

Poor teens' health may benefit from top schools

July 21 2014, by Lindsey Tanner

A study suggests that disadvantaged teens may get more than an academic boost by attending top-notch high schools—their health may also benefit.

Risky behavior including binge-drinking, [unsafe sex](#) and use of hard drugs was less common among these kids, compared with peers who went to mostly worse schools. The teens were otherwise similar, all from low-income Los Angeles neighborhoods who applied to top public charter schools that admit students by lottery.

The researchers compared behavior in almost 1,000 kids in 10th through [12th grade](#) who were picked for the high-performing schools and in those who went elsewhere.

Overall, 36 percent of the selected kids engaged in at least one of 11 [risky behaviors](#), compared with 42 percent of the other teens.

Results were published online Monday in *Pediatrics*.

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