A STUDENT HEALTH SURVEY PROJECT SPONSORED BY:
NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
The Student Health and Risk Prevention (SHARP) Surveillance System is the umbrella that encompasses the coordinated administration of three school-based student health surveys in Nebraska, including the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), Youth Tobacco Survey (YTS), and Nebraska Risk and Protective Factor Student Survey (NRPFSS).

SHARP includes the ONLY three student health surveys endorsed by the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) and Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (NDHHS).

All three surveys are administered at the same time in the fall of even calendar years with the next administration occurring Fall 2018.
Every survey under the umbrella of SHARP is unique!

**YRBS**

The Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) is part of the National Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System created and managed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). This statewide survey identifies and monitors priority health risk behaviors that are established during youth and result in sickness, disability, death, and social problems among youth and adults.

The YRBS is designed to monitor trends in the following health risk behaviors:
- Unintentional injuries and violence
- Mental health and suicide
- Tobacco, alcohol, and drug use
- Sexual risk behaviors
- Unhealthy dietary behaviors
- Physical inactivity

The YRBS also measures the prevalence of obesity and asthma among youth and young adults. The data are used to plan, evaluate, and improve school and community prevention and intervention programs. The YRBS is administered in public high schools. Schools and classrooms are randomly selected by the CDC.

**YTS**

The Youth Tobacco Survey (YTS) is a statewide survey that was created and is managed by the CDC to improve the ability of agencies and community organizations to design, implement, and evaluate tobacco prevention and control programs. The YTS is conducted in public high schools. Schools and classrooms are randomly selected by the CDC.

**NRPFSS**

The Nebraska Risk and Protective Factor Student Survey (NRPFSS) is designed to assess adolescent substance abuse, delinquent behaviors, bullying, and the risk and protective measures that predict adolescent problem behaviors. The NRPFSS also looks at risk and protective measures related to four domains including community, school, family, and individual/peer. One of the goals of this survey is to provide schools and communities with local level data to help in planning prevention programs based on the needs of their communities. Every public and non-public school with an 8th, 10th, and/or 12th grade program is eligible to participate in the NRPFSS.
The Sharp data provide insight into the health behaviors of Nebraska youth. A few examples of how this information has been utilized are listed below.

**YRBS**
- New school curriculum objectives have been established by guidance counselors, teachers, school nurses, Peer Mediation teams, and health departments.
- Data relevant to federal collection requirements are provided.
- Schools, along with state and community coalitions/agencies, are provided with necessary data for accessing federal, state, and local grant funds, a few of which are listed below:
  - Carol M. White Physical Education grants
  - Community Learning Center grants
  - Fresh Fruit and Vegetable grants
  - HIV Prevention Education grants
  - Maternal and Child Health Care grants
  - Nebraska Dairy Council grants
  - Nebraska Action For Healthy Kids grants
  - Nutrition grants
  - Safe Routes to Schools grants

**YTS**
- Provides information on the prevalence of tobacco use, exposure to secondhand smoke, knowledge and attitudes, advertising, and school curriculum for students in grades 9-12 that is not otherwise available.
- It provides Tobacco Free Nebraska a standardized long-term mechanism to chart the reduction of youth tobacco use in Nebraska.

**NRPFSS**
- Local and regional estimates are generated for health planning and evaluation.
- Measures are identified that may affect student academic achievement and career planning goals.
- Behavior problems related to substance abuse and/or delinquent behavior are targeted.
- Schools and community coalitions are provided the information that is necessary for accessing federal substance abuse prevention funds.
- Local and state funded substance abuse prevention programs are strengthened.
NEBRASKA HAS SEEN SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENTS IN A VARIETY OF AREAS.

YRBS

Since the first administration of the YRBS, Nebraska has made significant improvements in a variety of areas affecting our state’s high school students.

> In 1991, 46.1% of students reported riding with a drinking driver during the past 30 days compared to 22.1% in 2016.
> The percentage of students who had considered suicide in the past 12 months decreased from 28.9% in 1991 to 16.1% in 2016.

YTS

The YTS is the most comprehensive assessment of tobacco use and trends among youth in Nebraska.

By administering the YTS, we have learned that youth still experiment with tobacco products. However, cigarettes are no longer the leading product for experimentation. In 2016, 26.5% of youth reported trying electronic or e-cigarettes, making it the most commonly tried product while 24.3% of youth have tried cigarettes, 16.1% cigars and cigarillos, and 11.5% have tried smokeless tobacco.

Continued participation in YTS will help identify emerging trends (like the growth in e-cigarette use), and will provide schools, local health coalitions, and tobacco control programs the data needed to develop effective youth prevention programs to address these issues.

NRPFSS

When comparing the overall scores from all participating schools over time, we see improvements with many NRPFSS measures.

> More students in 2003 reported drinking alcohol than in 2016. For instance, 18.2% of 8th graders reported drinking alcohol in the past 30 days compared to 7.3% in 2016.
> Marijuana use has also decreased since 2007. In 2007, 24.5% of 10th graders reported having used marijuana in their lifetime compared to 17.4% in 2016.
All three surveys continue to see improvements in participation with the SHARP approach!

**YRBS**

The YRBS response rate has increased from 49% in 2009 to 63% in 2016. Prior to 2010, only four of the ten YRBS administrations in Nebraska had a response rate of 60% or higher.

**YTS**

The YTS response rate has increased from 38% in 2008 to 63% in 2016. Since 2010, three of the four YTS administrations in Nebraska had a response rate of 60% or higher.

**NRPFSS**

Participation in the 2016 NRPFSS was still higher than in 2007! In 2016, 241 school districts participated, including over 28,000 students and 335 schools. This is a large increase since the 2007 administration when 165 schools participated.

School administrators have also been very pleased

“SHARP was a seamless process. I didn’t have to rely on organizing it myself or involving teachers. We were able to administer the surveys without disrupting class time and the organization on the part of BOSR made the process very efficient.”

- Ryan Rifenbaw, Waverly High School

“SHARP has helped our district to focus on a common data collection to inform us regarding students’ self-reported risky behaviors. We can use this data for planning awareness activities and interventions in the school and in the community. The data connects several community agencies who are all working on the same social improvements. This makes us stronger in our common efforts. SHARP data also can provide a look at the severity of our students’ health risks in comparison to other national and state results. We also use the data for grant opportunities. It has been a great improvement for Nebraska to combine the survey efforts of different groups into one process.”

- Dr. Carol Renner, Kearney Public Schools
SHARP will be administered during fall of 2018.

SHARP ADMINISTRATION APPROACH

The survey administration process for 2018 will be similar to the process used in 2016. The YRBS and YTS state samples will be drawn so that no school is selected for both. Survey administration will be scheduled in the way that is most convenient for each school, recognizing that most schools will prefer to limit administration to one day. The YRBS and YTS will be given to grades 9-12, and the NRPFSS will be available to students in 8th, 10th, and 12th grade.

SURVEY ELIGIBILITY

The CDC will randomly select schools from across the state for the YRBS and the YTS. 82 public high schools will be selected for the YRBS, and 60 public high schools will be selected for the YTS. Subsequently, the CDC will randomly select classrooms within each of these schools. All schools with grades 8, 10, and/or 12 are eligible to participate in the NRPFSS.

MANAGEMENT BY BOSR

The Bureau of Sociological Research (BOSR) at the University of Nebraska - Lincoln will be coordinating the administration of SHARP for NDE and NDHHS.

CONTACTS

All eligible Nebraska schools will be contacted by a BOSR staff member to ask permission to survey students this fall. As always, survey participation is voluntary and confidentiality is guaranteed.

MORE INFORMATION

You can visit http://bosr.unl.edu/sharp to learn more about the surveys, view the questionnaires, and read documentation related to commonly asked questions. For more information, please contact Casey Seay, SHARP Project Manager, at 402-472-6746 or email him at cseay2@unl.edu and he will be happy to assist you.