

Investments in Adolescent and School Health Programs Help Youth Become Healthy, Successful Adults



ADOLESCENT AND SCHOOL HEALTH

STORIES OF SUCCESS



The Division of Adolescent and School Health at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) works to protect our nation's youth from HIV, STDs, and pregnancy through data-driven programs. School-based surveillance provides critical data about health risks facing youth. These data help inform effective school-based prevention programs that link education and public health to do the following:

- ▶ Deliver quality health education
- ▶ Create systems to link students to health services
- ▶ Establish safe and supportive school environments

From 2013 through 2018, 17 school districts funded by CDC expanded sexual health education, increased access to sexual health services, and improved school connectedness. The 2017 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) data collected in these districts showed significant declines in the percentage of students who had ever had sex, were currently sexually active, or had four or more sexual partners in their lifetime.

Progress by the Numbers

Expanded quality sexual health education to



CDC Programs Expand Quality Sexual Health Education

Quality sexual health education ensures that students acquire the knowledge and skills to prevent HIV, STDs, and pregnancy. By helping schools to implement learning objectives, lessons, materials, and assessments that are medically accurate and developmentally and culturally appropriate, CDC-supported districts are enhancing the knowledge and skills of students to prevent negative sexual health outcomes. With CDC funding, these districts increased the percentage of schools implementing quality sexual health education—from 61% to 88% of middle schools and from 83% to 93% of high schools.

Progress by the Numbers

Referred more than

65,000
students

to youth-friendly
health services



CDC Programs Link Students to Sexual Health Services

Preventive health services that include HIV and STD testing, counseling about preventive behaviors, and contraception and condom provision, are key to reducing adolescents' risk of negative sexual health outcomes. CDC-supported school districts are strengthening connections to school-based and community health providers to increase students' access to necessary sexual health services. More than 65,000 students were referred to youth-friendly preventive health services.

Progress by the Numbers

Expanded student-led
inclusive clubs to



CDC Programs Establish Safe and Supportive Environments in Schools

Increased school connectedness decreases a multitude of students' behavioral risks and experiences that can lead to poor health outcomes, including substance use, depression, and violence. CDC-supported school districts are working to ensure that all students are learning in environments where they feel safe, supported, and connected by implementing mentoring programs, service learning opportunities, classroom management practices, and student-led inclusive clubs (sometimes called Gay-Straight Alliances, Genders and Sexualities Alliances, or GSAs). GSAs are linked to greater feelings of school connectedness among all

students, including students who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning (LGBTQ). With CDC support, school districts expanded student-led inclusive clubs to 76% of schools.

CDC Surveillance Systems Support Data-Driven Decision Making

Collecting accurate data on adolescent health risk behaviors and experiences and on school-level policies and practices helps school districts to better understand what adolescents in their community are experiencing. CDC-supported districts use YRBS to collect information on risk behaviors and experiences among high school students and the School Health Profiles survey to assess the policies and practices in schools. Together these surveys provide valuable data school districts can use to help develop effective, locally tailored programs to best support youth.

