



everychild.one voice.

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October 12, 2022

Noelle Veilleux Markham
Arizona YRBS Coordinator
Division of Public Health Prevention Services
Arizona Department of Health Services
150 North 18th Ave, Phoenix, AZ 85007

Dear Ms. Veilleux Markham,

On behalf of the Arizona PTA, we are pleased to provide this letter of support for the 2023 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) taking place in Arizona high schools, gathering meaningful data on priority health risk behaviors for students in grades 9 through 12. This data can be used by organizations and schools to identify emerging health issues and create or fund programs that support the health and well-being of Arizona teens.

The participation of selected school districts is a crucial step in gathering this meaningful data on the health behaviors of our Arizona teens. Superintendents can be assured that their decision for schools to participate is important but not the only step. When school district superintendents allow the YRBS to take place in their selected schools, they are allowing the parent or guardian of each student (and the student themselves) to decide individually whether to participate.

- A signed permission form must be returned for a student to participate in the survey. This means all students taking the survey have active permission from their parents or guardian. Students without a returned form will not take the survey.
- Student privacy is protected, and individual student responses remain anonymous. Students do not put their names or other identifying information on the survey.
- Students taking the survey can skip any questions they do not want to answer and stop taking the survey at any time.

Arizona PTA understands that ADHS fully appreciates the dedication, time, and energy it takes to administer the YRBS and how crucial schools and staff are to the survey's success.

Sincerely,

Anne H. Gabriellini
President

Arizona PTA
agabriellini@azpta.org



NAMI Arizona is a state-wide grassroots organization dedicated to serving individuals and families affected by mental illness to improve their quality of life, achieve recovery. NAMI Arizona promotes activities in partnership with local NAMI affiliates, through education, advocacy, research, and support.

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NAMI ARIZONA PUBLIC POLICY POSITION:

1. We are proud of our State and love that we lead the Nation in several nonpartisan criminal justice, behavioral health, and veterans' initiatives.
2. We know all three branches of Arizona State Government seek effective system oversight and service delivery, and wish to do our part to ensure they're successful.
3. We realize that truly independent oversight is no different than good leadership and supervision, and choose to be proactive instead of reactive, inspirational instead of punitive, and to partner on the front end to achieve our targeted outcomes instead of admonishing on the back end.
4. We love and respect that our 11 Affiliates blanketing Arizona, reflect diverse sometimes even opposing perspectives on numerous issues, yet unite where we share common cause determined to deliver their powerful product. We vow to help strengthen their independent ability to ensure they can effectively unite and reflect the communities they serve.
5. We refuse to jump on anyone's bandwagon without knowing all sides of the issue, who's behind it and why. Even still, we will be extremely cautious not to dilute our brand or message.
6. We also refuse to shame, blame, or ridicule when we don't find common ground.
7. We value collaboration and intentional partnering in all that we do and strive to ensure the Right Voices are at the Right Tables, and those who share our cause feel heard, validated, and attended to.

October 11th, 2022

Noelle Veilleux Markham
Arizona YRBS Coordinator
Division of Public Health Prevention Services
Arizona Department of Health Services
150 North 18th Ave, Phoenix, AZ 85007

Dear Ms. Veilleux Markham,

On behalf of the Arizona State Office of the National Alliance on Mental Illness, our ten official NAMI Arizona Affiliates, and 1,000 or so members all across this Great State, it is my distinct privilege to share our wholehearted support for the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) and our Arizona schools in administering the 2023 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS). This survey collects important data on priority health behaviors, helping schools and organizations understand and meet the health needs of Arizona teens, particularly those experiencing disproportionate levels of risk behaviors in grades 9 – 12.

We understand from our friends at the American Psychological Association, American School Counselors Association, and the CDC, that:

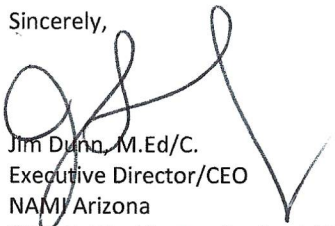
- a. the information generated from the YRBS is essential for measuring the effectiveness of prevention and education programs, ensuring accountability, and providing an index against which States may compare their own local YRBS results.
- b. To reduce the burden in any one school, only a small number of classes (one or two per grade) will be selected randomly within each selected school from required courses. The survey will take one regular 45-minute class period to complete and will be administered by specially trained field staff.

Honestly, the Arizona State NAMI Office understands how many of us have grown tired after decades of committees, work groups, focus studies, projects, councils, and surveys that proliferate much ado about nothing.

However; our staunch, determined, and highly dedicated pool of SME Board Members insist the time is now; we need strong participation to collect robust data in Arizona; and supporting ADHS and Arizona schools in administering the YRBS is an opportunity to actually do something to meet the physical and mental health needs of all Arizona teens, once and for all!

We look forward to an ongoing and productive intentional partnering with ADHS in support of gathering meaningful health data through the YRBS in Arizona schools.

Sincerely,



Jim Dunn, M.Ed./C.
Executive Director/CEO
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