

**Written Proponent Testimony on HB 2407
Child Welfare and Foster Care Committee
February 20, 2023**

Greenbush appreciates the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on HB 2407, a bill related to the processes for ensuring informed parental consent prior to the administration of certain tests, questionnaires, surveys or examinations. **Our testimony today is intended to provide information about administration protocols and how changes in requirements have impacted the administration process and participation levels.**

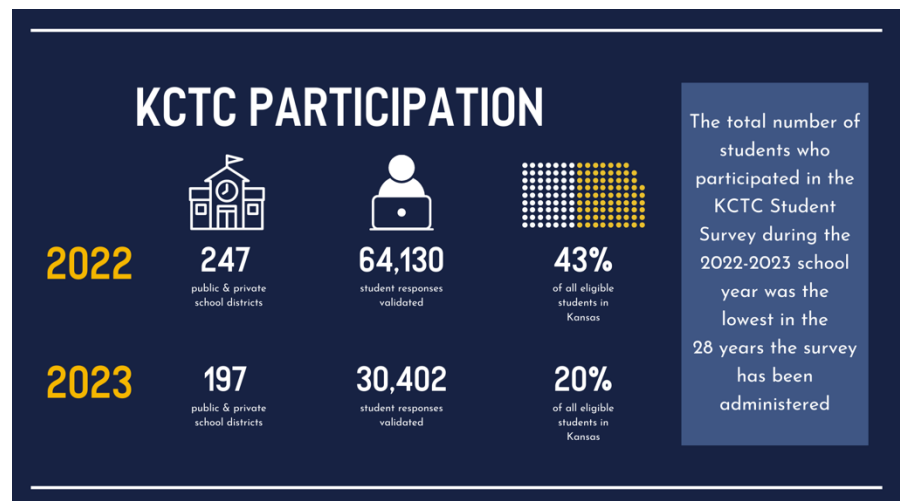
Since 1995, Greenbush has administered the Kansas Communities that Care (KCTC) Student Survey on behalf of the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services (KDADS). From the beginning, protocols have been in place to ensure parents/guardians were informed about the survey’s content, purpose, and how data would be utilized. KDADS makes the survey available to Kansas schools at no cost, though the decision to administer the survey is left to the local school district.

There is no other instrument in Kansas that provides local-level data across the state to inform school and community efforts to prevent risky behaviors such as substance use and bullying. The KCTC Student Survey is the only statewide data source to inform schools, communities, and families about how many of their kids are experiencing feelings of depression or who have seriously thought about killing themselves, have made a plan to kill themselves, or tried to kill themselves.

From 1995 until 2014, the procedure for parents/guardians to give consent for their child to participate in KCTC required parents to notify their school if they did not want their child to participate. This “OPT OUT” process was a common practice in obtaining informed consent from parents/guardians when collecting data from students. In 2015, Kansas enacted the Student Data Privacy Act requiring an active consent process through which parents/guardians would be required to give written permission to allow their child to participate in the KCTC Student Survey.

The Student Data Privacy Act was further amended in 2022 to add more specific requirements regarding informed consent. Most of the changes enacted in 2022 aligned with the protocols already in place.

Specifics about the timeframe for **obtaining parents’/guardians’ signatures within four months of the administration of the survey and obtaining separate signatures** for each test, questionnaire, survey or examination of this type were the most significant changes. We implemented these changes within a relatively short period of time between May and November of 2022.



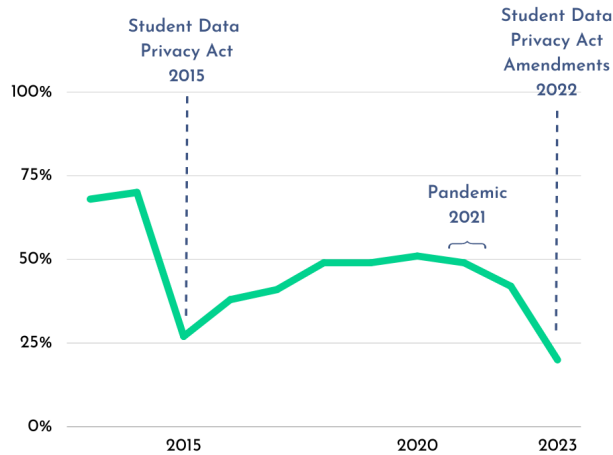


The percentage of student responses reported over the past decade is shown below. These are calculated based on the number of students whose survey responses are reported and the total number of students enrolled in 6th, 8th, 10th, and 12th grades as reported by KSDE. Changes in parental consent protocols are noted in 2015 and 2022 when participation levels were at their lowest.

KCTC STUDENT SURVEY PARTICIPATION

Percentage of 6th, 8th, 10th, and 12th Grade Students
Surveyed over the Past Decade

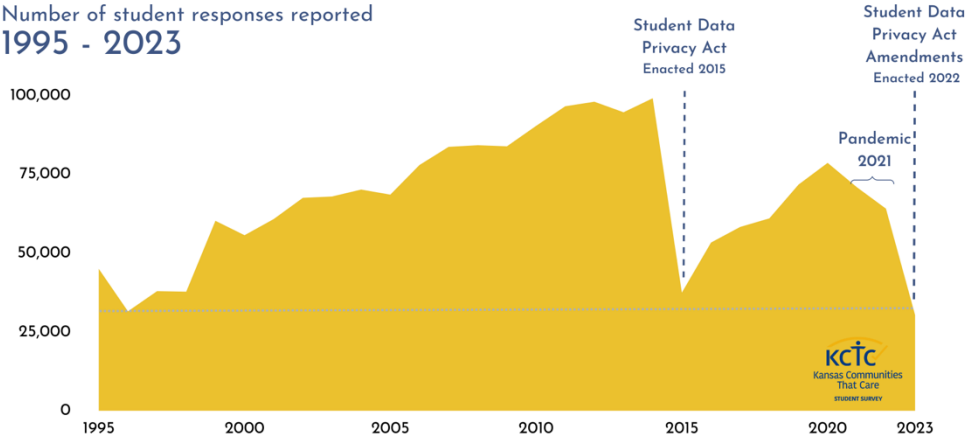
2013 - 2023



We anticipate participation levels will rebound. As you can see in the chart below, the number of students surveyed has steadily risen over time as schools and communities that utilize data from the KCTC Student Survey find value in knowing what local kids have to say.

KCTC STUDENT SURVEY PARTICIPATION

Number of student responses reported
1995 - 2023





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Our aim has always been to help the Kansas Department of Aging and Disability services ensure that local data is available to guide prevention work at the local level. Because of their investment in the Kansas Communities That Care Student Survey, these data resources are available at no cost to all Kansas public and private schools and each county that participates. An overview illustrating the type of information available from the KCTC Student Survey is attached.

Greenbush continues to support protocols to maintain the highest ethical and legal standards to ensure student privacy, informed consent by parents/guardians and students, and accurate data reporting. We welcome any questions and stand ready to share more specifics regarding the protocols that are in place at any time.

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2022

During the summer of 2020, stakeholders were engaged in a process to prioritize improvements to the Kansas Communities That Care (KCTC) Student Survey. In addition to parents, students, counselors, and administrators, Greenbush considered recommendations documented by the Attorney General's Suicide Prevention Task Force, the Kansas Mental Health Advisory Council, and the Kansas Blue Ribbon Task Force on Bullying.

From this process, two primary goals were established for the 2021 survey administration.

1. reduce the length and time required for administration
2. expedite reporting survey results for use by school, community, and state stakeholders

Online administration of the statewide survey began in 2009. By 2020, 93% of districts utilized the online option. As plans formed to end the use of paper surveys, the pandemic accelerated transition to fully online administration in 2021. This important milestone unleashed multiple opportunities to improve administration protocols.

To reduce the amount of time required to complete the 2021 survey, 35 questions were removed and language was modified to improve readability. An updated survey platform allowed the use of logic to skip past questions based on previous responses.

Improvements will continue based on annual review of processes, stakeholder input, and feedback from student focus groups.

The Kansas Communities That Care (KCTC) Student Survey is built on a prevention framework to inform local and state programs, policies, and practices and support healthy youth development. Greenbush administers KCTC on behalf of the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services (KDADS).

2022 KCTC Student Survey results were published online March 11th.

OVER
64,000
student responses



Results published earlier than ever before



244 PUBLIC & PRIVATE
school districts participated

43%

Nearly 43% of eligible 6th, 8th, 10th, & 12th graders participated



IMPROVED READABILITY

Language was modified to make questions easier to read



SKIP LOGIC REDUCES # OF QUESTIONS

This feature changes what question or page a respondent sees next based on how they answer the current question. The result is fewer questions for most students.



THE SURVEY TAKES APPROXIMATELY 27 MINUTES TO COMPLETE

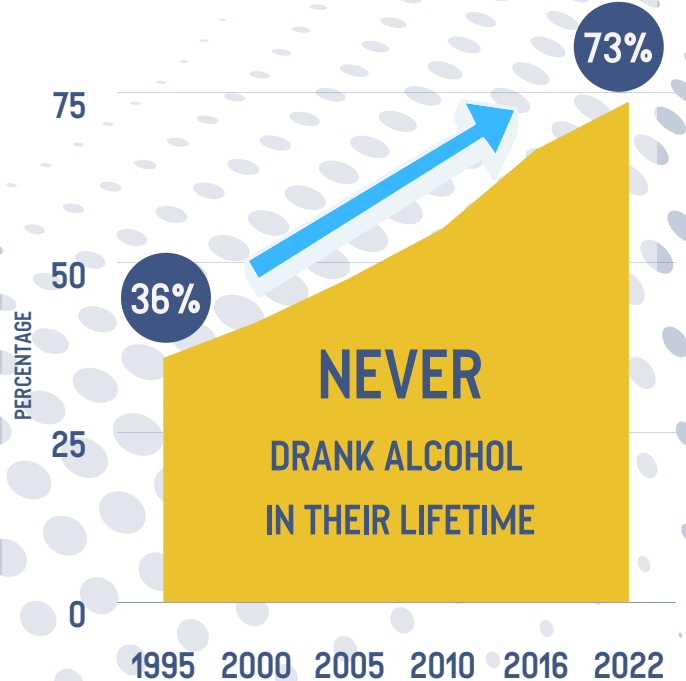
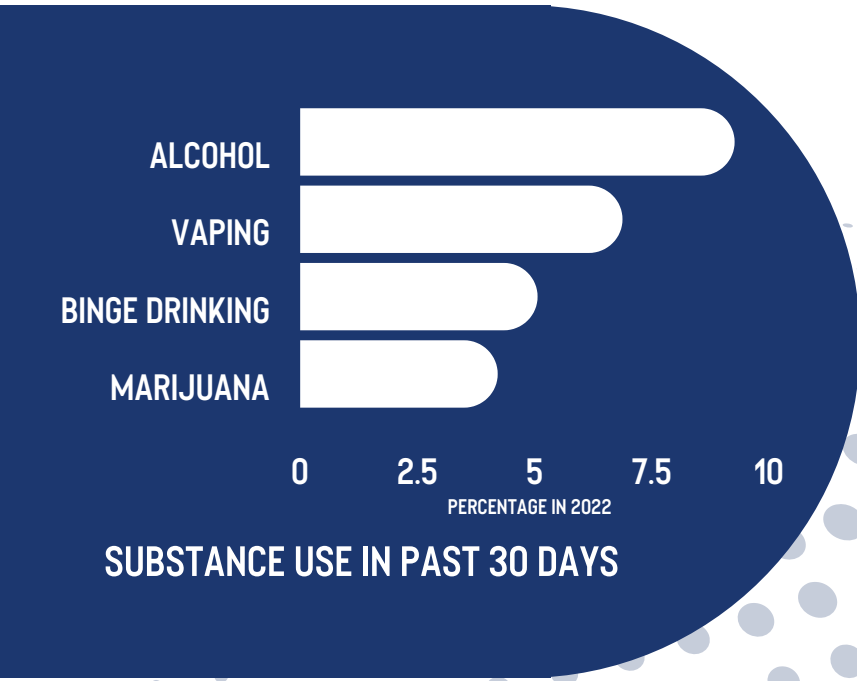
On average, KCTC requires about two hours of students' time throughout their entire K-12 educational experience.



2022

Less than
1 in 10
 Kansas kids surveyed reported they drank alcohol in the past 30 days

Over the past 27 years, a steadily increasing number of kids report that they have NEVER drank alcohol.



DATA ILLUSTRATES RESPONSES FROM STUDENTS SURVEYED IN 2022 WHO ANSWERED EACH QUESTION

KCTC EVOLUTION

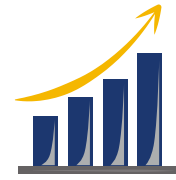
Kansas was a pioneer in substance abuse prevention needs assessment & local data access

1995	2007	2008	2009	2016	2021
COMMUNITIES THAT CARE SURVEY INITIATED Federally funded Six-State project to develop a prevention needs assessment	+ GAMBLING When Kansas expanded state-owned casinos, questions were added to monitor youth gambling	+ BULLYING Used to inform building-level crisis plans in accordance with the Jason Flatt Act	ONLINE ADMINISTRATION OFFERED	+ DEPRESSION & SUICIDE As concerns about youth mental health arose, questions about depression and suicidal ideation were added	FULLY ONLINE ADMINISTRATION Reduced # of items Streamlined with skip logic Embedded instructions Accessibility features Reports available sooner

SUICIDAL THOUGHTS, PLANS & ATTEMPTS IN THE PAST YEAR REPORTED BY STUDENTS IN 2022

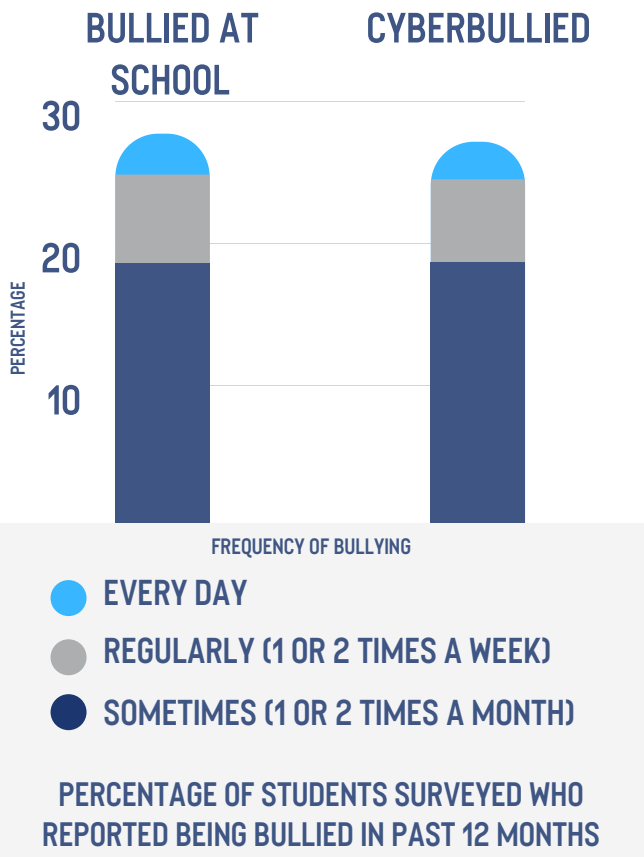
- 19% seriously thought about killing themselves
- 13% made a plan to kill themselves
- 5% tried to kill themselves

*NEARLY 60,000 KANSAS STUDENTS RESPONDED TO OPTIONAL QUESTIONS ABOUT DEPRESSION & SUICIDE QUESTIONS IN 2022

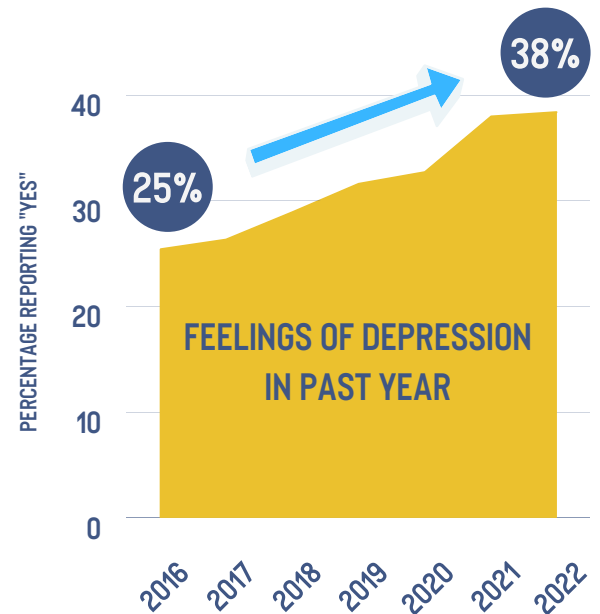


38%

38% of students surveyed reported feelings of depression in the past year

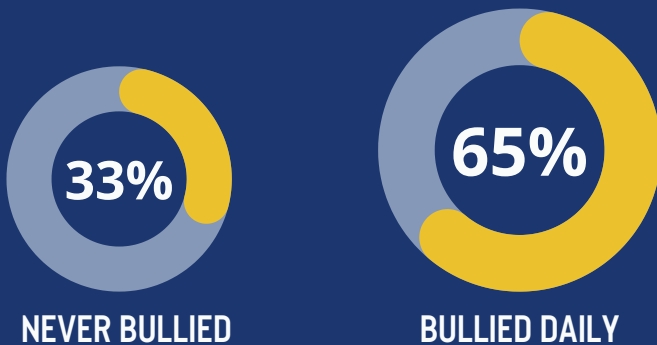


The percentage of Kansas students surveyed who reported feelings of depression has been increasing since we began asking in 2016.



DATA ILLUSTRATES RESPONSES FROM STUDENTS SURVEYED IN 2022 WHO ANSWERED EACH QUESTION

PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS SURVEYED WHO REPORTED FEELINGS OF DEPRESSION BASED ON HOW FREQUENTLY THEY WERE BULLIED



Kids who reported being bullied daily reported feelings of depression nearly twice as much as kids who reported they had never been bullied.

Being bullied once or twice a month also showed higher reported levels of depression.