

I1. State-level Recruitment Script for the National Youth Tobacco Survey Supplemental Documents - State Letter of Invitation

STATE LETTER OF INVITATION

{DATE}

{FIELD}1

Dear {FIELD}2 :

Tobacco use is the single leading and most preventable cause of disease and death in the United States. In November 1998, Americans won an unprecedented victory in our nation's century-long fight against tobacco use and abuse. The Attorneys General representing 46 states, the District of Columbia, and U.S. territories, successfully settled their cases with the tobacco companies. The Master Settlement Agreement (MSA) amounts to \$206 billion over the first 25 years.

The purpose of this letter is to inform you that ___ schools in your state are among the 200 public and private schools that have been randomly selected across the United States to participate in the national 2009 National Youth Tobacco Survey (NYTS). The Youth Tobacco Survey (YTS) was developed by the states, with technical assistance and facilitation by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The YTS has been conducted by 46 states, the District of Columbia, and several US territories. It was designed to provide states with the data necessary to support the design, implementation, and evaluation of the youth components of a comprehensive tobacco prevention and control program. [Your state is among those that have conducted a successful statewide YTS].

The National Youth Tobacco Survey (NYTS), funded by the CDC and modeled after the YTS, is the most comprehensive source of *nationally* representative data regarding youth and tobacco. It covers the following tobacco related topics: prevalence of use (cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, cigars, and tobacco in a pipe, bidis, and kreteks), knowledge and attitudes, media and advertising, minors access and enforcement, school curriculum, environmental tobacco smoke exposure, and cessation. The NYTS will be conducted biennially in odd-numbered spring semesters (e.g., 2009) and provides nationally representative data for students in grades 6-12 in the United States. Furthermore, the NYTS is the *only* nationally representative source of data for middle school students (grades 6-8) in the United States. The NYTS is essential for providing a national benchmark against which states and local agencies can measure the magnitude of the problem of tobacco use and design effective prevention and control programs. Within the Healthy People 2010 focus area of tobacco use, the NYTS provides data relevant to 6 health objectives. The survey also provides data to monitor one of the 10 Leading Health Indicators for Healthy People 2010 that addresses tobacco use.

The CDC respects the educational mission of schools; for that reason, only a small number of classes in each of the selected schools will be asked to participate. The survey will take one regular 45-minute class period to administer and complete. Student anonymity will be safeguarded. Data will be collected by specially trained field staff. Data will not be reported by school, school district, or state, but nationally. As on the past five cycles of the NYTS, Macro International, a nationally recognized research organization, will conduct the NYTS.

We plan to initiate contact with school districts in the fall of 2008, to invite their schools to participate in the 2009 NYTS. Because your support for the survey is influential, we ask that you reaffirm your support of the survey at this time. Enclosed are representative letters of support from national organizations, the 2009 NYTS questionnaire, a sample parental permission form and survey fact sheet, and a copy of the most recently published NYTS results report. A representative of the project will contact your office in the next week about the role you wish to play in making the 2009 NYTS a success in your state. If you have any immediate questions, please call Dr. Danice Eaton of my staff at (770) 488-6143.

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
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Enclosures

cc: