



KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

NEWS RELEASE

No. 17-044

March 30, 2016

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DATA SHOWS KENTUCKY SCHOOLS MAKING HEALTHIER CHOICES

(FRANKFORT, Ky.) – More Kentucky schools are making healthier choices for their students and taking stock of their school health policies, according to data from the School Health Profiles surveys conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The School Health Profiles assess school health policies and practices in states, large urban school districts and territories. Profiles surveys are conducted biennially by education and health agencies among middle and high school principals and lead health education teachers; the most recent data was collected in spring 2016.

The surveys revealed that there are fewer Kentucky public schools in which students can purchase less nutritious snack foods and beverages than in the previous surveys. Some examples:

- Chocolate candy – 7.8 percent in 2016, down from 22.6 percent in 2014
- Salty snacks that are not low in fat – 13.7 percent in 2016, down from 26.1 percent in 2014
- Cookies, crackers or other baked goods that are not low in fat – 12.0 percent in 2016, down from 24.1 percent in 2014
- Soda or fruit drinks that are not 100 percent juice – 15.7 percent in 2016, down from 33.1 percent in 2014

In addition, more than one-third of schools prohibited less nutritious foods and beverages from being sold for fundraising purposes in 2016 – 36.1 percent, up from 23.1 percent in 2014.

The data showed increases in the percentage of schools that have ever used the CDC's School Health Index or another self-assessment tool to assess school policies, activities and programs in the areas of physical activity (66 percent in 2016, 55.7 percent in 2014), nutrition (62.4 percent in 2016, 52.6 percent in 2014) and asthma (34.6 percent in 2016, 21.2 percent in 2014).

Nearly three-fourths of schools have one or more groups such as a school health council, committee or team that offers guidance on the development of policies or coordinates activities on health topics. There were such groups in 74.7 percent of schools in 2016, up from 63.8 percent in 2014.

(more)

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Page 2 – School Health Profiles

In addition, there is growth in the percentage of schools offering opportunities for students to participate in physical activity before the school day through organized physical activities or access to facilities or equipment for physical activity – 29.4 percent in 2016, up from 19.3 percent in 2014.

Changes to federal guidelines through the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 and the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Smart Snacks in School regulation, along with the Kentucky Department of Education’s Practical Living Career Studies (PLCS) Program Review, have contributed to helping support best practices related to school health committees, nutrition environment and physical activity opportunities for students.

For more information and the complete 2016 School Health Profiles reports, visit <http://education.ky.gov/curriculum/CSH/data/Pages/School-Health-Profiles.aspx>.

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