

**SB**

**101**

# SENATE COMMITTEE REPORT

DATE: 3/18/09

FURTHER:

DATE TURNED  
IN TO OFFICE: 3/27/09

Health and Social Services Committee considered SENATE BILL NO. 101

SB 101 STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRES AND SURVEYS

"An Act relating to questionnaires and surveys administered in the public schools."

and recommends:

- be replaced with  SCS or  CS \_\_\_\_\_ (\_\_\_\_\_)
- adopt previous  SCS or  CS \_\_\_\_\_ (\_\_\_\_\_)
- attached amendment(s)
- adopt \_\_\_\_\_ Letter of Intent
- further referral to \_\_\_\_\_ Committee

<b>SENATE BILL:</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Same Title
<input type="checkbox"/>	New Title
<hr/>	
<b>HOUSE BILL:</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Same Title
<input type="checkbox"/>	Technical Title Change
<input type="checkbox"/>	New Title w/ SCR # _____

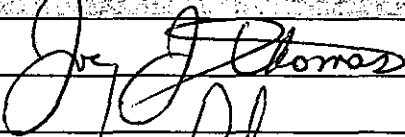
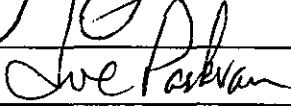

**NEW FISCAL NOTE(S):**

Department	Date	Fiscal	Indet.	Zero	FN#

**PREVIOUS FISCAL NOTE(S):**

Department	Date	Fiscal	Indet.	Zero	FN#
EED	3/6			✓	1

APPROPRIATION - no fiscal note

SIGNATURES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:	PRINTED LAST NAME:	DO PASS:	DO NOT PASS:	NO REC:	AMEND:
	THOMAS	✓			
	PASKVAN	X			
CHAIR: 	DAVIS	X			

# Alaska State Legislature

Interim: (May - Dec.)  
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Senator\_Betty\_Davis@legis.state.ak.us  
<http://www.akdemocrats.org>

## Senator Betty Davis

### Senate Bill 101

"An Act relating to questionnaires and surveys administered in the public schools."

### Sponsor Statement

**SB 101 is intended to allow for more student participation the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS)** which is conducted as part of a national effort by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to monitor health-risk behaviors of the nation's high school students. These behaviors, in turn, result in the most significant causes of both mortality and morbidity during youth and adulthood. The behaviors monitored by the Alaska YRBS include traffic safety; weapons and violence; suicide; tobacco use; alcohol and other drug use; sexual behavior; and diet, nutrition and exercise.

**Prior to new language in SB 101 written parental consent was required to administer the YRBS.** Under SB 101 only written refusal, or written non-consent to participate is required of parents or guardians of students. SB 101 provides that students themselves, independent of parental consent or non-consent, can elect not to answer certain questions or not to participate in the Youth Risk Behavior Survey or any questionnaire or survey. Moreover, SB 101 expands information required in the 2-week parental notice requirement to include date, sponsor, description of content, opportunity to review the questionnaire or survey, school contacts, and how to submit written permission or refusal for a student to participate. While studies have found that the vast majority of parents would consent to students participating in school questionnaires and surveys, non-response is more often due to apathy, oversight, or student omission or error in returning forms, rather than parental refusal.

**The CDC determined that at least 60% of students in the selected sample must complete the YRBS** for it to accurately represent student behavior across the entire state. In 2005, Alaska missed achieving an adequate response rate and was unable to use the data. As a result, lost were valuable measures of population-based information on youth which helps policy makers, educators, program planners, agencies, non-profits, and parents to better understand, fund, and track trends over time and help guide and evaluate important health and prevention programs. State and federal grant programs which rely on these surveys include tobacco prevention and control, obesity prevention, diabetes, heart disease and stroke, safe and drug free schools and other substance abuse prevention, and injury prevention, including violence and suicide prevention, HIV and STD prevention, and more.

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Senator\_Bettye\_Davis@legis.state.ak.us  
<http://www.akdemocrats.org>

## Senator Bettye Davis

### Senate Bill 101, 26-LS0524A

"An Act relating to questionnaires and surveys administered in the public schools."

### Sectional Summary

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*Note: this sectional summary should not be considered an authoritative interpretation of the bill, as the bill itself is the best statement of its contents.*

**Section 1.** Amends AS 14.03.110(a) to require a school district to obtain written permission to administer a questionnaire or survey, anonymous or not, with the exception of the Youth Risk Behavior Survey, as provided in Section 4 in new subsection AS 14.03.110(g).

**Section 2.** Repeals and reenacts AS 14.03.110(d) to require a school district provide to a student's parent or legal guardian written notice of a questionnaire or survey with detailed information as to the date, contents, sponsor, contacts at the school district, opportunity to review the questionnaire or survey, description of how to submit written permission or denial of permission to participate, including an anonymous or specific questionnaire or survey.

**Section 3.** Amends AS 14.03.110(e) to allow a student to participate but to refuse to "answer specific questions." Subsection (e) also requires that a parent or legal guardian may refuse to allow the student to participate in a specific questionnaire or survey "by submitting to the teacher or school principal a written denial of permission for the student's participation."

**Section 4.** Adds a new subsection AS 14.03.110(g) which provides that if a school district administers the Youth Risk Behavior Survey provided by the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, written permission of the student's parent or legal guardian is not required, but the school district shall provide parents notice of the survey and the opportunity to submit to the teacher or school principal a written denial of permission to take the survey.

*Note: Subsections AS 14.03.110(b) and (c) remain unchanged as to annual permission and two weeks notice for anonymous surveys under (b), and written permission and two weeks notice for surveys which are not anonymous under (c).*

# FISCAL NOTE

**STATE OF ALASKA**  
**2009 LEGISLATIVE SESSION**

Fiscal Note Number: SB 101  
 Bill Version: \_\_\_\_\_  
 () Publish Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Identifier (file name): SB101-EED-ESS-3-06-09 Dept. Affected: EED  
 Title "An Act relating to questionnaires and surveys administered in the public schools." RDU Teaching & Learning Support  
 Component School & Student Achievement  
 Sponsor Sen. Davis  
 Requester Senate Education Committee Component Number 2796

**Expenditures/Revenues** (Thousands of Dollars)

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below.

	Appropriation Required	Information						
		FY 2010	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015
<b>OPERATING EXPENDITURES</b>								
Personal Services								
Travel								
Contractual								
Supplies								
Equipment								
Land & Structures								
Grants & Claims								
Miscellaneous								
<b>TOTAL OPERATING</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>

<b>CAPITAL EXPENDITURES</b>								
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<b>CHANGE IN REVENUES ( )</b>								
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**FUND SOURCE** (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts								
1003 GF Match								
1004 GF								
1005 GF/Program Receipts								
1037 GF/Mental Health								
Other Interagency Receipts								
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>

Estimate of any current year (FY2009) cost: \_\_\_\_\_

**POSITIONS**

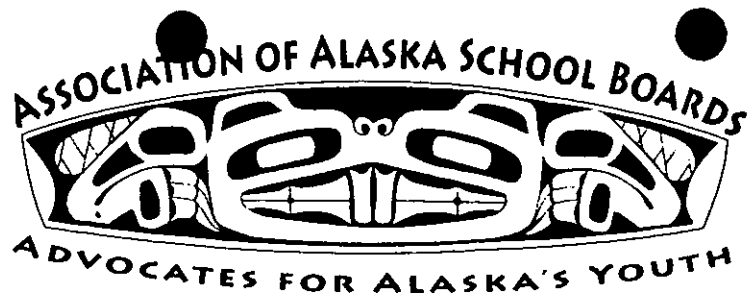
Full-time								
Part-time								
Temporary								

**ANALYSIS:** (Attach a separate page if necessary)

There is no fiscal impact on the Department of Education and Early Development.

Prepared by: Paul Prussing, Deputy Director  
 Division Teaching & Learning Support  
 Approved by: Larry LeDoux  
Commissioner

Phone 465-8721  
 Date/Time 3/6/09 12:00 AM  
 Date 3/6/2009

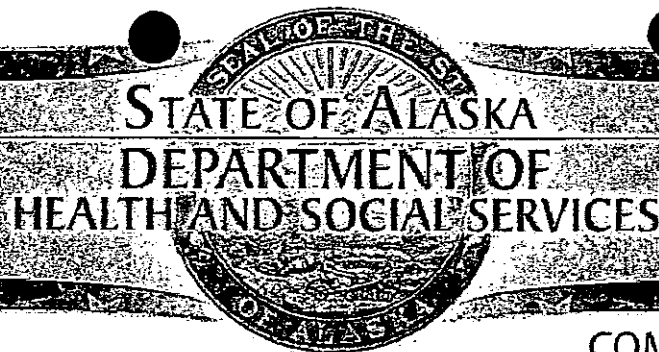


**Position Statement on SB 101  
Relating to Questionnaires and Surveys in Public Schools**

AASB member districts need school-by-school data to increase student achievement and accurately assess the effectiveness of current programs. Since passage of HB 70 in 1999, schools have been unable to obtain an adequate sample of student information to provide reliable information. AASB supports modifying the requirements for parental or legal guardian permission for a student to participate in a questionnaire or survey administered in a public school.

**Karleen Jackson**  
Commissioner

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Assistant Commissioner  
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## Fact Sheet

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Nov. 19, 2007

### **Fact Sheet: 2007 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS)**

#### **What is the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS)?**

The Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) is part of an epidemiological surveillance system that was established in 1990 by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). It was developed to monitor health risk behaviors that contribute markedly to the leading causes of death, disability, and social problems among youth and adults in the United States. These behaviors, often established during childhood and early adolescence, include:

- Tobacco use;
- Unhealthy dietary behaviors;
- Inadequate physical activity;
- Alcohol and other drug use;
- Sexual behaviors that contribute to unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV infection; and
- Behaviors that contribute to unintentional injuries and violence.

#### **What are the purposes of the YRBS?**

- Determine the prevalence of health risk behaviors;
- Assess whether health risk behaviors increase, decrease, or stay the same over time;
- Provide comparable national, state and local data;
- Provide comparable data among subpopulations of youth; and
- Monitor progress toward achieving the Healthy People 2010 objectives and other program indicators.

#### **How long has Alaska participated in the YRBS?**

The YRBS high school survey was first implemented at the national level in 1990. Since that time CDC has sponsored national surveys from 1991 to the present on an every-other-year basis. Alaska first participated in the YRBS in 1995 and obtained representative statewide data. Due to external factors, the YRBS was not administered in 1997. It was administered in 1999; however the Anchorage School District did not participate. Without Anchorage the data were not representative of the state as a whole. The survey was administered in 2001, but unfortunately low student response rates rendered the data unusable. A major obstacle in 2001 was the constraint of the active parental consent law that had just gone into effect. In 2003 the survey was administered statewide with active parental consent and representative data were obtained, making this

the first statewide YRBS representative sample since 1995. The survey was again administered in 2005, however the response rate fell just below the target and the data was not used. In 2007, the survey was administered and achieved an adequate response rate, yielding important survey results.

**What is the difference between active and passive consent?**

Alaska's active parental consent law, AS 14.03.110, prohibits public schools from administering surveys or questionnaires that ask about personal or family affairs, or anything else that is not a matter of public record or readily observable in public, without first getting written permission from all participating students' parents or legal guardians. This law holds regardless of whether the surveys are anonymous and voluntary. Alaska is one of only a few states in the nation that has a school survey law requiring active parental consent for surveys of this type. Most states employ passive parental consent when administering such anonymous surveys. Passive parental consent involves notifying and informing the parents about the survey and assuming that students will participate unless the parent provides a written refusal to opt out of the survey.

**How was the YRBS conducted?**

A two-stage sample design was used to select the actual students for participation. The first stage consisted of selecting schools. Schools were selected with probability proportional to the size of their enrollment. Once a school was selected, classes were selected as the second stage. Eligible classes were those where a student would be enrolled in one and only one class at a time. For example second period or required English. This gave each student an equal opportunity of being selected. At any time a school district, an individual school, a student's parents, or a specific student had the opportunity to decline participation.

At the classroom level, teachers were given a script to read to students that established guidelines for student privacy and anonymity and the importance of the survey. Each student was given an unmarked envelope in which to seal his or her survey before turning it in. These survey envelopes remained sealed until received at a central state collection site. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and a CDC contractor analyzed the state survey data.

A national YRBS also was conducted in 2007, however, the results will not be available until early summer 2008. As a result, 2005 National YRBS results are being used for comparison purposes.

**Who participated in the survey?**

Forty one high schools from 19 districts were scientifically selected to be included in the survey. Thirty-eight (88 percent) schools participated and 1,318 (68 percent) students completed the survey resulting in an overall response rate of 60 percent. The CDC has determined that the overall response rate must be 60 percent or greater in order for the data to represent the high school population of the state. Therefore, these survey results represent 34,399 students grades 9 through 12 in public high schools (excluding private, alternative, boarding and correctional schools).

**How are the data used?**

The results of the YRBS are used to detect changes in risk behaviors over time and provide an important piece of program planning and evaluation, curriculum development and decision-making regarding the use of available resources. The information from the YRBS can be used to help schools and communities identify strengths and weaknesses in current programs and services. Additionally the results can be used by schools and communities when applying for grant funding to initiate or maintain programs that serve youth.

**Who supported the YRBS in Alaska?**

The YRBS in Alaska is a cooperative effort between the state departments of Health and Social Services and Education and Early Development. The survey is also endorsed by the following groups and boards:

- Association of Alaska School Boards
- Alaska Action for Healthy Kids
- All Alaska Pediatric Partnership
- American Heart Association, Pacific/Mountain Affiliate
- American Lung Association of Alaska
- American Cancer Society, Alaska
- Alaska Health Education Consortium
- Alaska Tobacco Control Alliance
- Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium

Contact: Greg Wilkinson, HSS, (907) 269-7285, Cell (907) 382-7032  
Ann Potempa, HSS, (907) 269-7957, Cell (907) 240-9158  
Eric Fry, EED, (907) 465-2851

###



# Healthy Alaska

Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) Nationally and in Alaska

January 2007

## Inside This Issue:

• YRBS - Nationally

• YRBS - How Can This Short Survey Collect Vital Behavioral Information We Need?

• YRBS - How it Works

• YRBS - The Value

• Alaska YRBS

• Dear PA7

An Overwhelming Opportunity  
SP Alaska Regional Conference on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD)

January 25-27, 2007  
Centennial Hall  
Juneau, Alaska

Registration Deadline  
January 16, 2007. Any  
questions regarding  
registration contact  
Robba Wolfing at 907-  
708-7556 or  
fasdconference@yahoo.  
com

Brain Booster

Question:

Make this equation  
correct without changing  
the numbers:  $8 + 8 = 91$

## YRBS -Nationally

The Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) is the largest and most respected source of data on the youth risk behaviors that contribute to the leading causes of mortality, morbidity, and social problems in the US. The YRBS was created by the Division of Adolescent School Health, Center for Disease Control, and representatives from more than 800 local, state, and federal health agencies in 1990. The YRBS measures behaviors that fall into the following 6 categories: Behaviors that result in unintentional injuries and violence, tobacco use, alcohol and other drug use, sexual behaviors that result in HIV infection, other STDs, and unintended pregnancies, dietary behaviors, physical activity.

## YRBS- How Can This Short Survey Collect the Vital Behavioral Information We Need?

Amazingly, nationally 71% of all deaths for persons 10-24 years of age are due to only 4 causes: motor vehicle crashes, other unintentional injuries, homicide, and suicide. In addition, 800,000-900,000 teenaged girls become pregnant each year and an estimated 3 million STDs occur among persons ages 10-19. A limited number of behaviors usually established during youth contribute substantially to these causes of mortality and morbidity. These behaviors include: carrying a weapon, physical fighting, attempting suicide, drinking or using drugs while operating a motor vehicle, lack of seatbelt use while riding in a motor vehicle, lack of helmet use while riding a bicycle, and unprotected sexual intercourse that results in HIV infection, other STDs, or unintended pregnancies.

The Youth Risk Behavior Survey also surveys youth on the leading causes of adult morbidity and mortality as many individuals initiate the risk behaviors that lead to problems as adults in their adolescence. Among adults in the US aged 25 and older, 63% of deaths are due to only 2 causes: cardiovascular disease and cancer. A limited number of causes contribute to these health problems. These behaviors include: use of tobacco, unhealthy dietary behaviors, and physical inactivity.

## YRBS - How it Works

The YRBS is administered in a collection of randomly drawn sample schools from nearly every state every other year. The survey is administered to high school aged students in a single class period and is completely anonymous. Some school districts choose to survey all of their high school students to better understand and measure risk behaviors in their communities. Strict precautions are in place to absolutely insure student confidentiality and participation in the survey is completely voluntary. Students answer the multiple choice questions about their current and past risk behaviors, which are collected and sent to the state for processing. State results are then shared federally with CDC.

## YRBS - The Value

The YRBS results have tremendous value at the national, state, and local level. Results allow health and educational professionals to track the prevalence of youth risk behaviors over time, to compare their state to other states or to the nation, and even to empower local communities to measure themselves compared to the rest of the state. Understanding the extent to which youth practice health risk behaviors is critical for developing programs that address risk behaviors practiced in their jurisdiction and for measuring progress toward program goals. YRBS results also help with focusing school health education teacher training and instructional programs, supporting health-related legislation, and seeking funding for school health programs.

## Alaska's YRBS

Alaska managed to collect enough student responses to the YRBS to get usable data twice since it began administering the survey in 1995. CDC determined that at least 60% of students in the selected sample must complete the survey for it to accurately represent student behavior across the entire state. Alaska was able to get 60% or more responses in 1995 and in 2003. In 2005, Alaska missed achieving an adequate response rate and was unable to use the data. Every effort is being made for a successful survey in 2007.

Here is a sample of Alaska 2003 YRBS data:

- 11.8% of high school boys reported carrying a weapon to school in the last 30 days
- 38.7% of high school students reported drinking alcohol in the last 30 days
- 47.5% of high school students reported having ever used marijuana
- 1 in 4 high school students reporting driving in a vehicle with a driver who drank alcohol in the last 30 days
- 1 in 5 high school girls reported seriously considering suicide in the last 12 months

For more information visit <http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/chronic/school/pubs/YRBSreport2003.pdf>.

DEAR PAT,

I am a health teacher who recently heard that Alaska has a law that requires parental consent for youth health surveys at school. I occasionally utilize classroom surveys with my students and now am concerned if I am following protocol. Is this true, and if so, what should I do?  
Signed, Alarmed in ABC School

Dear Alarmed in ABC School,

Alaska has had a law, AS 14.03.110, since 1999 that prohibits schools from administering surveys or questionnaires at public schools that inquire into personal or family affairs, or anything else that is not a matter of public record or readily observable in public (regardless of whether or not the surveys are anonymous and voluntary) without first getting written permission from all participating students' parents or legal guardians. This type of requirement is known as active parental consent.

According to the Centers for Disease Control Alaska is one of two or three states in the nation that has a school survey law requiring active parental consent for surveys that are anonymous and voluntary. Most states employ passive parental consent when administering such surveys. Under this system, written notice is sent out to parents informing them of the upcoming survey and the types of questions it will ask, and then permission to participate is assumed unless parents or students indicate otherwise. With passive parental consent all students and parents can decline to participate at any point in the process.

Classroom teachers need to be aware of this law as it applies to small informal surveys teachers may want to include in their instruction as well as to national surveys like the YRBS. Many teachers are surprised to learn of this law and its requirements, and are forced to revisit some of their current instructional assignments and practices to avoid violations. Teachers should check with their school administrators for further guidance.

Addressing active consent is a controversial topic. Advantages to active parental consent are greater parental involvement and less risk of students being included in surveys without parental approval. Disadvantages of active parental consent include the drastically increased costs and labor involved in conducting student surveys, the high failure rates for getting enough student responses to get usable data for larger surveys, the potential for leading to inaccurate/misrepresentative data, the research suggesting that the vast majority of parents consent to their students participating in such surveys, and that most parental failures to provide written permission are driven by apathy, oversight, or student error, not by refusal.

As a health teacher you can do several things to support collections of important health data for local, state and national use. First you can communicate with your site administrator to see if consent for surveys is built into your school's annual parental enrollment packet. Second, you can incorporate lessons on the YRBS into your curriculum, highlighting its findings and its importance. Student health projects could focus on raising community awareness and support for the YRBS and other youth risk behavior surveys. Finally, some students could choose to research Alaska's law around surveys in schools and its current effects on Alaska's youth risk behavior data collection efforts.

\*\*\*Much of the information in this edition comes from CDC's 2005 Handbook for Conducting YRBS Surveys.

### Brain-Booster

Answer:

Look at the equation upside down:  $16 = 8 + 8$

### Fundamentals of HIV Prevention, Counseling & Training

February 12 & 13, 2007  
Anchorage, Alaska

If the training is designed for HIV test counselors, substance abuse counselors, mental health clinicians, and others responsible for HIV prevention counseling. If you have any questions, please contact Carl Aronson at (907) 269-8055.

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### FEEDBACK

We are looking for feedback! If there are any changes you would like to see made, and/or suggestions for content of the newsletter, please send them to Sarah Schaal at [sarah\\_schaal@eed.state.ak.us](mailto:sarah_schaal@eed.state.ak.us)

### School Health Partners:



[www.eed.state.ak.us/tls/schoolhealth/](http://www.eed.state.ak.us/tls/schoolhealth/)



[www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/chronic/school/default.htm](http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/chronic/school/default.htm)



# Planned Parenthood<sup>®</sup> of the Great Northwest

March 9, 2009

The Honorable Bettye Davis  
Alaska State Senate  
State Capitol, Rm 30  
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Senator Davis:

On behalf of Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest (PPGNW), I'm writing in support of Senate Bill 101, "*An Act relating to questionnaires and surveys administered in the public schools.*"

Planned Parenthood relies on the results of the school-based Alaska Youth Behavior Risk Survey to determine where our efforts should be in terms of education and STI prevention programs. For accurate survey results it's critical to get as many survey responses as possible. Planned Parenthood recognizes that the current regulations of active parental consent for anonymous surveys decrease the response rate significantly.

Senate Bill 101 will increase the accuracy of the vital information Planned Parenthood and many other organizations rely on to serve Alaska's young people. Thank you for addressing this issue.

Sincerely,

Clover Simon  
Vice President of Alaska  
Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest  
(907) 770-9705  
clover.simon@ppgnw.org

Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest  
Alaska Administrative Office - 4001 Lake Otis Pkwy  
Anchorage, AK 99508

SB 101



**ALASKA PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION**

Committed To Advancing Alaska's Public Health Since 1978

**ALPHA RESOLUTION 7-2008**

**Support for Passive Parental Consent for the Youth Risk Behavior Survey**

**Sponsor: Jayne Andreen**

Whereas the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) is part of an epidemiological surveillance system that was established in 1988 by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to help monitor the prevalence of behaviors that put young people at risk for the most significant health and social problems that can occur during adolescence and adulthood.

Whereas the survey examines six categories of adolescent behavior including: 1) behaviors that result in unintentional and intentional injuries; 2) tobacco use; 3) alcohol and other drug use; 4) sexual behaviors that can result in HIV infection, other sexually transmitted diseases (STD's) and unintended pregnancies; 5) dietary behaviors; and 6) physical activity.<sup>1</sup>

Whereas Alaska's YRBS is a joint project between the Dept. of Education & Early Development and the Dept. of Health and Social Services and was established in Alaska in 1995.<sup>2</sup>

Whereas survey results are used at the national, state, and local level such as measuring progress towards the national Healthy People 2010 and the Healthy Alaskans 2010 health objectives.

Whereas, understanding the health risk behaviors of youth is critical for developing programs that address risk behaviors practiced and for measuring progress toward program goals.

Whereas Alaska's YRBS has been unable to collect reliable data consistently with the challenge of administering the survey under the active parental consent law AS 14.03.110, which requires written permission from all participating students' parents or legal guardians.<sup>2</sup>

Whereas employing active parental consent drastically increases costs and labor involved in conducting student surveys, and results in high failure rates for getting enough student responses to get usable data for larger surveys, and the potential for leading to inaccurate/misrepresentative data.<sup>3</sup>

Whereas Alaska is one of only three states in the nation that has a school survey law requiring active parental consent for surveys of this type.<sup>3</sup>

Whereas most states employ passive parental consent when administering such surveys which involves notifying and informing the parents about the survey and assuming that students will participate unless the parent provides a written refusal to opt out of the survey.<sup>3</sup>

Whereas it is believed that the majority of parents consent to their students participating in such surveys and that most parental failures to provide active parental consent (written permission to participate) are driven by apathy, oversight, or student error, not by refusal.<sup>4</sup>

Whereas the survey is anonymous and voluntary.

Therefore be it resolved that the Alaska Public Health Association supports the content and the implementation of the Youth Risk Behavior Survey in Alaska with parental notification and passive parental consent

And be it further resolved that the Alaska Public Health Association supports changing the requirement for participation in the survey from active parental consent to passive parental consent.

#### References:

<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Retrieved November 2, 2008 from <http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/yrbs/brief.htm>

<sup>2</sup> State of Alaska, Department of Health and Social Services. Retrieved November 2, 2008 from <http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/chronic/school/YRBS.htm>

<sup>3</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Division of Adolescent and School Health. (2006) *Parental Permission and the Youth Risk Behavior Survey*. 2006

<sup>4</sup> Ellickson P, Hawes JA. An assessment of active versus passive methods for obtaining parental consent. *Evaluation Review* 1989;13(1):45-55.

**Sen. Bettye Davis**

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**From:** Gretchen Clarke [bhantelope@gci.net]  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 22, 2009 9:48 AM  
**To:** Sen. Bettye Davis; Sen. Joe Paskvan; Sen. Johnny Ellis; Sen. Joe Thomas; Sen. Fred Dyson  
**Subject:** Support SB 101

Senators,

I urge you to support SB 101 (Davis) changes the parental permission for Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) to opt out procedure rather than the current opt in.

YRBS provides critical information regarding the health and behaviors of our young people. It is an anonymous survey and is the 'gold standard' for schools. The information collected by YRBS is crucial for schools and others who work with youth as it provides information that supports grant applications and other sources of youth support funding. However, in order for YRBS to be a useful tool for collecting information, a large number of youth need to take this survey so progress can be noted. Most parents do not object to their children taking part in YRBS. They are just busy and don't get the permission forms returned which leads to school districts spending additional resources to track down permission forms, all in effort to get enough student participation in the survey to get statistically valid results. Please support the change to parental passive consent; parents opposed to their children participating will still be able to refuse participation.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Gretchen Clarke  
Sitka, AK