Mutual Respect Between Teachers and Students as a Protective Factor against Youth Substance Use

Positive and healthy relationships between teachers and students have been found to have long-lasting benefits for youth school adjustment and their pro-social attitude and behaviors. Eleventh grade respondents of the 2017 Delaware School Survey were asked their perceptions of whether students at the school treated teachers with respect, and whether teachers treated students with respect. As the chart illustrates, students who report mutual disrespect between students and teachers are also more likely to report past month substance use. For example, reported alcohol use rate is 48% among students who feel mutual disrespect between students and teachers, while this rate drops to 25% among students who report mutual respect. Building a climate of mutual respect between students and teachers should be considered one prevention strategy to reduce the risk of substance use.


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