

Good health and good grades have much in common

By Associated Press, adapted by Newsela staff

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Claudia Prada (left) teaches Spanish to eighth graders at View Park Prep Charter School, Oct. 11, 2005, in South Los Angeles. Specialty schools that shun many of the methods of traditional public schools are no longer just the purview of privileged suburban kids; charter schools are booming in California's inner-city schools.

CHICAGO—Better schools may lead to healthier kids.

This finding comes from a new study. The study was published Monday.

Scientists studied 1,000 students in grades 10 through 12. Some kids went to good schools. Some went to bad schools. Otherwise, they had a lot in common. Most of the teens were Hispanic. They lived in poor neighborhoods.

The scientists made an important discovery. The kids in good schools made better health choices. Fewer kids made unsafe health choices. These unsafe choices included drinking alcohol and using drugs.

The study does not prove that the schools made the difference. But it may show that “better education will lead to better health,” said Dr. Michael Wong. He led the team of researchers. He works for the University of California, Los Angeles.

This Is How They Were Chosen

The study involved mostly Hispanic students. They applied to one of three top schools in Los Angeles from 2007 to 2010.

The three schools chose their pupils randomly. This means they basically picked the names of students out a hat. They weren't chosen based on grades or test scores. Most of the other students went to worse schools. Until high school, the students did about the same in school.

After a year, scientists could see a difference. The kids at the good schools did better. Their math and English test scores were higher. At the good schools, about 1 in 10 kids dropped out. At the worse schools, 1 in 4 dropped out.

Everyone Should Do Well

Professor Harold Pollack is an expert on health. He teaches at the University of Chicago. He said the study is important. It showed the need to build "a much larger number of schools that serve kids well."

Doing well in school is important for the long-term health of all students.

School is so important for people's well-being, he said.

Quiz

1. Top schools in Los Angeles chose students:
 - (a) randomly
 - (b) based on grades
 - (c) based on locality
 - (d) based on health conditions
2. Out of 10 students, how many kids dropped out of good schools?
 - (a) 0
 - (b) 1
 - (c) 4
 - (d) 7
3. Select the paragraph from the first section of the article that describes the unsafe health choices made by students.
4. The research was conducted on:
 - (a) students with poor grades
 - (b) students from rich families
 - (c) students living in poor areas
 - (d) students with unhealthy habits

Answer Key

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