

October 1, 2019

Ref: SP-2019-071

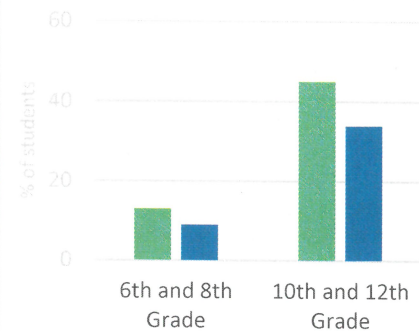
Dear School District Superintendent:

The 2020 Prevention Needs Assessment (PNA), sponsored by the Wyoming Department of Health, Public Health Division (WDH-PHD), will soon be conducted throughout Wyoming. The information gathered from this survey is crucial to school and community activities affecting the health of Wyoming's youth and for the planning and evaluation of prevention efforts designed to reduce youth use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs.

Children and adolescents who use alcohol and drugs at an early age are more likely to face problems with substance use as adults. Sixty-two percent of adults participating in a substance abuse treatment program had initiated alcohol or drug use before the age of seventeen. Alcohol, tobacco, and drug abuse are strongly correlated with student academic achievement and dropout rates.

ALCOHOL

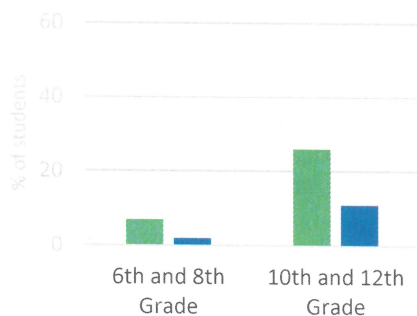
The percent of Wyoming Students who reported drinking at least one alcohol drink during the 30 days before the survey has **decreased** from **2001** to **2018**.



Data Source: PNA 2001-2018

TOBACCO

The percent of Wyoming Students who reported smoking at least one cigarette during the 30 days before the survey has **decreased** from **2001** to **2018**.



Data Source: PNA 2001-2018

These findings highlight the need to prevent and delay drug initiation among adolescents and children for as long as possible. The data gathered from the PNA is an integral part of the substance abuse prevention in your community. Local community and school prevention activities are successful in making Wyoming a healthier state in which to grow up. As illustrated by the Alcohol and Tobacco data, the percentage of high school and middle school students using alcohol and tobacco has decreased significantly from 2001 to 2018.

Overall, the PNA is a unique survey because it not only offers a glimpse of the sixth, eighth, tenth and twelfth grade students in your school and district that are using tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs, but it also helps with understanding factors that may influence whether or not students use drugs and alcohol. The survey also collects important information about bullying and other

problem behaviors the students may experience. The PNA is one of the few instances where local level data is collected and reported to help you as a school district to understand the unique challenges facing your students.

This next survey will continue a commitment to understand how your students have changed over time and in relation to the state and other communities. Data from the 2020 PNA can be used by your school district for data-driven decision making, to plan and apply for funding for future prevention efforts, and to evaluate whether your current prevention efforts are associated with any changes. To review all state and county level data collected by the PNA since 2001 please go to <http://www.pnasurvey.org/>. Districts will be provided the information related to their students. District level information will not be made public.

Please feel free to contact Erica Mathews at the Wyoming Department of Health, Public Health Division, (erica.mathews@wyo.gov, 307-777-6463), or Eric Canen, Principal Investigator at the Wyoming Survey & Analysis Center (ecanen@uwyo.edu, 307-760-0307).

Thank you for your attention to this matter and commitment to the health of your students.

Sincerely,



Stephanie Pyle, MBA
Senior Administrator
Public Health Division



Alexia Harrist MD, PhD
State Health Officer
Public Health Division

SP/em

- c: Erica Mathews, Manager, Substance Abuse Prevention Program, Public Health Division
Angie VanHouten, MS, Chief, Community Health Section, Public Health Division
Lisa Wordeman, MS, Manager, Prevention and Health Promotion Unit, Public Health Division