



Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy
Supports HB 1530 (Rep. Ann Coody)
Establish Health Education in Grades 6-8

Problem:

Oklahoma is one of the unhealthiest states in the nation, ranking at the bottom of all health risk factors:

- Income 47, Exercise 47, Health Insurance 44, H.S. Education 41, College Educ 47, Tobacco Use 47, Nutrition 50, Mental Illness 50, Heart disease 50

To meet this challenge, health officials, businesses and community leaders are promoting greater personal responsibility and better lifestyle choices.

Yet many Oklahomans simply don't have good information on which to base their choices. In addition, Oklahoma students are bombarded by threats to their health and safety in the forms of bullying, violence at schools, the lure of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs, and environmental factors.

Startling Fact: Oklahoma is one of only two states in the nation that has no requirement in our public schools for health education.

Even though our state-adopted Priority Academic Student Skills (PASS) guidelines provide a comprehensive outline of the components of health education at every grade level, only about half of the 539 schools districts in Oklahoma offer any type of physical education, health and nutrition classes in the upper grades.

Solution: HB 1530 (Rep. Ann Coody)

HB 1530 Establishes a requirement for school districts to provide a minimum of one semester of health education in grades 6, 7 or 8, in accordance with PASS guidelines.

HB 1530 Provides for topics to be determined by each local school district, including physical activity, nutrition, drug abuse prevention, oral health, environmental health, growth and development, injury prevention and wellness.

HB 1530 Encourages local school districts to work with community-based organizations, including county health departments, local hospitals, county extension offices and others with proven expertise in the subject areas to provide materials and resources, including personnel.

HB 1530 is part of the 2009 Legislative Agenda for Children and Youth promoted by the Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy. For more information, contact Anne Roberts at 405/627-9877.