Survey of School Board Smoking Policies
In Alberta
February/March 2003

HIGHLIGHTS

The following highlights are based on the findings of a province-wide survey of school board divisional smoking policies conducted by Action on Smoking & Health as part of an 18-month project titled "Building Capacity for Smoke-Free Environments in Alberta". A five-page, self-administered questionnaire was distributed to the superintendents of all 64 Alberta public, separate, and francophone school boards between February and March 2003. Of the 64 questionnaires sent, 53 completed questionnaires were received resulting in an 83% response rate.

TOTAL SURVEYS RECEIVED

N = 53
(83% response rate)

Divisional Smoking Policy

- 89% of responding school boards have adopted a divisional smoking policy.
- 40% of school boards without current smoking policies have indicated formal plans to introduce a divisional smoking policy in 2003.

Possession of Tobacco Products

- 34% prohibit student possession of tobacco products on school grounds.
- 40% of school boards have formal plans to amend (or strengthen) their current smoking policy to specifically prohibit student possession of tobacco products on school grounds.

Student Smoking Policy

- Most school boards prohibit tobacco use by students in all school buildings (87%) and in school buses and vehicles used to transport students (79%).
- 62% of school boards prohibit tobacco use by students on school grounds.
- 51% of school boards prohibit tobacco use by students at off-campus, school-sponsored events.

Faculty/Staff Smoking Policy

- Most school boards prohibit tobacco use by faculty and staff in all school buildings (87%), in bus barns and maintenance shops (75%) and in school buses and vehicles used to transport students (77%).
- 58% of school boards prohibit tobacco use by faculty and staff on school grounds.
- 36% of school boards prohibit tobacco use by faculty and staff at off-campus, school-sponsored events.

Community Use of School Facilities

- The majority of school boards prohibit tobacco use by visitors in all school buildings (81%), in school buses and vehicles used to transport students (75%), and outside on school grounds (58%).
- Only a handful (6%) of school boards allow smoking by facility users or renters during private functions.

Smoking Awareness, Prevention & Cessation

- 23% of school board policies require schools to include smoking awareness and prevention education for students in the curriculum.
- 9% of school board policies require schools to provide assistance to students who wish to quit smoking.
- 34% of school boards offer assistance to faculty and staff who wish to quit smoking (primarily through employee assistance and benefits plans).

Tobacco Marketing

- As of March 2003, 6% of school boards have adopted policies prohibiting tobacco industry sponsored school-based smoking prevention programs.

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