association of State and Territorial Chronic Disease Directors, the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials, the Council of Chief State School Officers, the National Association of Chronic Disease Directors, the National Association of State Boards of Education, the National Education Association, the National PTA, the National School Boards Association, and the Society of State Directors of Health, Physical Education and Recreation have provided letters of support.

The Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System has become the primary source of information on the most important health risk behaviors of high school students in this country and is increasingly used by leading educators, public health officials, the media, and others to advocate for and improve school health policies and programs. In parallel to the national survey, the YRBS questionnaire is used independently by many state and local departments of education and health to conduct their own surveys. Results from the national YRBS serve as an index against which results from state- and local-level surveys can be compared.

The YRBS focuses on priority health risk behaviors that are often established during childhood and adolescence and that contribute to the leading causes of death and disability among youth and adults in the United States. These behaviors include: behaviors that result in unintentional injuries and violence; tobacco use; alcohol and other drug use; sexual behaviors that contribute to HIV infection, other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), and unintended pregnancies; unhealthy dietary behaviors; and physical inactivity.

The YRBS is conducted biennially among a random sample of 9th through 12th grade students. A new sample of students is selected each time the survey is conducted. In each school, one or two classes at each grade are selected randomly to participate. Though some school districts selected to participate this year may be selected in future years, it is very unlikely the same schools will be selected more than once. The 98-item questionnaire will be administered during one normal class period by specially trained field staff. Survey administration procedures are designed to protect student privacy and allow for anonymous participation. Counties, cities, school districts, schools, and students will not be identified in any published reports.

Enclosed are a copy of the questionnaire, parental permission form and survey fact sheet, letters of support, and the 2007 YRBS results report. Within one week, a representative from Macro International Inc. (ORC Macro), a nationally recognized survey research firm, will contact you to discuss your support of the survey. If you have any immediate questions, please call Dr. Danice Eaton of my staff at (770) 488-6143. Your support for this survey will help to improve efforts to reduce priority health-risk behaviors among adolescents throughout our Nation.

Sincerely yours,

Howell Wechsler, Ed. D., M.P.H.
Director
Division of Adolescent and School Health
National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion

Enclosures

cc: