



**Division of Adolescent and School Health (DASH)
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion¹
FY 2025 Labor HHS Appropriations Bill**

	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025 President's Request	FY 2025 TFAH
Domestic HIV/AIDS Prevention and Research - School Health (DASH)	\$38,081,000	N/A	N/A	\$100,000,000

Background: The Division of Adolescent and School Health (DASH) at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) works to promote schools where youth can gain fundamental health knowledge and skills, connect to health services, and learn in safe and supportive environments. DASH translates science into innovative programs and tools that protect youth and supports a network of leaders in primary prevention by funding education agencies directly. Through enhancing protective factors and reducing risk behaviors, DASH programs help children and adolescents avoid substance use, sexual risk, violence, and other experiences that could result in adverse health and educational outcomes. Findings CDC released in February 2023, showing increasing levels of poor mental health for nearly all groups of youth, underscore the importance of this work.²

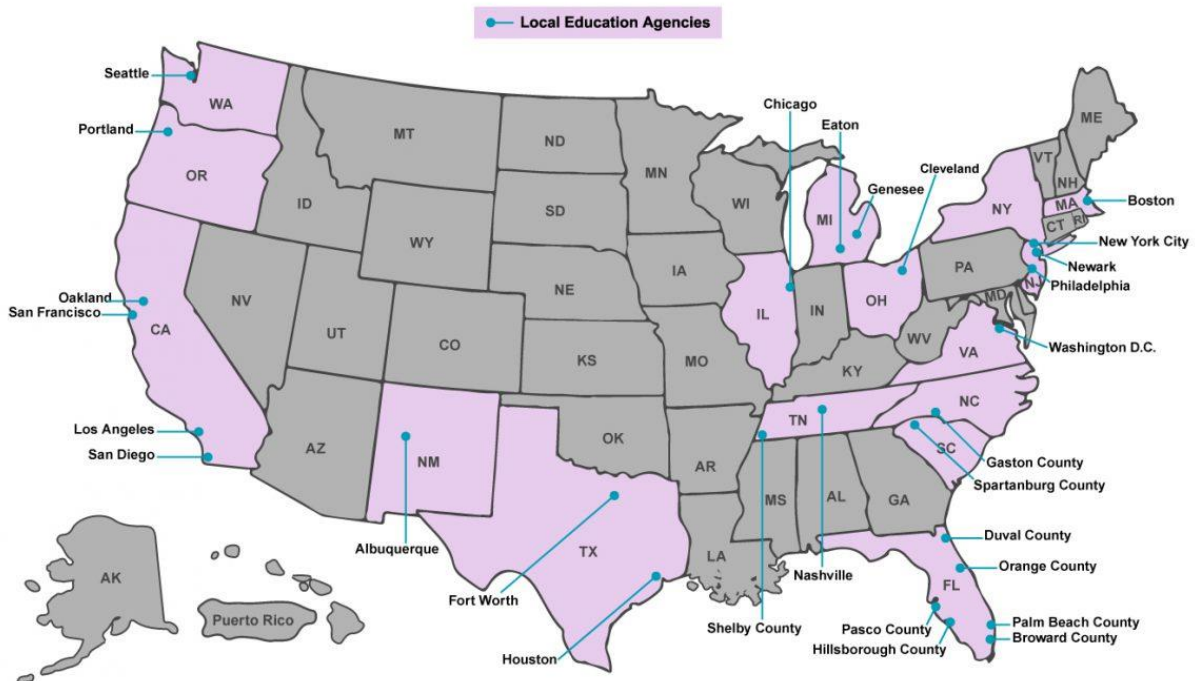
Impact: The DASH What Works in Schools program promotes the health and well-being of adolescents by implementing evidence-based programs and policies in schools for less than \$10 per student. DASH currently provides resources to 26 local education agencies (LEAs)³ for school-based programs that improve health education, increase access to health services, and institute strategies to improve school connectedness and parent engagement.⁴

¹ In August 2023, CDC announced it would create a new division within the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (NCCDPHP) that included the Division of Adolescent and School Health (DASH), previously within the National Center for HIV, Viral Hepatitis, STD, and TB Prevention, and the Healthy Schools Branch within NCCDPHP. The funding lines for these components are likely to remain separate for FY 2025.

² *Youth Risk Behavior Survey Data Summary & Trends Report: 2011–2021*. Atlanta: CDC Division of Adolescent and School Health, February 13, 2023. https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/data/yrbs/pdf/YRBS_Data-Summary-Trends_Report2023_508.pdf (accessed December 14, 2023).

³ LEAs are public boards of education or other public authorities controlling, directing, or serving public elementary or secondary schools in cities, counties, school districts, or other political subdivisions of a state. 34 C.F.R. 303.23.

⁴ Parental engagement—in which parents and school staff work jointly to improve the health and development of students—can reduce the risk of unhealthy behaviors like drug use. See Parental Engagement in Schools. In *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Division of Adolescent and School Health*. https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/protective/parent_engagement.htm (accessed December 14, 2023).



Local Education Agencies Receiving CDC DASH Funding⁵

In an action guide released in December 2023, for example, DASH outlined strategies to promote mindfulness and build relationships and social skills.⁶ Studies released in January and February 2022 found that DASH programs resulted in significant decreases in sexual risk behaviors, violent experiences, and substance use, as well as improvements in mental health and reductions in suicidal thoughts and attempts.⁷

An increase in funding for DASH’s What Works in Schools programs to \$100 million would enable:

- **Direct funding to up to 75 of the largest LEAs, 50 states, and 7 territories** to implement school-based programs and practices designed to reduce and prevent HIV, STD, and pregnancy among adolescents as well as establish safe and supportive environments for students.

⁵ See Funded Local Education Agencies. In *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Division of Adolescent and School Health*. https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/partners/funded_locals.htm (accessed February 2, 2024).

⁶ *Promoting Mental Health and Well-Being in Schools: An Action Guide for School and District Leaders*. Atlanta: CDC Division of Adolescent and School Health, December 6, 2023. <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/mental-health-action-guide/index.html> (accessed January 4, 2024).

⁷ Robin L, Timpe Z, Suarez NA, et al. “Local Education Agency Impact on School Environments to Reduce Health Risk Behaviors and Experiences Among High School Students.” *Journal of Adolescent Health*, February 2022. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S1054139X21004006> (accessed December 14, 2023); Kaczowski W, Li J, Cooper A, et al. “Examining the Relationship Between LGBTQ-Supportive School Health Policies and Practices and Psychosocial Health Outcomes of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Heterosexual Students.” *LGBT Health*, January 2022. <https://www.liebertpub.com/doi/10.1089/lgbt.2021.0133> (accessed December 14, 2023).

- **Funding to up to 75 of the largest LEAs, 50 states, and 7 territories** to support DASH’s two school-based systems that provide educators with information they can translate into programs, policies, and practices to improve student health and well-being.
- **Support to national organizations** to help education agencies with training, technical assistance, and resource development to increase the impact of local programs.

Recommendation: TFAH urges the Committee to provide \$100 million in FY 2025 to expand the work of DASH’s What Works in Schools program in promoting the health and well-being of adolescents through schools and address long-standing negative trends in youth mental health, which the pandemic exacerbated.⁸ This program reaches approximately 2 million—or around 7%—of the roughly 27 million middle and high school students as of fall 2021. An increase of over \$60 million in funding compared to FY 2023 would allow DASH to expand its What Works in Schools program to roughly 25% of all students and equip more children and adolescents with protective factors that will enable them to become healthy adults.

⁸ See *Youth Risk Behavior Survey Data Summary & Trends Report: 2011–2021*. Atlanta: CDC Division of Adolescent and School Health, February 13, 2023. https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/data/yrbs/pdf/YRBS_Data-Summary-Trends_Report2023_508.pdf (accessed December 14, 2023); *Adolescent Behaviors and Experiences Survey – United States, January–June 2021*. Atlanta: CDC Division of Adolescent and School Health, April 1, 2022. <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/data/abes/reports.htm> (accessed December 14, 2023).