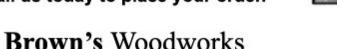


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I Sing the Body Electric survey of high school teens show improvements, areas of concern

High school students – 3,164 of them – from 12 high schools in Vermilion County have expressed their attitudes and reported their health behaviors through the 2010 I Sing the Body Electric Youth Risk Behavior health survey. I Sing the Body Electric, an outreach program of Provena United Samaritans Medical Center Foundation, has now administered five biennial surveys.

Results of the survey, the first step in this three-phase health education and prevention program, were released last Thurs-





day at Provena United Samaritans Medical Center. The printed survey report, which represents the responses of approximately 77.1% of the Vermilion County teen population, includes data and a retrospective analysis of health risks since the first biennial survey was conducted in 2002.

"The survey data gives us a very vivid picture of what is on the minds of our Vermilion County youth," said Dottie McLaughlin, I Sing the Body Electric program coordinator. "However, we're interested in more than the data – we want to assist our youth in finding long-term solutions to the health concerns they've expressed."

The program is a collaboration among Provena United Samaritans Medical Center, Provena United Samaritans Medical Center Foundation, Danville Area Community College, Danville District 118, the Vermilion County Regional Office of Education, the Vermilion County Health Department, The Center for Children's Services, Hoopeston Multi-Agency, and Hoopeston Community Memorial Hospital.

McLaughlin presented data and said there have been improvements in health risk areas since the initial 2002 survey: 42.6% decrease in the number of youth who drink and drive

29.7% decrease in youth who ride with someone who has been drinking

35.3% decrease in youth who binge drink (had 5 or more drinks in a row within a couple of hours)

27.4% decrease in high school teens who have had at least one alcoholic drink of alcohol in the previous 30 days before the survey ("current users")

Decrease every survey year in the overall numbers of youth who have had at least one drink of alcohol in their life

12.2% decrease in youth who have ever used marijuana 7% decrease in youth who are "current users" of marijuana

51.8% decrease in high school students who have ever used methamphetamines

8.5% decrease in youth who have used ecstasy

28.7% decrease in teens who have smoked a whole cigarette

25.3% decrease in youth who are "current" smokers 19.4% decrease in youth who have made suicide plans 22.2% decrease in those seriously considering a suicide attempt

16.8% decrease in youth actually attempting suicide

The survey information also pointed to continuing concerns, however:

Females (46.1%) and males (35.0%) reported being the target of bullying on school property.

One in four teens had their first drink of alcohol at 13 or 14 years of age; one in seven smoked their first whole cigarette and one in seven students first tried marijuana at those ages. One in 11 teens reported abusing over-the-counter cough and cold medicines, a 43.5% increase since 2008.

One in six youth (15.2%) report taking prescription drugs not prescribed for them, an increase of 11.8% since 2008.

Female depression has increased 27.3% since 2002, going from 31.9% to 40.6% in 2010.

One in three females (31.9%) and one in six males (16.7%) report cutting or hurting oneself on purpose.

Rates of attempting suicide are down but still nearly twice as high for county youth (12.4%) as national youth (6.3%).

Over one-half of the teens (55.7%) report having sexual intercourse at least once, an increase of 4.5% from 2002.

Looking at nutrition we find: 1) Over one-fourth of VC youth (27.8%) drank no fruit juice in the seven days prior to taking the survey 2) One in five VC teens (20.7%) ate no fruit in a week 3) Four out of 10 students (44.1%) ate no salad over seven days 4) One in five of our youth (19.2%) ate no other vegetables in seven days 5) Over one in six students (17.5%) drank no milk in a week.

The top 10 health concerns identified by youth: alcohol use; teen sexuality; drug use, body image; fighting/bullying/ carrying weapons; depression/suicide; nutrition and physical fitness; seat belt use; domestic and dating abuse; and tobacco use. These now become the focus of prevention messages created by the high school students using the arts. Mini-grant proposals written by the students assist with the costs of producing the projects and assure that any student, regardless of economic means, can be involved. The culmination of the project production phase is an I Sing the Body Electric Arts and Health Festival which will be held this year at Danville Area Community College on Sunday, May 1.

Weather

Chance of snow today. High 41. Tonight, mostly clear. Low 27. Tomorrow, sunny. High 50, low 38. For current weather conditions, call Hoopeston Weather Service, (217) 283-6221.



every Thursday 7 p.m. Hoopeston American Legion 502 E. Penn

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NOTICES

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