



# SURVEYING STUDENTS ABOUT **RISK BEHAVIORS**



**We need to understand youth behaviors to make informed decisions!**

## Louisiana Needs to Anonymously Survey Young People in order to:

- ◆ **Monitor** risk behaviors that lead to health and social problems.
- ◆ **Assess** whether risk behaviors increase, decrease, or stay the same over time.
- ◆ **Examine** the co-occurrence of different risk behaviors
- ◆ **Provide data** that is comparable to national data, that of other states, and among subpopulations of youth within Louisiana.
- ◆ **Evaluate** prevention programs to make sure that they are working.
- ◆ **Inform** policy development and administrative decision-making at the state and local level.
- ◆ **Avoid losing funding** for prevention programming in schools. Schools are a great place to conduct prevention programs because many youth can be served at a relatively low cost.

## Most States Conduct the YRBS

- ◆ The majority of states already use the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (**YRBS**) including the sexual risk behavior questions.
- ◆ In 2013, 42 states participated in the YRBS, including Louisiana and nearby states such as Mississippi and Alabama.
- ◆ **Louisiana and Georgia were the only two states** that participated but **did not** collect sexual risk behavior data.

## What Is the YRBS?

- ◆ The YRBS is a school-based survey developed by the CDC and conducted every two years.
- ◆ In Louisiana it is conducted by the Department of Education in high schools throughout the state.
- ◆ The YRBS monitors health risk behaviors that often lead to death and disability among youth:

Alcohol & Drug Use  
Nutrition

Tobacco Use  
Physical Activity

Injuries & Violence  
**Sexual Risk Behavior**

- ◆ The survey is voluntary and districts, schools, parents (guardians), and students all must consent to participation.
- ◆ The survey is anonymous and data is only compiled at the state level; data will never be reported for a parish, district, school, or individual student.



# What Is the Need?



## Teen Pregnancy Is High in Louisiana

- ◆ In 2014, there were 35.5 births per 1,000 females aged 15 to 19 years in Louisiana with **5,229 babies born to teen mothers**.<sup>i</sup>
- ◆ This is significantly higher than the national rate and the **7<sup>th</sup>** highest rate of any state in the country.<sup>ii</sup>

## We Don't Know If Louisiana Follows National Trends

- ◆ According to the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), there was a **16%** increase from 1991 to 2013 in the number of high school students nationwide who had never had sexual intercourse.
- ◆ Louisiana students are not included in this data, so we don't know if this trend holds true for young people in our state.
- ◆ From 1991 to 2013, the national teen birth rate dropped 57%, while the rate in Louisiana for the same time period dropped only 48%.

## Sexually Transmitted Infections Are Common Among Teens in Louisiana

- ◆ Ranked **1<sup>st</sup>** in the US for primary and secondary syphilis, ages 15-19 with a total of 51 cases (2013).<sup>iv</sup>
- ◆ Ranked **2<sup>nd</sup>** in the US for chlamydia among ages 15-19, with a total of 9,399 cases (2013).
- ◆ Ranked **2<sup>nd</sup>** in US for gonorrhea among ages 15-19, with a total of 2,586 cases (2013).
- ◆ Ranked **2<sup>nd</sup>** in the US for HIV infection among ages 13-19, with a rate of 15.4 cases per 100,000 people (2013).<sup>v</sup>

<sup>i</sup>Office of Public Health. (2016, January 14). *Louisiana Health Report Card 2015*. Retrieved from Department of Health & Hospitals: <http://new.dhh.louisiana.gov/assets/docs/LegisReports/ACT985Report1995R.S.2015.pdf>

<sup>ii</sup>The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy. 2016. *Teen Birth Rate Comparison, 2014*. Accessed March 24, 2016. <https://thenationalcampaign.org/data/compare/1701>.

<sup>iii</sup>The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy. (2012). *Teen Childbearing, Education, and Economic Wellbeing*. Retrieved from <https://thenationalcampaign.org/sites/default/files/resource-primary-download/childbearing-education-economicwellbeing.pdf>

<sup>iv</sup>SIECUS. (n.d.). *Louisiana State Profile Fiscal Year 2014*. Retrieved October 8, 2015, from Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States: <http://siecus.org/document/docWindow.cfm?fuseaction=document.viewDocument&documentid=526&documentFormatId=607>

<sup>v</sup>Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2016, February 26). *HIV Surveillance: Adolescents and Young Adults*. Retrieved from HIV/AIDS: <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/pdf/library/slidesets/cdc-hiv-surveillance-adolescents-young-adults-2014.pdf>