



# Promoting Parent Engagement in School Health

National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD, and TB Prevention  
Division of Adolescent and School Health



# Program Objectives

1. Understand the importance of adolescent and school health.
2. Define parent engagement and understand why it is important.
3. Describe the association between parent engagement and student social, academic, and health outcomes.
4. Identify the essential aspects of parent engagement.
5. Identify strategies and actions schools and districts can implement to increase parent engagement in school health.
6. Identify resources for assessing and promoting parent engagement in school health.

# How healthy are our adolescents?

In 2011, among U.S. high school students . . .

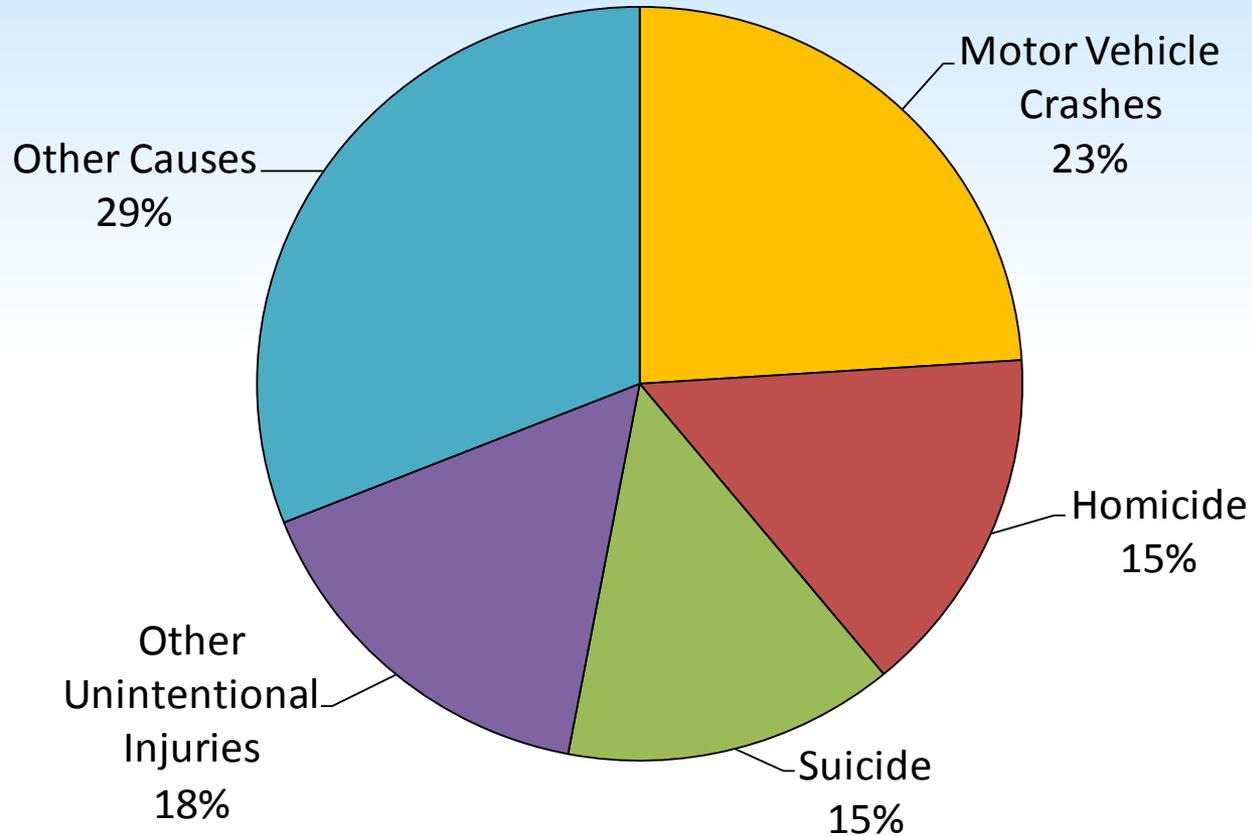
- 22% ate fruit or drank 100% fruit juices three or more times per day during the 7 days before the survey.
- 13% of students were obese and 15% were overweight.
- 29% of students were physically active at least 60 minutes on all 7 days before the survey.
- 48% did not attend physical education classes in an average week.
- 18% currently smoked cigarettes.

# How healthy are our adolescents? (Continued)

In 2011, among U.S. high school students . . .

- 6% had had sexual intercourse for the first time before age 13 years.
- 47% ever had sexual intercourse.
- 39% reported current alcohol use.
- 22% of students had had five or more drinks of alcohol in a row.
- 24% rode in a car or other vehicle driven by someone who had been drinking alcohol one or more times in last 30 days.
- 17% carried a weapon (e.g., a gun, knife, or club).

# Leading Causes of Death Among Persons Aged 10 – 24 Years in the United States, 2010

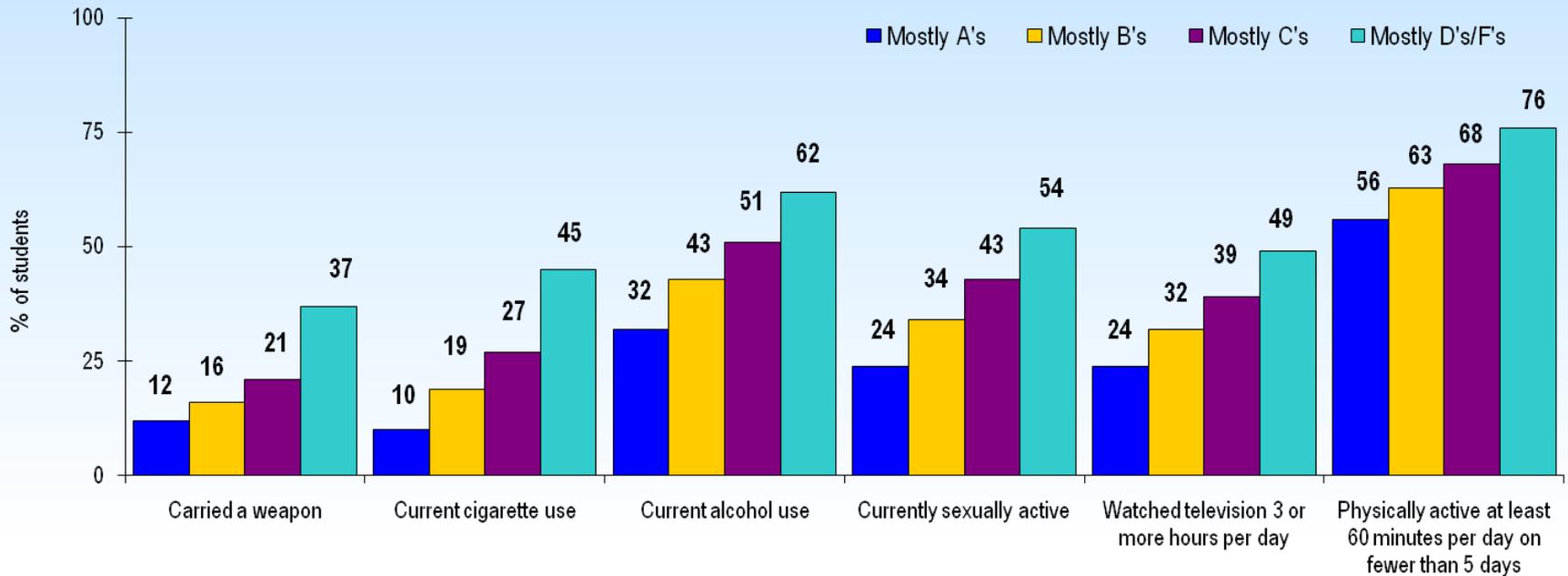


Source: National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS). National Vital Statistics System. Hyattsville, MD: US Department of Health and Human Services; 2012.

# Why address health in schools?

- Increase students' readiness to learn
- Improve school attendance and graduation rates
- Create safe learning environments
- Improve social skills
- Decrease behavioral issues
- Educate many children and adolescents about health

# Percentage of U.S. High School Students Getting Mostly A's, Mostly B's, Mostly C's, or Mostly D's/F's Who Engage in Selected Health-Risk Behaviors\*



\*  $p < .0001$  after controlling for sex, race/ethnicity., and grade level.

Source: CDC. (2010). Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance – United States 2009. [June 3, 2010]. MMWR 2010; 59(No. SS-5).

# Parent engagement in schools

... is defined as parents and school staff working together to support and improve the learning, development, and health of children and adolescents.

# Why engage parents in school health?

- Promotes positive education and health behaviors and outcomes
- Enhances school efforts
- Improves health services for students with healthcare needs (e.g., asthma, diabetes, and food allergies)

# Education Benefits of Parent Engagement

Students who have parents involved in their school life have —

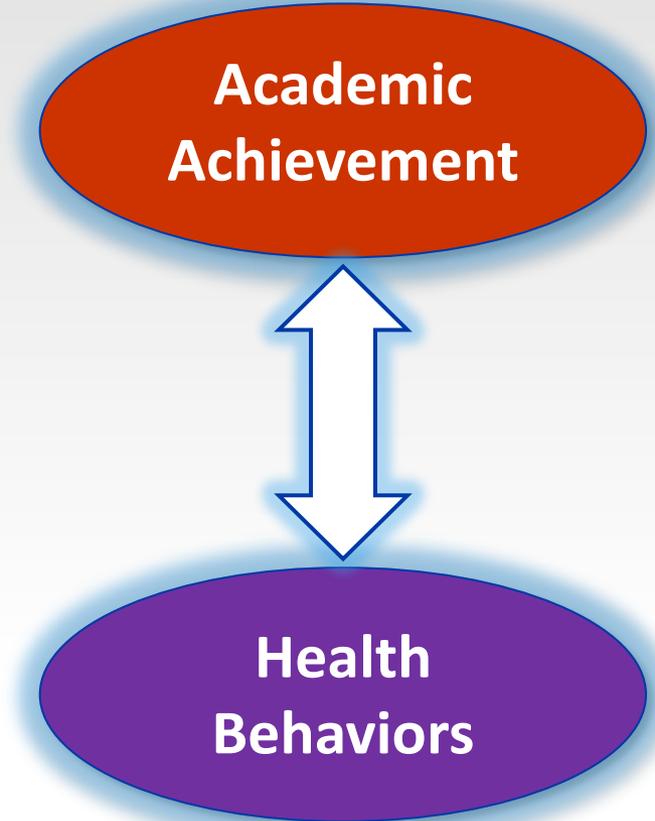
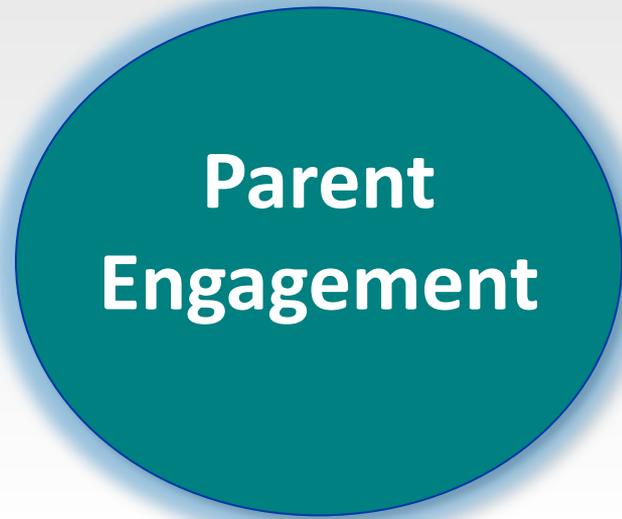
- Better student behavior.
- Better school attendance.
- Higher academic performance.
- Higher school completion rates.
- Enhanced social skills.

# Health Benefits of Parent Engagement

Students who have parents involved in their school life are less likely to —

- Experiment with alcohol.
- Smoke cigarettes.
- Be emotionally distressed.
- Become pregnant.
- Be physically inactive.

# Parent Engagement, Academics, and Health: Important Links



# What factors motivate parents to be engaged?

- Parents believe that their actions will improve their child's learning and well-being.
- School staff want and expect parents to be engaged.
- School staff reach out to parents in ways that encourage and enable them to be engaged in their children's education.
- Students want and expect their parents to be engaged.

# What are three essential aspects of parent engagement?



Schools must make a positive connection with parents.



# What is needed for parents and schools to be CONNECTED?

- Have a clear vision and mission statement that includes parent engagement.
- Create a welcoming and trusting school environment.
- Provide school staff development on how to engage parents.
- Ask parents what they want and need.
- Have a well-planned program for parent engagement in the school.

# Activity 1: Connect with Parents — Instructions

- See Handout B.
- Circle “yes” or “no” to the questions on Handout B.
- Put a star (\*) by two of the questions to which you responded “no” that you would like to address in your school to improve the school’s connection with parents.
- Think about and note what your school might do to address the starred questions.

Schools should provide a variety of activities and frequent opportunities to fully engage parents.



# How can schools ENGAGE parents in school health activities?

- Provide parenting support.
- Communicate with parents.
- Provide a variety of volunteer opportunities.
- Support learning at home.
- Encourage parents to be part of decision making in schools.
- Collaborate with the community.

## Activity 2: Engage Parents — Instructions

- See Handout C.
- Put an “X” by the ideas (under each of the six types of involvement) you think your school or classroom could implement.
- Put a star (\*) by the ideas that are most feasible to implement at your school.

Schools should work with parents to sustain parent engagement by addressing challenges to getting and keeping parents engaged.



# How can schools and parents work together to SUSTAIN parent engagement?

- Appoint a dedicated team or committee that oversees parent engagement.
- Identify challenges that keep parents from being connected and engaged.
- Work with parents to tailor school events and activities to address these challenges.

## Activity 3: Sustain Parent Engagement — Instructions

- See Handout D.
- Select one or two of the six listed challenges to parent engagement most relevant to your school.
- Put an “X” by solutions you think your school or classroom could implement to address these challenges.
- Put a star (\*) by the solutions you think would be the most feasible to implement at your school or in your classroom.

Now, what should you do?

# Create an Action Plan



# Action Planning for Parent Engagement in School Health

- **Action Plan:** Specific goals, objectives, and activities to enhance parent engagement.
- **Action Team:** A group of school staff, parents, students, and other community members dedicated to assessing parent engagement,
  - implementing actions grounded in the parent engagement strategies,
  - advocating for change,
  - facilitating improvements, and
  - evaluating progress and outcomes.

# Questions to Consider in Developing the Action Plan

- What is your school or district presently doing to promote parent engagement? What is missing?
- Which new strategy, action, activity, or policy change would be the most feasible and appropriate for your school or district to use that you are not doing now?
- What strategies have other schools or local school districts in your area implemented? How might you go about finding out what strategies other schools or school districts are successfully implementing?
- What strategies might also be relevant or useful to achieving your school improvement plan(s)?

**Team School or School District:**

**Team Members:**

**Handout E**

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***Parent Engagement Action Plan***

**Strategy #** \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Action</b>	<b>Steps</b>	<b>By Whom</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Progress</b>

# Action Planning for Parent Engagement in School Health — Instructions

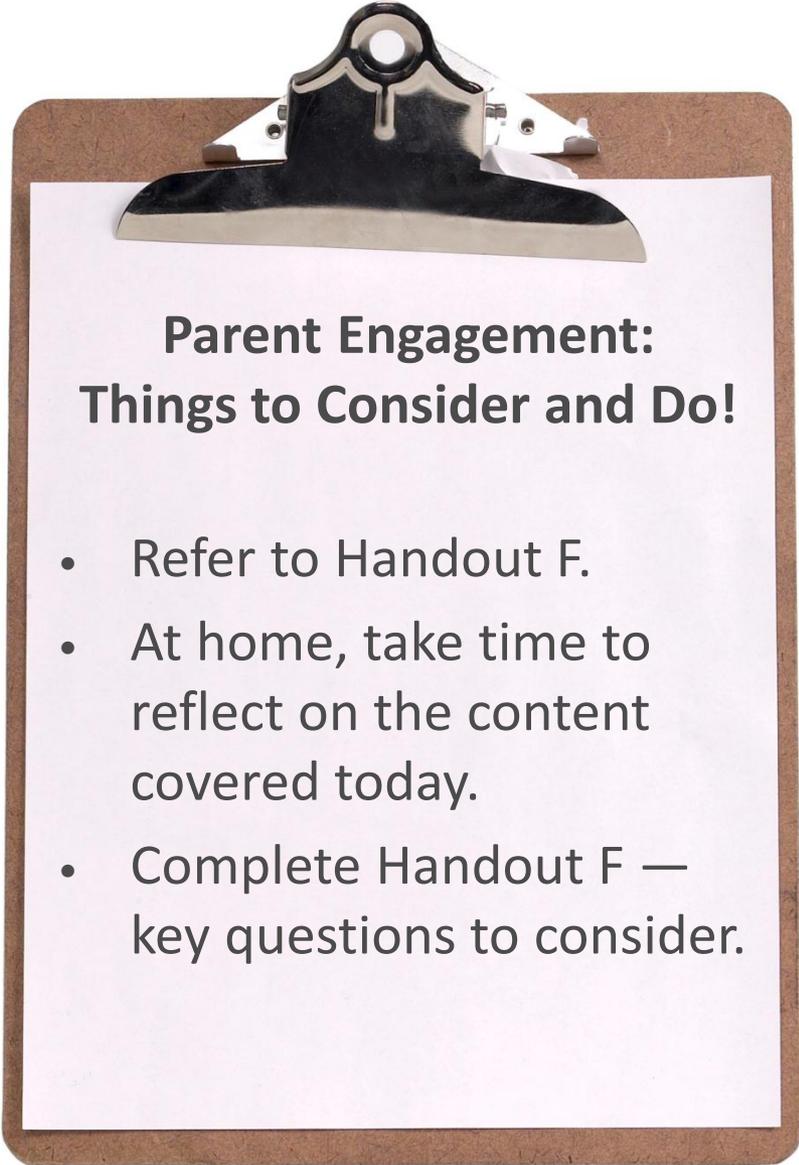
## Activity 4:

- See Handout E.
- Select one of the essential aspects of parent engagement (connect, engage, or sustain).
- Develop your Action Plan.
- Share your Action Plan.

# Questions to Consider for Moving the Action Plan Forward

- How will your team obtain feedback on your Action Plan ideas from other members of your school and district staff, parents, and students?
- What resources and buy-in are needed to move the Action Plan forward?
- What contacts or professional expertise will be needed to help move the Action Plan forward?
- Who will serve as the team lead for coordinating, refining, implementing, and monitoring the implementation of the Action Plan?
- How can your Action Plan be incorporated into the school's existing program for parent engagement?

# Take-Home Exercise



## **Parent Engagement: Things to Consider and Do!**

- Refer to Handout F.
- At home, take time to reflect on the content covered today.
- Complete Handout F — key questions to consider.

# Selected Parent Engagement Resources

- Parent Engagement Strategies:  
[cdc.gov/healthyouth/AdolescentHealth/pdf/parent\\_engagement\\_strategies.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/healthyouth/AdolescentHealth/pdf/parent_engagement_strategies.pdf)
- Student Health and Academic Achievement:  
[cdc.gov/healthyouth/health\\_and\\_academics/index.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/healthyouth/health_and_academics/index.htm)
- U.S. Department of Education:  
Parent Involvement Information  
[www.ed.gov/parents/academic/help/partnership.html](https://www.ed.gov/parents/academic/help/partnership.html)  
  
Parental Information and Resource Centers  
[www.nationalpirc.org](https://www.nationalpirc.org)
- National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS) at Johns Hopkins University: [www.partnershipschools.org](https://www.partnershipschools.org)



# Questions?

National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD, and TB Prevention  
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# Thank you!

For more information, contact the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

1600 Clifton Road NE, Atlanta, GA 30333

Telephone. 1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636)/TTY: 1-888-232-6348

Email: [cdcinfo@cdc.gov](mailto:cdcinfo@cdc.gov) Web: [www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth](http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth)

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