



Exciting New Partnership Opportunity *HIV/STD/Teen Pregnancy Prevention*

Partnership

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) is now offering 15 school districts an opportunity to participate in an exciting five-year initiative to improve adolescent health through school-based HIV/STD and pregnancy prevention.

Urgency

Student health status and school achievement are directly connected. By addressing the critical health problems that interfere with learning such as HIV/STD infection and unintended teen pregnancy, students will be able to attend class ready to learn, feel connected to the school community, stay in school and graduate.

In 2010, young people ages 13 to 24 accounted for 21% of all new HIV infections in the United States. Nearly half of the 19 million new STDs reported each year are among young people ages 15 to 24. Schools, in concert with families and communities, can play a key role in implementing effective sexual health education programs.

Well-planned and implemented comprehensive school health education has been shown to positively influence students' health-related knowledge, skills and behaviors.

Areas of Focus

Districts selected for this partnership will have an opportunity to become national and state leaders by implementing exemplary school health policies and practices that:

- 1. Establish safe and supportive learning environments;**
- 2. Deliver developmentally-appropriate exemplary sexual health education; and**
- 3. Increase adolescents' access to key sexual health services (e.g., counseling, testing and referral for HIV/STDs and pregnancy) available in school-based health centers and/or in community health agencies.**

The focus will be on secondary schools and will include an additional focus on increasing access to sexual health services for students in alternative school settings.

Benefits to School Districts

As a partner, you will receive at no-cost, high-quality professional development and technical assistance from national and state experts on:

- ✦ cutting-edge resources and evidence-based practices;
- ✦ compliance with health-related state mandates;
- ✦ curriculum-specific training for classroom teachers;
- ✦ creating safe and supportive environments;
- ✦ networking opportunities with other partner districts; and
- ✦ strategies for adoption and implementation of policies and practices.

Who is Eligible to Apply?

This opportunity supports a five-year partnership between the CSDE and selected school districts. All LEAs may apply, however, if more than 15 applications are received, districts will be selected based on a variety of factors including need, capacity and readiness.

What role will the CSDE play in this partnership?

The CSDE will commit to the partnership with the school districts to:

- ✧ Dedicate full-time consultants with expertise in areas related to teen pregnancy prevention and HIV/STD prevention;
- ✧ Assist districts with curriculum alignment to national and state standards;
- ✧ Provide **at no-cost**, professional development, technical assistance, research and best practice tools on:
 - selecting and implementing research-based curricula;
 - developing model policies;
 - building and sustaining effective teams and advisory committees;
 - ensuring safe and supportive learning environments;
 - reaching all students, including those at greatest risk, (e.g. students attending alternative schools);
 - ensuring school-connectedness and parent engagement;
- ✧ Facilitate an ongoing learning collaborative among partner district teams;
- ✧ Help create linkages between schools and community-based organizations to increase access to youth-friendly health care providers;
- ✧ Facilitate access to state and national experts; and
- ✧ Provide technical assistance on utilizing data for assessment, planning and monitoring.
- ✧ During the implementation years 2-5, provide funding for logistical costs such as substitute coverage, resource materials and professional development contingent upon funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

What is involved at the district and school level?

The partner school district will agree to:

- ✧ Designate a team of three staff that includes a representative from each of the following areas (health education, school health services, mental health/counseling) who will serve as the project leaders and will attend and participate in conference calls and site visits with state consultants each year to support implementation;
- ✧ Develop or maintain a district-level advisory council;
- ✧ Send appropriate school staff to professional development opportunities offered by the partnership on required areas;
- ✧ Establish a referral system (if you do not have one already) with community organizations that provide adolescent sexual health services;
- ✧ Adopt a written course of study in sexual health education for middle and high school students that is evidence-based, developmentally appropriate and taught by well-qualified and trained teachers;
- ✧ Track policy adoption and monitor policy implementation for HIV/STD and pregnancy prevention education, sexual health services, safe and supportive environments; and
- ✧ Participate in required data collection activities including the Connecticut School Health Survey and School Health Profiles.

How is this partnership supported?

The CSDE is one of 19 State Education Agencies to receive a five-year cooperative agreement from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Division of Adolescent and School Health (CDC/DASH), entitled *Promoting Adolescent Health Through School-Based HIV/STD Prevention*. This cooperative agreement runs from August 1, 2013-July 31, 2018 and is contingent upon funding from CDC.

Interested in becoming a *Partner District*?

The Application deadline is November 15, 2013. If your district is interested in joining the partnership, visit the [Healthy School Communities for Success Schools](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/healthyschools) Web site at www.sde.ct.gov/sde/healthyschools. For questions, please contact: Dr. Bonnie J. Edmondson, Program Manager and Education Consultant for School Health, Connecticut State Department of Education, bonnie.edmondson@ct.gov or 860-713-6936.