

California Health Kids Survey Santa Rosa Secondary Schools 2007 Data Summary

The California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS) is one of several tools used to identify gang prevention and intervention services for at-risk youth in our community. This is the second CHKS survey that included specific questions related to gang involvement of youth in grades 7, 9, 11, and Alternative Education classes. This year 5,409 (82%) of the eligible 6,565 students participated in the survey. While this is the second survey conducted, it is too soon to begin identifying trends. The following are some important highlights from the survey. Even though there were 5,409 participants, not all students responded to every survey question.

- Of the respondents, 90% report never having been involved in a gang. But, our youth continue to join gangs at an alarmingly young age. Of 3,834 respondents, 358 (9%) identified themselves as having been gang members, with the majority (86%) joining at age 13 or younger.
- Self-identified gang affiliated students were twice as likely as non gang-involved students to be truant more than once per week.
- Among self-identified gang affiliated students, more than half (63%) believe that the adults who are close to them condone their gang involvement.
- Drugs and alcohol use with self-identified gang affiliated students continues to be higher than for non gang-involved youth. Binge drinking 3 or more days in the past 30 days among gang-involved youth was 2 to 8 times more frequent than for non gang-involved students.
- The majority of students feel safe going to and from school in their neighborhoods. A higher percentage of self-identified gang affiliated students have been targets of violence to and from school compared to non gang-involved students.
- Youth report joining gangs for a variety of reasons with the top five being to have fun, for protection, because a friend or family member is a gang member, or for respect.
- Self-identified gang affiliated students were significantly more likely to have possessed a gun or other weapon at school in the past 12 months compared to non gang-involved students.
- Self-identified gang affiliated students are more likely to perceive themselves as failing in school than non gang-involved students.
- 76% of non gang-involved students feel safe or very safe in their neighborhoods compared to 47% of self-identified gang affiliated students.
- Self-identified gang affiliated youth said that they would like more organized sports, arts programs including music and dance, computer programs, volunteer opportunities, tutoring and mentoring assistance, youth clubs, job training, counseling, and alcohol and drug treatment programs for students their age.