

Teaming up for the 2005 North Carolina Youth Tobacco Survey (YTS)



You are a key player on this team!

The enclosed letter was sent to all selected LEA Superintendents on July 14th about this fall's upcoming 2005 North Carolina Youth Tobacco Survey (NC YTS). In the letter, superintendents were informed of the important role that you play in the YTS survey process.

You were the best in the nation: let's do it again!

The NC YTS is the single largest statewide youth survey in the state and has had an unprecedented participation rate. In 1999, NC had a school district participation rate of 98%, the highest in the nation (top 5 in 2003 at 96%). Rates this high do not come easily—they are due to your hard work and dedication! Now that we have set the standard for the nation, I know you can help meet that standard for 2005. But beyond the number of schools and students, data from YTS resulted in the Health and Wellness Trust Fund (HWTF) allocating funding for school and community prevention programs. Funding for HWTF's Teen Tobacco Use Prevention and Cessation Initiative has increased from \$6.4 million to \$15 million annually since the initiative was started in 2002. Many schools and communities, perhaps your own, were granted awards in the past two years. Hopefully, even more opportunities exist in the future. This is a direct result of your hard work and dedication. In order to measure our progress, extend our prevention efforts, and dedicate future funding, we need a similar response rate from school districts, schools and students for the 2005 YTS. It is high response rates that make the data convincing.

N.C. Youth Tobacco Survey is critical

The 2005 YTS will be vital as we now have expanded and enhanced prevention efforts across the state. We need to demonstrate that evidence based tobacco prevention programs work and show significant declines in youth consumption of tobacco. And in 2003 for the first time, middle school current cigarette rates dropped significantly and high school tobacco use rates declined overall.

YTS resources

We have included several YTS resources with this reminder that might be helpful as we start working with school administrators. **However, please do not start calling districts or schools until given notification by DPI.** A second letter is being sent to Superintendents on August 1st. At that time, they will have 10 days to notify us of their participation. After 10 days, we can call them to follow-up and recruit them for their participation. If you feel that participation is in questions, please contact us as soon as possible as we will strategize to locate others who might help facilitate participation. It is very important to respect the concerns of school administrators. At the same time, let's make sure that an informed decision has been made.

Contact us

In the meantime, enjoy your new pencil. This is one of the 8,000 pencils ordered for the YTS this fall. And if you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call Scott Proescholdbell, Epidemiologist, Department of Health and Human Services at 919-715-3497 (scott.proescholdbell@ncmail.net) or Antonia Johnson, Safe and Drug Free Schools at 919-807-3944 (ajohnson@dpi.state.nc.us). Again, thank you for your support and help.

