

School Health Policies and Programs Study 2006

Tobacco

This podcast is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC – safer, healthier people.

Welcome to the 2006 School Health Policies and Programs Study, or SHPPS. SHPPS is a national survey conducted every six years to assess the characteristics of eight components of school health programs at the elementary through high school levels. It provides data to help improve school health policies and programs, nationwide.

States and districts were asked whether they had policies prohibiting cigarette smoking, smokeless tobacco use, and cigar or pipe smoking among students, faculty and staff, and school visitors. Nearly all states had adopted policies prohibiting cigarette smoking and cigar or pipe smoking among students. Four out of five states prohibited smokeless tobacco use among students. State-level policies prohibiting tobacco use among school visitors or among faculty and staff during any school-related activity were not as common.

School districts and schools often set their own tobacco-use policies. For example, SHPPS found that all districts, nationwide, had adopted a policy prohibiting cigarette smoking among students, and nearly all districts had adopted a policy prohibiting both smokeless tobacco use and cigar or pipe smoking among students. Similarly, nearly all schools had adopted a policy prohibiting cigarette smoking, and nine out of ten schools prohibited smokeless tobacco use and cigar or pipe smoking among students.

As part of a tobacco-use prevention effort and to promote a healthy school environment, school policies should prohibit students, faculty and staff, and visitors from using any form of tobacco anywhere under the control of school authorities. To assess whether such policies are in place, SHPPS 2006 examined the locations where cigarette smoking and smokeless tobacco use were prohibited.

In general, states, districts, and schools had adopted policies prohibiting cigarette smoking and smokeless tobacco use among students in school buildings; outside on school grounds, including parking lots and playing fields; on school buses or other vehicles used to transport students; and at off-campus, school-sponsored events. Fewer states, districts, and schools prohibited cigarette smoking and smokeless tobacco use among faculty, staff, and visitors in all of these locations.

Although most states and districts had adopted policies prohibiting some tobacco use in some locations, only 38 percent of states and 55 percent of districts had adopted policies that prohibited tobacco use among all individuals, including students, faculty, staff, and school visitors on school property and at off-campus, school-sponsored events. Likewise, only 66 percent of elementary schools, 59 percent of middle schools, and 66 percent of high schools had policies that prohibited tobacco use among all individuals at all of these locations.

In addition to prohibiting tobacco use, states, districts, and schools can reinforce their commitment to tobacco-use prevention and tobacco-free environments by adopting policies prohibiting tobacco advertisements, sponsorship of events, and wearing of tobacco brand-name

apparel or merchandise. Less than half of all states, but more than three fourths of all districts and more than 90 percent of all schools had adopted policies prohibiting tobacco advertisements on school property, on school buses or other vehicles used to transport students, in school publications, and through sponsorship of school events and prohibiting students from wearing tobacco brand-name apparel or carrying merchandise with tobacco company names, logos, or cartoon characters on it.

The health hazards for youth and adults associated with both tobacco use and breathing secondhand smoke are all well established. Prohibiting all tobacco use at school and school-sponsored events not only protects students, faculty, staff, and visitors from secondhand smoke, but also eliminates the opportunity for students to observe and participate in tobacco use at schools and school activities.

In 2006, many schools' policies fell far short of the Healthy People 2010 goal to increase to 100 percent "smoke-free and tobacco-free environments in schools, including all school facilities, property, vehicles, and school events."

For additional information and resources about SHPPS, including a detailed report, school health component and topic specific fact sheets, podcasts, a state-level summaries document, questionnaires, analytic data files, technical documentation, and archives of previous SHPPS studies, visit www.cdc.gov/SHPPS.

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