



International Survey Associates

March 29, 2005

Faculty, staff benefit from Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities funds

By Thomas J. Gleaton, Ed.D., President, Pride Surveys

In the discussion about the continued funding of the Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities program, noteworthy attention has been paid to the drug and violence behaviors of students. But little attention has been given to the needs of faculty and staff.

The following data from the Pride Surveys Questionnaire for Faculty and Staff should be of concern to school administrators, including superintendents, principals and school board members. The data is based upon the responses of 24,069 faculty and staff members from across the United States.

A majority of faculty and staff (53%) believe students are more violent than in the past.

On the other hand, faculty and staff underestimated the incidence of illegal drug use among students in grades 9 to 12. On average, they placed marijuana use in the 5 to 15% range while students in grades 9 to 12 self-reported past year marijuana use at 30%.

Data from Pride Surveys has consistently shown that students who use drugs are far more likely to engage in violent behaviors, such as bullying, harming other students, carrying guns to school and joining gangs.

Since school systems can use SDFSC funds to provide personnel training, the elimination of this money would have serious negative consequences for every local school district in the nation. A large majority (77%) of faculty and staff answered that they need more training in their personal liabilities and responsibilities regarding students.

Three-fourths or more of them pointed to additional training needs in safety issues:

- 77% of faculty and staff said "I need training" in violence prevention
- 76% called for more training in recognizing signs and symptoms of potential violence
- 75% needed training in conflict resolution

More than two-thirds mentioned their need for training in drug issues, specifically:

- Locating and using community resources (71%)
- Student refusal skills (71%)

- Recognizing signs and symptoms of alcohol and drug use (69%)
- Alcohol and other drug curricula (65%)

Ignoring these needs would place local education agencies, their students and personnel at greater health and safety risks, increase the potential for litigation, and lead to a deteriorating learning environment.

Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities funding has created an educational setting in America in which students report that their teachers are as likely as parents to warn them about the problems of alcohol and drug use.

While much work remains to be done, turning back to the days when schools were unequipped to deal with drug and violence issues is not an option for school administrators or the nation.

Thomas J. Gleaton, Ed.D., of Atlanta, is the president of Pride Surveys. In 1998 Congress designated the Pride Surveys questionnaire for grades 6 to 12 as an official indicator of adolescent drug use in the United States.

Pride Surveys urges Congress to support SDFSC

In a letter to 539 Members of Congress and territorial delegates, Pride Surveys President Thomas J. Gleaton urged continued funding for the program. Read the text of the letter by [clicking here](#).

Ask your newspaper to support SDFSC funding

Dr. Gleaton's letter to Congress has been formatted for use as a newspaper guest column. You can [download the column here](#). Simply contact your local newspaper and ask the editorial page editor to consider using the column as an op-ed piece. Be sure to do this on your own time and using your own computer, etc., if you are a public employee.