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CCDPH Hosts First Virtual Youth Risk Behavioral Survey (YRBS) in the Nation

Oak Forest, IL – Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH) is now conducting the 2020 Suburban Cook County Youth Risk Behavioral Survey (SCC YRBS). This is the first time in the nation the YRBS has ever been offered virtually.

The YRBS is a survey of students in grades 9 through 12 that assesses priority health-risk behaviors, including (1) behaviors that result in unintentional injuries and violence; (2) tobacco use; (3) alcohol and other drug use; (4) sexual behaviors that could contribute to sexually transmitted diseases, and unintended pregnancies; (5) dietary behaviors; and (6) physical activity.

The YRBS has become the primary source of information on important health risk behaviors of high school students in the U.S. and is used by leading educators, public health officials, the media, and others to advocate for and improve school health policies and programs. The last time a local YRBS was conducted in Suburban Cook County was in 2010.

Twenty-five schools were randomly selected to participate in the survey. CCDPH surveyed the first 7 schools in-person in February and March 2020, but had to suspend data collection due to COVID-19.

“We understand districts and schools are undergoing significant changes in response to the pandemic,” said CCDPH’s Director of Epidemiology, Dr. Alfreda Holloway-Beth, PhD. “We believe this new YRBS data will provide valuable insight into the current and emerging trends of youth engagement in risky behaviors.”

CCDPH will begin surveying the 18 remaining schools virtually beginning in October and ending in December. The 30-minute survey will be administered in four classes per school in a virtual classroom setting with a teacher present.

Survey administration procedures are designed to protect student privacy and allow for anonymous participation. Cities, school districts, schools, and students will not be identified in any published reports. As a symbol of appreciation for time and support, participating schools will receive a \$500 school award.

The SCC YRBS results will be:

- Published online at cookcountypublichealth.org in February 2021
- Compared to the results of the national and state YRBS
- Used to conduct the CCDPH Community Health Assessments
- Used to support the design, implementation, and evaluation of effective prevention and control programs at the local level

If your school has been selected, you should have received an invitation packet from CCDPH. For more information, visit <https://cookcountypublichealth.org/epidemiology-data-reports/yrbs-youth-risk-behavior-survey/>. To schedule the survey, call 877-808-5881.