

# **Conducting a School-Based Surveillance Survey to Assess Youth Health Risk Behaviors**



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# Presenter Disclosures



**Jacqueline Lawler**

**The following personal financial relationships with commercial interests relevant to this presentation existed during the past 12 months:**

**“No relationships to disclose”**

# Background



- **Orange County is located in the Hudson Valley, about 60 miles north of New York City**
- **Approximately 375,000 residents**
- **18 school districts with approx. 60,600 students**



# Healthy Orange



- **Healthy Orange is the umbrella organization for all of the OCDH chronic disease grant and county-funded programs**
- **Developed in 2006, it focuses primarily on:**
  - **Improving nutrition**
  - **Promoting a tobacco-free lifestyle**
  - **Increasing physical activity**
- **Childhood obesity is now a national priority**
  - **Few data resources available at the county/district level**

# Survey Development



- **Based on CDC's Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YBRSS)**
  - **Surveys students in grades 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> in a sample of high schools across U.S. every 2 years**
  - **Monitors six types of health-risk behaviors that contribute to the leading causes of death and disability among youth**
    - ✦ **Tobacco use**
    - ✦ **Dietary behaviors**
    - ✦ **Physical activity**
    - ✦ **Alcohol and drug use**
    - ✦ **Sexual behaviors**
    - ✦ **Behaviors leading to unintentional injury and violence**
  - **Over 80 questions**

# Survey Development



- **Focus on three topics aligned with Healthy Orange priorities**
  - Tobacco use
  - Physical activity
  - Dietary behaviors
- **Survey piloted in multiple settings**
- **Created survey in ExpertScan program**
  - Creates scannable surveys with individualized codes for each school district
  - No need for manual data entry!
  - Scanned, automatically entered into database and program tallies results

# Survey Distribution



- **Created a shorter survey- approx. 30 questions**
- **Surveys were distributed during one class period**
- **Collected, analyzed and created reports**
- **Compiled data by County and School District**

# Survey Results



- Completed in 11/15 high schools in Orange County
- 10,617 students completed the survey
- Response rate of 65.2% in 11 high schools
- School specific reports were sent to superintendents
- Data helps target Healthy Orange Programs for each participating school district



# Survey Results



- **Current tobacco use lower than NYS and national average (10% vs. 16% nationally)**
- **Fifty percent of students using computers, internet or social media more than 3 hours per day compared to 40% at state and national levels**
- **Only small percentages of students meeting recommended guidelines for fruit, vegetable or daily breakfast consumption**
- **Exceed both state and national rates for recommended daily physical activity of 60 minutes/day (40%)**

# Limitations of Survey



- Data did not include students who have dropped out of school or students who were absent the day the survey was administered
- Data based on self-report, thus students may under-report illegal type behavior
- Four high schools chose not to participate

# Follow Up



- Completed focus groups with students and staff from different high schools to help improve the survey and its administration
- Gave individualized and county data presentations:
  - Health and wellness committees
  - School superintendents
  - County Youth Bureau
  - Student groups
- Results shared in local newspaper to engage parents and public

# Successful Strategies



- **Use existing validated survey questions to help expedite survey creation**
- **Use existing partnerships with the schools to garner support from Superintendents**
- **Identify a champion in each school district interested in the survey to help with logistics**
- **Share results with parents through school communication**

# Barriers and Solutions



- **Minimal time for students to complete surveys in the classroom**
  - Gave each district flexibility to complete survey in health class, physical education class or outside of core requirements
- **Schools being asked to complete multiple surveys**
  - Met with local government and community groups to work out timing and combining into one survey every 2 years
- **Time constraints to complete survey scan**
  - Worked with local students to help with process
  - Consider using online survey during one class period

# Future Directions



- Work with schools to develop collaborative programming to target unhealthy behaviors
- Getting each high school in Orange County to participate in the survey
  - Solicit help from students to engage your parents, community and school officials
- Complete the survey every 2 years to coincide with YRBSS reports to understand trends over time
  - Next survey will be distributed in the Fall of 2015

# Questions?



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