

2021 Adolescent Behaviors and Experiences Survey

Attachment P7

Letter of Invitation to States



{DATE}

{Agency Head SAL FIRST.NAME LAST.NAME}  
{STATE AGENCY NAME}  
{ADDRESS}  
{CITY, ST ZIP}

Dear {TITLE LAST.NAME}:

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will be conducting the Adolescent Behaviors and Experiences Survey (ABES) during the 2020-2021 school year. **The purpose of this letter is to inform you that {#} schools in {STATE} are among the approximately 350 schools randomly selected across the United States to participate in the ABES.**

This has been a challenging time as we navigate the impact of COVID-19 on our communities and our schools. The pandemic highlighted the essential role that schools play in the health and well-being of our students. We understand that the effects of this public health crisis will continue to impact student learning throughout the 2020-2021 school year, and potentially beyond. Nevertheless, we must continue to monitor the behaviors that put our youth at the greatest risk for harm. In order to assess students' engagement in risk behaviors during the pandemic, and to help understand the pandemic's impact on youth, CDC will conduct the ABES in spring 2021.

**The ABES will only be conducted once and is essential to helping CDC understand the impact that COVID-19 has had on students nationwide.** The ABES will be administered as a web-based survey between January and May 2021. Only a small number of classes in each school are asked to participate. Depending on class configuration, typically one or two classes equating to about 25 to 50 students in each selected grade are chosen randomly. Students in selected classes will complete the survey outside of school using any internet-connected device.

As a survey of students in grades 9 through 12, the ABES will provide valuable insight into the current and emerging trends of youth engagement in risky behaviors. Topics include: (1) students' experiences during the pandemic, (2) behaviors that result in unintentional injuries and violence, (3) tobacco use, (4) alcohol and other drug use, (5) sexual behaviors that contribute to HIV infection, other sexually transmitted diseases, and unintended pregnancies, (6) unhealthy dietary behaviors, and (7) physical inactivity.

The CDC respects the educational mission of schools; for that reason, only a small number of classes in each school, one or two at each selected grade level, are chosen randomly to participate. Survey administration procedures are designed to protect student privacy and allow for anonymous participation. States, counties, cities, school districts, schools, and students will not be identified in any published reports. As a symbol of appreciation for contributing their time and support, the CDC will provide each participating school with a monetary token of appreciation. One option is to use these funds for prevention curriculum and educational materials. However, no restrictions will be placed on how schools may use these funds.

Enclosed are a list of schools selected in your State, the ABES questionnaire, a fact sheet, and sample parental permission forms. Within one week, a representative from ICF, a nationally recognized survey research firm contracted by CDC to conduct the ABES, will contact you to

confirm your receipt of this information and answer any questions you may have. If you have any immediate questions, please call Ms. Alice Roberts of ICF at (800) 675-9727 or Dr. Nancy Brener of CDC at 404-718-8133.

As we continue to adapt to a “new normal,” results from the ABES will be used to develop tools and resources for communities and schools to use in their pandemic recovery efforts. Your support for this survey is appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

Kathleen A. Ethier, Ph.D.  
Director, Division of Adolescent and School Health  
National Center for HIV, Viral Hepatitis, STD, and TB Prevention  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Enclosures

cc: Nancy Brener, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
{STATE PRECONTACT}  
Alice Roberts, ICF  
{RECRUITER}, ICF