



Tobacco-Free Schools in Missouri 2006

Missouri's Tobacco-Free Schools Law:

- ❑ No person shall smoke or use tobacco or tobacco products in any indoor area of a public elementary or secondary school building or educational facility, excluding institutions of higher education, or on buses used solely to transport students to or from school or to transport students to or from any place for educational purposes. (RSMo 191.775)
- ❑ Local Boards of Education may adopt policies more stringent than the state law. (RSMo 191.777)

The need for total tobacco-free school policies that are enforced—

- ❑ Early adolescence (ages 11-15, grades 6-10) is the period when most smokers tried cigarettes for the first time. The majority of adult smokers progressed to become regular smokers before the age of 18.
- ❑ Young people who believe more adults and young people smoke than actually do are more likely to approve of smoking and to become smokers.
- ❑ Young people are more likely to become users when in environments that approve of tobacco use.
- ❑ Additionally, Missouri state law prohibits youth under 18 from possessing tobacco products. (RSMo 407.933)

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Preventing Tobacco Use Among Young People: A Report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta, Georgia. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Office on Smoking or Health. July 1994.

The current status of school policies in Missouri - 98% of secondary schools have adopted a policy prohibiting tobacco use.

Percentage of Missouri secondary schools (grades 6-12) that have policies prohibiting tobacco use by students, faculty/staff and visitors in each of the following locations:

Policy Prohibiting:	In School Buildings			In School Buses or Other Vehicles Transporting Students			On School Grounds			At Off-Campus, School Sponsored Events		
	2002	2004	2006	2002	2004	2006	2002	2004	2006	2002	2004	2006
Tobacco use by:												
Students	100%	99%	100%	99%	99%	100%	99%	99%	98%	97%	97%	96%
Faculty/staff	99%	97%	98%	96%	96%	95%	72%	70%	73%	68%	67%	73%
Visitors	98%	95%	96%	94%	92%	90%	59%	57%	53%	41%	40%	38%
Tobacco advertising:		95%	92%		93%	91%		94%	91%	In publications	94%	92%
92% of secondary schools' policy prohibits tobacco advertising through sponsorship of school events.												
95% prohibit students from wearing tobacco brand-name apparel or carrying merchandise with tobacco names, logos or cartoon characters on it.												
56% of secondary schools have signs posted marking a tobacco free school zone, that is, specific distance from school grounds where tobacco use by students, faculty and staff, and visitors is not allowed.												

*Note: There is no statistically significant change between 2004 to 2006 or 2002 to 2006.
Source: Missouri School Health Profile, 2002, 2004, and 2006. Responses from secondary building principals in Missouri. Missouri Department of Elementary & Secondary Education. Jefferson City, Missouri.*

Tobacco use by Missouri students under age 18 on school property –

- ❑ 7.6% of high school students and 2.9% of middle school students smoked on school property one or more days during the 30 days prior to responding to the Missouri Youth Tobacco Survey.
- ❑ 5.3% of high school students and 1.6% of middle school students used smokeless tobacco on school property one or more days during the 30 days prior to the survey.

Source: Missouri 2005 Youth Tobacco Survey. Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services, Health Promotion Unit.

Actions taken by schools with students caught smoking cigarettes on school property:

- ❑ 98% always or almost always refer student to a school administrator
- ❑ 96% always or almost always inform parents or guardians
- ❑ 5% always or almost always require students to participate in an assistance, education, or cessation program
- ❑ 41% always or almost always remand students to in-school suspension or detention
- ❑ 25% always or almost always suspend students from school
- ❑ 11% always or almost always refer students to legal authorities
- ❑ 13% always or almost always refer students to a school counselor

Source: Missouri School Health Profile, 2006. Responses from secondary building principals in Missouri. Missouri Department of Elementary & Secondary Education. Jefferson City, Missouri.

Tobacco-free school policies should be comprehensive—

- ❑ A comprehensive tobacco-free school policy prohibits tobacco use by students, faculty/staff and visitors in school buildings, buses and vehicles, on school grounds, and at school-sponsored activities and events off school property.
- ❑ The policy should prohibit tobacco advertising, or sponsorship, and student possession of tobacco gear.
- ❑ The policy should include a tobacco-free zone that extends beyond the school property prohibiting tobacco use by students, faculty-staff and visitors.

How to get started making the schools in your community tobacco-free—

- ❑ Find out if there is a school health advisory committee, youth group, or community coalition working on tobacco issues in the school and community. If so, join and identify others who would like to learn more about the school's tobacco policies.
- ❑ Ask a school administrator about the school's tobacco policies and how they are enforced. Learn the process for adopting new school policy or strengthening current policy. Solicit his/her support and recommendations for a tobacco-free school policy.
- ❑ Prepare a policy paper on why a tobacco-free school policy is needed. Present to the school administration and seek support for taking to the school board.
- ❑ Involve students in presenting to the school administration and school board. It is their school and they are who the policy is intended to protect.

Additional information—

Missouri Tobacco Use Prevention Program
Missouri Dept. of Health and Senior Services
Bureau of Health Promotion
866-726-9926