



Knox County Health Department

140 Dameron Avenue, Knoxville, TN 37917

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Feb. 15, 2023

Contact: Kelsey Wilson
865-257-7460 cell

KCHD Releases 2022 Youth Risk Behavior Survey

Report outlines health risk behaviors among high school students

Knox County, Tenn. – The Knox County Health Department released the 2022 Knox County High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), which is designed to track behaviors that negatively affect the physical and mental health of high schoolers. The survey, which is also conducted on a state and nationwide level, focuses on issues such as self-harm and violence, tobacco use, alcohol and other drug use, and weight control and diet. The full report can be found [here](#).

“As one of only a few counties who conduct their own YRBS, we know how important it is to get a glimpse into the major health concerns that affect students in our community,” said KCHD Senior Director Kevin Parton. “With the information from this report, we, along with our partners, can assess current efforts and better determine the resources that students and their families need.”

Several of the findings included in the analysis reflect improving outcomes, such as declines in cigarette smoking, alcohol consumption, and riding in a vehicle without a seatbelt. However, several of the findings are concerning, especially regarding physical activity, feelings of sadness or hopelessness, and illegal drug use. Several of these key findings can be found in the YRBS “At A Glance”, attached to this media release.

“Supporting the social and emotional well-being of students is an essential part of our work, and this report provides important insight into some of the challenges they face,” said Jason Myers, Assistant Superintendent of Student Success for Knox County Schools.

The 2022 Knox County YRBS was administered in March 2022 and included a sample of ninth through 12th grade students in Knox County Schools. This report is a joint effort between KCHD and Knox County Schools, with support from the Metro Drug Coalition. The YRBS is designed to assist local agencies in planning and policy formation to improve overall health in the county, especially the health of adolescents.

The 2023 Knox County YRBS will be based on input from middle school students; these two age groups are assessed in alternate years.

About Knox County Health Department

The first health department in Tennessee to achieve national voluntary accreditation by the Public Health Accreditation Board, the Knox County Health Department (KCHD) is dedicated to ensuring the conditions in which every resident can be healthy. For more information, visit www.knoxcounty.org/health.

