

Suggestions for System Review of Data

- Internal discussions among the county and regional coordinators are encouraged; and comparisons from county to county can be reviewed internally. ***So... county and regional coordinators may view the entire packet. But we want to stress that any release of these summary data to external stakeholders, should only be of the county that is relevant.*** We should avoid comparisons of schools and counties when the coordinators go to discuss the results with the schools and other stakeholders. The focus should be on the relevant school or county with which the coordinators are assigned.
- The County STOP Coordinators should be the ones to review the information in the pre-survey for their respective counties with the school administrative and faculty contacts currently established as well as any other stakeholders such as the steering committee. We would prefer the county level STOP coordinators to review the data in person with the school contacts (contacts that have already been made) and other stakeholders.
- The data of course can also be shared via the faculty advisor and county coordinator with the student leadership as well.
- A generic press release can be sent by each county. Dru Potash has drafted a guide release where counties can insert the relevant data for each county. The highlights of the release will be geared toward a few main points: (a) tremendous cooperation and participation by the local high schools as STOP began, (b) tobacco use continues to be a problem for young teenagers in Tennessee and in these counties in particular, (c) nearly all adult tobacco users started the habit between the ages of 12 to 17 years of age, and (d) tobacco is the leading cause of death and illness in the U.S.
- Composing the press release may be a good activity for the both the coordinators and the students

Some Guidelines on Interpreting the Survey Data

- The STOP Pre-Assessment data can be very helpful to participating systems. Several elements of the survey process strengthen the validity of the data. First, the instrument has been used before and was deemed to have a high level of validity. Second, the response rates, while not 100%, are fairly high, suggesting that the results have a strong probability of reflecting the aggregate perceptions of the population.
- However, caution is always necessary when reviewing survey results. Several issues should be given consideration:
 - Since the results do not represent 100% of the population, some level of potential bias could exist – that is, non-respondents may have had differing perceptions, they just chose not to share them by participating in the survey or they were not available when the surveys were completed.
 - Moreover, individual questions that have a large percentage of non-respondents should also be viewed with caution. Whatever the reason respondents had for not choosing to respond to a particular question, they may in fact have differing opinions than the folks who responded to the question.
 - Question percentages may not total to 100% because of rounding.
 - Finally, surveys represent individuals' self-reports, and there is no way to know if the self-reports are accurate. Also, some questions are factual in nature, while others focus on attitudes, perceptions and observations.

These challenges affect all surveys/self-reports, but acknowledging this possibility is useful for retaining our perspective of the findings. In other words, these are the best data we will have, but such data are never perfectly accurate.