



The Division of Adolescent and School Health (DASH), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is conducting a national survey of school health policies and practices.

SHPPS will describe school policies and practices at the school and classroom levels nationwide related to health education, physical education and activity, health services, mental health and social services, nutrition services, faculty and staff health promotion, healthy and safe school environment, and family and community involvement.

This document answers important questions about the study. For additional information about SHPPS, please visit the study web site: <http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/shpps/>.

Q. Why is the study being conducted?

A. The health problems of adolescents, many of which are caused by their own behavior, have attracted national attention. Little is known, however, about the current status of school health policies and practices that promote healthy behaviors and address the health needs of children and youth. Study participants will provide information that will be used at the national, state, and local levels to assess and shape the future of school health programs.

Q. From whom will the data be collected and how?

A. Data will be collected from school faculty and staff who are responsible for school health policies and practices. They will be interviewed at their schools by professionally trained interviewers.

Q. Will any data be collected from students?

A. No. Interviews will be conducted only with school faculty and staff.

Q. Do schools or school staff have to participate?

A. Participation in SHPPS is voluntary; however, the participation of each school is important to ensure the completeness and accuracy of the results. Schools that are randomly selected cannot be replaced, and a high response rate is necessary to achieve valid national estimates of school health policies and practices.

Q. Will the responses of participants be treated in a confidential manner?

A. School and classroom information will be reported only in aggregate form. No schools or school staff will be named in any study reports.

Q. Who will be interviewed at the school level?

A. The principal will be asked to identify the most knowledgeable person to discuss each of the study topics. In addition, randomly selected teachers of health education and physical education will be asked to take part in interviews on classroom practices.

Q. How is SHPPS coordinated at the school level?

A. It is preferable to have one contact person/liaison at a school. The principal or a contact person will identify the appropriate staff for an in-person interview.

Q. How long will it take to complete the interviews?

A. The interviews vary in length depending on the topic area and range from about 20 minutes to just over an hour.

Q. When will data for the study be collected?

A. Data collection in the schools will occur from February through May 2014. A convenient timeframe for school interviews will be identified by each school's principal.

Q. What is the observational component included in SHPPS?

A. Observations consist of documenting the foods and beverages students have access to during the school day through vending machines. Although some schools may not have vending machines for students, for schools that do, we will note the foods and beverages that are available in up to five randomly selected machines.

Q. When will the results be available?

A. Results will be released by the fall of 2015 and will be available on the CDC's website (<http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/SHPPS>).

Q. Is the study limited to certain grade levels or schools?

A. No. Information will be collected on elementary, middle, and high school policies and practices in public, Catholic, and private schools.

Q. How many states, districts, and schools will be involved?

A. Nationwide, about 800 schools will be invited to participate. However, schools will not be selected in every state.

Q. Does the study have national support?

A. Yes. The survey is supported by many major national organizations interested in the health of youth, including: American Association for Health Education; American Association of School Administrators; American Medical Association; American Nurses Association; American School Health Association; Association of State and Territorial Health Officials; Council of Chief State School Officers; National Assembly on School-Based Health Care; National Association of School Nurses; National Association of School Nurses; National Association of State Boards of Education; National Association of State School Nurse Consultants; National Education Association; National Education Goals Panel; National Parent Teacher Association; National School Boards Association; National Middle School Association; President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sport; School Nutrition Association; Society of State Directors of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation.

[NOTE: THIS LIST WILL BE REVISED TO REFLECT ORGANIZATIONS ENDORSING THE STUDY IN 2014]

Q. Who is collecting the SHPPS data?

A. ICF International Inc., a nationally recognized survey research firm in Calverton, Maryland, has received a contract from CDC to work with schools to conduct the study. ICF is working with CDC to select a sample of schools, develop the SHPPS questionnaires, arrange and conduct visits to schools, and process data.

Q. Where can additional information be obtained?

A. To obtain additional information about SHPPS, contact CDC or ICF.

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