



# INFORMATION FOR PARENTS & STUDENTS

**Our school will participate in the Healthy Youth Survey this Fall.**

The survey asks questions about risks for injury, health outcomes, and alcohol and drug use. Schools, and state and local agencies use survey results to support our youth and reduce their risks. The Healthy Youth Survey is voluntary and anonymous and provides important information to guide policy and programs that serve our youth.

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*Please share this information with your student.  
Then talk about the survey and decide if your student will participate.*

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**Q: Who will be asked to take the survey?**

**A:** Students in Grades 6, 8, 10, and 12 across Washington State and students in Grades 7, 9 and 11 in small school districts.

**Q: Is the survey voluntary?**

**A:** Yes! Students taking the survey can skip questions and stop taking the survey at any time. If you do not want your student to participate in the survey, you can call the school to excuse your student. Students can also tell their teacher that they do not want to take the survey. Students not taking the survey will take part in a different activity, such as studying or reading in the library. There is no penalty for not taking part in the survey. Your student's grades will not be affected.

**Q: What questions are on the survey?**

**A:** Survey questions come from surveys across the nation and in Washington. Parents or guardians can contact their school office to see a copy of the questionnaire or review the questions on [www.askhys.net](http://www.askhys.net).

Some topics include:

- Information, such as age, sex, race and ethnicity
- Feelings about school and community
- Relationships with parents, friends, and neighbors
- Eating habits, physical activity
- Health education
- Attitudes about and the use of tobacco, alcohol and other drugs
- Behaviors and feelings related to safety
- Behaviors related to violence
- Gender identity (optional and simplified version available for Grades 6 and 7\*)
- Sexual orientation (not for Grades 6 and 7)
- Sexual behavior, abuse and exploitation (not for Grades 6 and 7)

\* Unless schools specifically opt into asking this question, students will not be asked to report their gender.

**Q: How is student identity protected?**

**A:** The HYS is always voluntary, and students will not put their names on the survey. There are no codes or information to match a survey to a student. No one from the school will look at their answers. Students will submit their completed surveys confidentially when they are done.

If there were unauthorized access to students' answers, someone might try to identify a particular student using information like school, grade, and race/ethnicity. However, we take confidentiality very seriously and there are several steps we use to prevent unauthorized access to students' answers and to ensure that the sensitive information collected on the survey remains anonymous. You can learn more at: <https://www.AskHYS.net/HYS/HYSInformation>

**Q: How are the survey results used?**

**A:** Schools, school districts, counties and state agencies use the results to understand our students and to provide them with the services they need. Results are used for planning, evaluating, and improving programs, and getting the money to support them. Anonymous data are also shared with local health departments, Tribal Epidemiology Centers, and approved researchers.

**Need More Information?**

If you have any questions about the purpose of the survey or survey procedures:

- Call toll-free 1-877-HYS-7111
- Email [healthy.youth@doh.wa.gov](mailto:healthy.youth@doh.wa.gov)

Information about the Healthy Youth Survey can be found at: [www.AskHYS.net](http://www.AskHYS.net)

The Washington State Institutional Review Board has approved the procedures for the Healthy Youth Survey that are described in this letter. If you believe these procedures have not been followed, please call 1-800-583-8488. You do not have to leave your name. All messages will be returned.

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**Students have been taking the Healthy Youth Survey since 2002. The number of students has grown from only a few thousand students to over 230,000 a year!**

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*Thank you for reviewing this information and talking with your student!*

*The Healthy Youth Survey is sponsored by the following state agencies: Health Care Authority - Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery, Department of Health, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and Liquor and Cannabis Board.*

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