

Utilizing Technology to Deliver Public Health Messaging: *An Environmental Scan of Community, School, Tribal, Worksite, and Healthcare Sectors in South Dakota*

SCHOOL

Demographics: Twenty-eight respondents represented the school sector, including 60% (4) k-12, 16% (4) higher education, 12% (3) high school, 8% (2) elementary school and 4% (1) combined elementary and middle school. Within those respondents, their student population includes the following in Table 1.

Table 1 - Student Population

Student Population	% (Number)
Less than 250	28.00% (7)
250-249	24.00% (6)
500-749	12.00% (3)
1250-1499	4.00% (1)
2000 or more	32.00% (8)



Patterns of Technology Use: Students and families are the primary audiences targeted by the top three technologies utilized to

deliver messaging, e-mail, website, and social media, with smartphone application, podcasts, and discussion boards as the least used. Middle school and k-12 schools do not use smartphone applications. Specifically, families are heavily targeted for k-12 schools, but not at all for universities. Faculty and staff are additional audiences targeted, as well as student portals and an internal TV station are additional types of technology used. The focus of the messaging is primarily health education and health promotion and prevention. In addition, physical activity and nutrition, tobacco, and oral health are the top three health topic address through messaging, as well as immunizations in k-12 and drugs and alcohol and STD's in university facilities as other health topics addressed. Cancer and heart disease and stroke are the least addressed topics.

Feasibility of Technology Use: The effectiveness of technology used is measured through response rate, social media engagement, and achieving desired health outcomes, with reach not measured at all and some unsure if it is being measured and or not at all. Individual staff person(s) are responsible for delivering messaging, followed by a communications team and no one that is assigned. Wellness team and health and physical education teachers, as well as school counselor are other staff persons assigned to delivering messaging. Staff are primarily tasked with posting and developing content in delivering messaging, with scheduling the least assigned task, as well as other roles assigned include sending out training information and links to information. Content for messaging is developed in advance, followed by content shared from other sources and contributions by other organizations. Various methods are used to manage delivery of messaging via social media, including Facebook, text messages, websites and Connect 5 Messaging System, with half of respondent who indicate none are used. Barriers to using technology to deliver messaging are broad, with a lack of staff training on technology, budget, and internet access as the leading barriers, however lack of access to the intended audience and lack of information on what needs to be shared as other barrier identified.

Additional Information to Inform Technology Use

for Public Health Messaging: There are largely no areas of chronic disease that are challenging to address using technology to deliver messaging, however a few areas indicated that sharing photos of chronic disease are too graphic, and it is different to recommended place for information or treatment for specific diseases as there is no affiliation with a medical group. In addition, one respondent indicated that

diseases such as heart disease and diabetes do not apply to young children and parents are not interested in the information. Schools have had success with gaining people's attention regarding chronic disease, and getting the word out through social media, specifically Facebook on the reservation. Parents have also encouraged schools to continue to share health messages as they are unaware of current health trends. Additional insight to better understand school sectors' use of technology to deliver messaging include the use of a basic approach to deliver messaging through e-mail, text messages, and social media.

Chronic Disease Areas Not Addressed

"Specific topics such as diabetes, heart disease etc. do not apply to the masses of young children. Often parents are not interested in information that they perceive doesn't apply to them"

-School Staff
