



## **QUESTION and ANSWER FACT SHEET**

### **Healthy Youth Survey 2025**

#### **Q: What is the focus of the Healthy Youth Survey (HYS)?**

**A:** The HYS focuses on beliefs, behaviors, attitudes, and other factors, such as housing stability, interpersonal relationships, violence, substance use, and school climate that can influence youth well-being. The survey also includes questions about risk and protective factors, which are attitudes and opinions that research has shown to be correlated with health risk behaviors. A document with a description of the survey questions, Rationale and Description of Survey Content, is available at: [www.AskHYS.net/HYS/HYSInformation](http://www.AskHYS.net/HYS/HYSInformation).

#### **Q: Why is the survey conducted?**

**A:** The survey is used to identify and monitor factors that affect the health of youth in Washington. Healthy Youth Survey has been conducted across the state since 2002. Survey results can indicate changes in health behaviors over time and schools can use the results to identify important areas of need.

#### **Q: Which schools are allowed to participate?**

**A:** Any Washington public school with students in Grades 6, 8, 10, or 12 is eligible to participate, except for detention facilities.

Small school districts with fewer than 150 students enrolled in Grades 6, 8, 10 and 12 can survey additional grades 7, 9 and 11. This option is intended to provide more reliable data to schools with very few students.

Private schools can participate upon request. Schools who are unable to administer the survey in-person (e.g., Alternative Learning Experiences, online learning, virtual, etc.) will also be able to participate upon request and will be allowed to administer the survey remotely, if previously approved, in a classroom-like, virtual setting.

#### **Q: Does my school have to participate?**

**A:** School participation in the survey is voluntary.

#### **Q: Why should my school participate?**

**A:** This survey provides important information about students in Washington which can be used

to guide school policy and programs. Each school will receive a summary of its results (provided that at least 15 valid surveys are completed per given grade level). Statewide results are also included for comparison. Schools decide whether or not to receive their results at the time they register to participate. School building and district results are provided to the district superintendent for release. HYS results are provided at no cost to the schools.

The survey also provides very useful data to state and local agencies, county prevention coordinators, community mobilization coalitions, community public health and safety networks, and others so they can support students and school programs.

### **Q: Are sensitive questions asked?**

**A:** The survey includes questions related to unintentional and intentional injuries; physical activity; alcohol, tobacco, and other substance use; and related risk and protective factors. Unless questions in these topic areas are asked honestly and straightforwardly, we cannot know the degree to which Washington's youth engage in these health risk behaviors.

For grades 8, 10 and 12, surveys include questions about sexual behavior and sexual violence. Schools can submit an exemption request during registration if they don't want to ask questions about one or both topics.

The survey administered to younger students (grades 6 and 7) does not include sexual behavior and sexual violence questions.

### **Q: Is participation voluntary?**

**A:** Yes. Youth taking the survey can skip questions, decide to stop taking the survey at any time, or may decide not to take the survey at all. Schools must plan an alternative activity for students who choose not to take the survey.

### **Q: How is participant identity protected?**

**A:** People with access to individual, participant-level responses could potentially try to identify a particular participant using information like school, grade, race/ethnicity, and outside knowledge. However, the HYS is always voluntary and **there are steps we take to protect participant privacy and confidentiality including:**

1. Participants do not put their names on the survey, and there are no codes collected to match a survey to a participant.
2. Participants take the survey on an electronic survey platform and responses are stored on a secure server with restricted access.
3. Schools and districts must disable any recording, keystroke tracking, and video capture software on school-issued devices used to take the survey.
4. The survey materials and process are all reviewed and approved by the Washington State Institutional Review Board (WSIRB)
5. If there is ever a deviation from the strict rules for how the survey is administered and

data safety is maintained, the study team immediately works to correct the situation and inform affected parties, and the WSIRB is notified to help ensure that the corrective actions are adequate.

### **Q: Who has access to the results?**

**A:** Individual participant-level responses are combined and summarized in aggregate reports. Aggregate reports for schools and districts are made available to superintendents and principals. County, regional Educational Service Districts (ESD), and state aggregate reports are shared publicly on <https://www.askhys.net/SurveyResults>.

Datasets with individual, participant-level responses are made available upon request to approved data users, like local health departments, and researchers, through a data sharing agreement process managed by the Department of Health.

### **Q: How is the survey coordinated at each school?**

**A:** Each participating school has a designated survey coordinator, to help organize local survey efforts. Survey coordinators have additional information about the survey, including administration instructions.

### **Q: Can I review the survey?**

**A:** Yes, parents or guardians can review the questions in their school office or on <https://www.askhys.net/Resources/SurveyQuestionnaires>.

### **Q: How long does it take to complete the survey?**

**A:** Students will have one class period (about 45minutes) to complete the survey. All responses are self-reported and no physical tests or examinations are involved.

### **Q: Do students answer the questions truthfully?**

**A:** Both national research and experience in Washington indicate that the data collected are accurate when students are informed of the importance of the survey and their responses are completely anonymous. Internal reliability checks are also used to help identify surveys with unlikely or unreasonable response patterns and those surveys may not be included in the results. In addition, students always have the option of not answering questions to which they do not feel comfortable responding, which can make it easier for them to be honest when they do respond.

### **Q: When is the survey conducted? When are results available?**

**A:** The survey will be administered during the Fall of 2025. Results will be available in March 2026.

**Q: How does this HYS compare to surveys that have been administered in the past?**

A: This HYS will be similar to past surveys. To accommodate the large number of items, only a subset of questions is asked of all students in grades 8-12. The remaining questions are randomized so that approximately half of the students respond to one set of questions and the others respond to the other set. All students in grades 6 and 7 receive a shorter questionnaire.

Copies of past surveys are available at [www.AskHYS.net/Resources/SurveyQuestionnaires](http://www.AskHYS.net/Resources/SurveyQuestionnaires).

The survey will be administered electronically, in person. Alternative Learning Environment schools (e.g., online or virtual) who are unable to administer the survey in-person will be allowed to administer the survey remotely if they verify that it will be given in a classroom-like, virtual setting, with a proctor or teacher, just like during a test.

**Q: How can I find out which schools have registered to participate in the HYS?**

A: You can visit the HYS web site ([www.AskHYS.net](http://www.AskHYS.net)) to check on school registration status or past participation.

**Q: How will the survey results be used?**

A: Information from the Washington State HYS can be used to meet a variety of needs at the school, community, and state levels. The survey provides information that can be used to examine various health trends, inform resource and policy decisions, and support evaluating and implementing new interventions. The results of this survey can and have been used to support prioritizing key health issues across the state, including highlighting important trends and changes over time. Provide evidence for the high priority of the important health issues identified. The state-level data can also be used to compare Washington to other states that conduct similar surveys and to national results.

Meanwhile, legitimate researchers can also use the data to support deeper investigations into the health and wellbeing of Washington youth and what we can do to best support them.

**Q: Who sponsors the survey?**

A: The Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI); Department of Health (DOH); Health Care Authority Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery (DBHR); and Liquor and Cannabis Board (LCB).

**Q: Where can I get more information about the survey?**

A: The following is a list of contacts who will be happy to answer questions and the website where you can find out more about the survey:

HYS Principal Investigator, Megan Suter (DOH)	<a href="mailto:healthy.youth@doh.wa.gov">healthy.youth@doh.wa.gov</a>	(877) HYS-7111
Jaymie Bockelman (DBHR)	<a href="mailto:hcahealthyyouthsurvey@hca.wa.gov">hcahealthyyouthsurvey@hca.wa.gov</a>	(360) 725-5259
Doua Kha (OSPI)	<a href="mailto:Doua.Kha@k12.wa.gov">Doua.Kha@k12.wa.gov</a>	(360) 878-1155
Kristen Haley (LCB)	<a href="mailto:Kristen.Haley@lcb.wa.gov">Kristen.Haley@lcb.wa.gov</a>	(360)-522-0421
Susan Richardson (contractor)	<a href="mailto:SurveyAdmin@AskHYS.net">SurveyAdmin@AskHYS.net</a>	(877) HYS-7111

AskHYS.net website: [www.AskHYS.net](http://www.AskHYS.net)