



JEB BUSH
GOVERNOR

STATE OF FLORIDA

Office of the Governor

THE CAPITOL
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA 32399-0001

January 24, 2005

Dear Superintendents:

During the last six years, Florida has made great strides to reduce substance abuse among our youth. Yet, this continues to be a serious challenge for Florida. Substance abuse is the single largest impediment to a healthy, safe and productive future for our children.

The Florida Youth Survey is central to our success. Your continued support of this survey is extremely important to public health and education. As you know, students who do not use drugs and learn in safe and supportive environments are much more likely to reach their academic potential. The information from the survey helps schools and other local community groups effectively prevent drug use and provide healthy environments.

The Florida Youth Survey is a collaborative endeavor of the Governor's Office of Drug Control and four state agencies: Departments of Education, Health, Children and Families and Juvenile Justice. A sample of schools will be randomly selected to participate in the 2005 survey. Selected school districts will receive instructions on administration of the survey from Commissioner John Winn of the Department of Education and Secretary John Agwunobi of the Department of Health. Accurate administration of the survey ensures its continued success and satisfies the policy and data requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act.

Since 2000, drug use has decreased across almost all categories of youth. Students who reported good grades and meaningful coursework also reported lower rates of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use. Without the information from the Florida Youth Survey, Florida's communities could not realize or accurately measure such gains. This success is a result of school districts' support of effective prevention of drug abuse and violence. For specifics on Florida's progress to reduce youth drug use, visit <http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/mentalhealth/publications/fysas/>. I encourage you to lead this effort in your school district.

Sincerely,

Jeb Bush