



Texas Department of State
Health Services

Friday Beat

January 14, 2022, Edition

The newsletter that takes a [Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child](#) approach.

Announcements

Updated TEA COVID-19 Guidance

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) made updates to public health guidance for schools. The new guidance document includes updates to positive tests in schools, masks, students and staff with COVID-19, and students and staff who are close contacts. Read the [TEA guidance document](#).

CDC Supports Test-to-Stay Policies in Schools

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released a media report highlighting the use of test-to-stay practices. The report supports the use of test-to-stay practices used in schools to minimize absenteeism and learning loss which can occur during traditional quarantine at home. The CDC also recommends everyone get the vaccine or booster shot to best protect everyone from COVID-19 and COVID-19 related complications. View the [CDC media report](#).

K-5 Kids Art Contest Now Open

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality is hosting the Take Care of Texas Kids Art Contest. This contest is a fun way for K-5 students to learn about protecting the environment and come up with creative ways to share this knowledge with others. Students submit their artwork of how they, along with their friends and family, help keep the air and water clean, conserve water and energy, and reduce waste. The students that submit the best art can win a tablet or laptop computer. The contest closes on March 4, 2022. [Learn more about the contest](#) and how to submit artwork.

Professional Development

Improve Food Security in your School Community Webinar

Did you know that schools can increase student access to healthy foods through school meals and community partnerships? Alliance for a Healthier Generation will host the Improve Food Security in your School Community webinar explaining this relationship on January 20, 2022, at 1:00 p.m. The webinar will explore federal nutrition programs, such as school meals, leverage family engagement strategies, and strengthen community partnerships to address food insecurity. [Sign up for the webinar](#) hosted by the Alliance for a Healthier Generation.

New Data Shows Significant Decrease in Vaping Among Teens

The 2021 Monitoring the Future survey, conducted by researchers at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor and funded by the National Institutes of Health National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), released data showing the progress in the fight to curb youth nicotine vaping. The data signals the efforts to provide education to prevent e-cigarette use and quitting resources are starting to work. The findings represent the largest one-year decrease in overall illicit drug use reported since the survey began in 1975. [Read the survey results.](#)

Nutrition Environment and Services

New Consumer-Friendly Handouts Based on the Dietary Guidelines

The United States Department of Health and Human Services Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion added five new handouts based on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025. The new handouts take a life stage approach and reflect the science-based nutrition guidance in the current edition of the Dietary Guidelines. You can share these new handouts with parents, school staff, and community partners to encourage healthy eating across the lifespan. [Download the handouts](#) from the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

Local Meat in Schools

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) released a guidance document to help schools include local meat in school lunches. The document includes information on how to get meat from local sources, how to make curriculum connections to the local ecosystem, how to create the school menu with local meat, and more. [Read the USDA document.](#)

Counseling, Psychological and Social Services

Support for Teens When a Family Member Has Cancer

The National Institute of Health National Cancer Institute released information to support teens who have a family member with cancer. The article includes information and resources on how teens can cope, manage stress, find support, and more. This is often a difficult and confusing time for teens, and no one should go through this experience feeling alone. To help support a teen going through this, [share cancer information](#) from the National Cancer Institute.

Social and Emotional School Climate

Social and Emotional Climate and Learning for Schools and Parents

Social and Emotional Climate is one of the 10 components of the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child (WSCC) model, CDC's framework for school health. To help schools support student health and learning, school leaders can work towards a positive social and emotional climate. A positive social and emotional climate at school enables students to develop the skills they need to recognize and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, appreciate the perspectives of others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions. View the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's [information and strategies to support student's social and emotional learning](#) for schools and parents.

Physical Environment

Free Environmental Education and Outreach Materials

Take Care of Texas has environmental education and outreach materials that schools and parents can order for free. The materials include information on the water cycle, school recycling, energy conservation, and much more. The materials are available in both English and Spanish. [Download or order the materials](#) from Take Care of Texas.

Reducing Diesel Emissions from School Buses

Especially during the winter months, it might be tempting to leave the school buses idling to keep it warm. However, diesel exhaust from these buses has a negative impact on human health, especially for children who have a faster breathing rate than adults and whose lungs are not yet fully developed. The Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) [Clean School Bus National Idle Reduction Campaign](#) is designed to help communities reduce emissions from older diesel school buses. The Texas School Health Advisory Committee also provides [recommendations to limit school bus and automobile idling](#).

Employee Wellness

CDC's Lifestyle Change Program

What comes to mind when you think of healthy living? It may seem overwhelming to think about everything that being healthy means. The good news is that reversing prediabetes and living healthier aren't impossible! We encourage you to join a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention-recognized [diabetes prevention lifestyle change program](#) to help you prevent or delay type 2 diabetes. [View prediabetes information and resources](#) from Department of State Health Services Diabetes Prevention and Control Program.

Quote to Note

"The capacity to be puzzled... the premise of all creation, be it art or in science." – Erich Fromm

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