

Student Health Survey FAQs – School Staff

Why should my school participate in the Student Health Survey?

The Student Health Survey (SHS) provides a snapshot of how your students are doing physically, emotionally and socially.

Educators and school staff recognize that the academic success of Oregon students is impacted by factors outside of the classroom. Protective factors, such as supportive adults at school, lead to better health and education outcomes. Trauma, hunger, mental health challenges, bullying and lack of access to necessary medical care make it difficult for Oregon youth to reach their full potential. The Student Health Survey (SHS) provides the sole source of statewide data on the health and well-being of Oregon youth.

How can my school use the data? What is SHS used for?

The SHS provides data that will help your school with the Student Success Act (SSA).

SHS data can inform your school's needs assessment and strategic planning. Survey topics provide data that can help you directly address components of the SSA and Student Investment Account. The SHS asks about resilience factors and risk behaviors that directly impact students' health.

The SHS provides students with the chance to tell us how they're doing and where they need our support in each of the following domains:

Social Emotional Learning/Mental Health

- Emotional and mental health
- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE)
- Depression, suicide ideation and attempts, access to a loaded gun

Health Status

- Physical health
- Oral health
- Obesity (based on self-reported height and weight)
- Nutrition
- Exercise
- Sexual health relating to the prevention of unintended pregnancies and STIs

School Climate

- Allies/adult support at school
- Respect for diversity
- Safety
- Bullying (victimization and perpetration)

Social Determinants of Health

- Housing instability
- Hunger
- Economic status (free- or reduced-price lunch)

Access & Opportunity

- Access to health care services (School-Based Health Centers, urgent care, oral health care)
- Unmet emotional and mental health needs
- Unmet physical health needs

Risk and Assets

- Positive Youth Development
- Absenteeism
- Grades
- Healthy relationships
- Exposure to violence
- Substance use (alcohol, tobacco, e-cigarettes/vaping, marijuana, prescription drugs)
- Perceived risk, parental and peer norms
- Gambling

Disparities

SHS results can also help in exploring and addressing disparities based on students’:

- Race, ethnicity and tribal affiliation
- Sexual orientation and gender identity
- Economic standing, based on free-or reduced-price lunches under the United States Department of Agriculture’s current income eligibility guidelines
- Disability status
- Language other than English spoken at home
- Housing instability

What does my school get for participating?

Schools get comprehensive data on their students’ health and well-being...at no cost.

All participating districts and schools receive a report of their own results with statewide comparisons that allow you to identify whether the problem is a local issue or is part of a larger social trend among Oregon youth. This information is at your fingertips and can be used for needs assessment, as supporting evidence for staff or program requests, to inform curriculum decisions, and as a program evaluation tool to monitor outcomes.

When is the SHS administered? Will it conflict with state assessment?

No, survey administration is in the fall to avoid conflicting with state assessments.

The SHS will now survey 6th, 8th and 11th graders every year in the fall. The SHS is available in a web-based format.

We'll start contacting districts and schools before the end of the school year to participate for the following year's survey.

Can't my school can get everything we need from other youth surveys?

SHS touches on all domains most relevant to schools and the Student Success Act.

The SHS is comprehensive and focuses on the whole child. Other youth surveys focus on one or two areas. The SHS and other youth surveys can complement each other.



What do you do to protect students' privacy?

Protecting student confidentiality is paramount, and the SHS is anonymous and confidential

Surveys are more accurate when students believe their answers cannot be linked to them. The SHS does **not** ask for any identifying information, and it is not possible to link survey responses to a particular student, parent or family.

Sometimes students do exaggerate. But survey data from adolescents are as reliable as data collected from adults. Internal reliability and logic checks help identify the small percentage of exaggerated or falsified answers.

A minimum number of completed surveys are required for school, district and county-level reporting for confidentiality and validity. Some data are suppressed or combined for public use datasets to protect respondent confidentiality.

How are parents notified?

OHA endorses an active parental notification/passive parental permission model to get the most accurate results.

The SHS uses a passive parental permission model, where parents are notified of the survey and can return a signed form to the school if they choose to excuse their student from the survey.

The benefits of active parental notification with passive parental permission are that it:

- ***Supports parental rights*** by informing them of the survey, providing them with the opportunity to review the survey and the opportunity to opt their child out of the survey by returning the signed form to the school.
- ***Results in a higher response rate, more accurate results, and is more inclusive.*** Passive parental consent ensures that students with different backgrounds, cultures and experiences are represented in the survey. Passive consent ensures that results are unbiased, accurate, and representative of the student population.
- ***Meets Federal requirements*** regarding parental notification since student participation is not required, and the survey does not use Department of Education funding.
- ***Reduces administrative burden on schools*** by avoiding the time needed to spend on communications and follow-up to make sure parents receive and return consent forms. It also minimizes the time required to track returned forms.

Schools should send the parental notification letters at least two weeks before the survey date. Use a direct method (mail or email) to send the letters to parents/guardians notifying them of the survey and giving them sufficient time to review the survey (online or have hard copies at the front office) and return the form to the front office if they choose to have their child not participate.

Who do I contact for more information?

Have questions about the survey? Email studenthealth.survey@odhsoha.oregon.gov and we'll respond as quickly as we can.