



Jackson County Department of Public Health

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PREPARING TO GO BACK TO SCHOOL: CONSIDERING THE LINK BETWEEN ACADEMICS AND HEALTH

It's that time again! As the summer is in full swing, and the daylight is decreasing, our local schools are getting going. It will significantly help parents and students to recognize key health and safety information that can lend to a more successful and enjoyable school year.

Studies show that academic success is strongly linked with overall health. Students who avoid risky behaviors are more likely to achieve higher grades, and accomplish more of their goals, than students who engage in those behaviors. Risky behaviors include substance abuse, sexual activity, and participating in violence. Together we can prepare our students with the tools to avoid these behaviors, thereby providing them with an opportunity to improve their health, as well as support their ability to achieve academic success!

The Jackson County Department of Public Health (JCDPH) partners with the Jackson County Public Schools (JCPS) to offer a multi-week program called Making Proud Choices. This curriculum teaches students how to reduce their risk of Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STI's), and pregnancy, by abstaining from sex, or using condoms and hormonal birth control, if they choose to have sex. Additionally, the program builds the skills and confidence of the students to navigate the pressure to participate in risky behaviors and situations.

Making Proud Choices will be offered to Smoky Mountain High School during fall 2022, and spring 2023. For any questions about the program, contact Health Educator, Curtis Collins, in person at the JCDPH, by phone at 828-587-8252, or by email at curtiscollins@jacksonnc.org.

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