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Hiding in Plain Sight (Part 1)

Why does our school district lack transparency in how it communicates with parents?

2021 YRBS: The most helpful information to provide parents about the 2021 Youth Risk Behavior Survey can be summoned up in one sentence -"For the *actual surveys* that we, SDR, are administering to your children, look at the attached pdf or follow this link..." However, parents weren't given either. Instead, parents received a one-page letter in the mail with an additional double sided Q&A sheet. The second question on the back side of that Q&A sheet is this statement, "...the main survey is available on the DPI website." But no link. No attached pdf.

It seems as if the *actual* survey questions (presuming that these *are* the actual surveys that are administered to our kids) would be the best and most efficient way to convince any doubting parents that the surveys are good. Why not clearly and directly provide the parents with the actual surveys and links?

(Here's the link- <https://dpi.wi.gov/sspw/yrbs/online> Look for heading "YRBS 2021 Administration Webinars and Q&A Sessions" then look below to the pull down heading of "Surveys and Optional Modules" for the surveys.

Also, there is an interesting link included - it's a webinar about the surveys for the administrators https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mZ1tfsc_4nc)

Coaching Boys Into Men: The school presented Coaching Boys Into Men (CBIM) in a very similar manner. A small group of parents (whose sons had been signed up for spring sports early) received a brief email introducing the one-and-a-half page letter letting parents know that a new program called Coaching Boys Into Men would be taught to the male athletes by their coaches starting with the spring

sports season. That was it. Just the name. No links. Nothing.

RHS Principal Dornfeld wrote, "We encourage you [parents] to *become* informed about new school programs" (emphasis added) and invited parents to ask questions of Maria Otterholt, Oneida County Health Department Community Health Specialist. The school distanced itself by providing no information and deferring all questions to the Health Department. Eventually, after a lengthy period of persistence by parents at the Superintendent level and in cooperation with the Activities Department, the relevant information was provided and posted on the school's website.



Why should parents have to consistently and persistently question the administration to get the relevant information? Even to the most basic of questions, "Is this the link to the program you are implementing?" Why was the administration's expectation that

each and every parent independently research a program that the administration had (presumably) already researched and approved?

Again, the YRBS and CBIM are programs that the administration believes are worth implementing in our schools as an important component of our children's education. Then why not provide the children's parents with the source materials directly and voluntarily? The administration needs to stop the game of claiming that it informs when it actually makes every single parent go on a hunt for the information that it easily can and should provide.

Some obvious conclusions are that the school administration doesn't want parents and guardians to know the actual content, and hasn't needed to make it a practice to provide us with the information. And most importantly, we, the parents and guardians of our children, need to SPEAK UP and RECLAIM our position of primary responsibility for the education and wellbeing of our children.