

STUDENT HEALTH SURVEY FACT SHEET FOR PARENTS

Q. What is the goal of the Student Health Survey?

- A.** The Student Health Survey (SHS) is a collaborative effort with the Oregon Department of Education to improve the health and well-being of all Oregon students to help them succeed. Good health is an essential educational tool. No curriculum is brilliant enough to compensate for a hungry stomach or distracted mind. 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.

Research shows that healthy students have better attendance, get higher grades and test scores and are less likely to skip school, drop out or engage in risky behaviors. The Student Health Survey is the only source of statewide data that gives a snapshot of how students are doing physically, emotionally and socially.

Q: Will anyone know my child's answers?

- A.: No.** Your child's privacy (and yours) are protected. The SHS is an anonymous and confidential survey. We do not ask for any identifying information, and it not possible to link survey responses to a particular student, parent or family.

Q: How can I see the questions you're asking?

- A:** A copy of the questionnaires are available on the SHS website: healthoregon.org/shs or at the school's front office.

There are different questionnaires for 6th, 8th and 11th grade that contain age-appropriate questions. The SHS asks about resilience factors and risk behaviors that directly impact students' health and well-being, including:

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- Support at school/school climate
- Positive youth development
- Emerging public health issues, such as e-cigarette use
- Food insecurity, nutrition and exercise
- Physical, emotional and mental health
- Injury prevention
- Sexual health relating to the prevention of unintended pregnancies and STIs
- Substance use (e-cigarettes, tobacco, alcohol, marijuana and prescription drugs)
- Demographics, including race, ethnicity and sexual and gender identity to assess health disparities

Q: Does asking these questions encourage the behavior/put kids at risk?

- A. No.** Research shows that asking youth about sensitive topics does NOT harm them and does NOT get them to try it. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) states that there is no evidence that simply asking students about health risk behaviors encourages that behavior.

Some of the survey questions may be considered sensitive. Questions are age-appropriate and presented in a straightforward and sensitive manner. Students can choose not to answer any question that may make them uncomfortable.

Q. What if I don't want my child to participate?

A: We respect parents' decisions and have made it easy for you to opt your child out of the survey. Simply fill in the bottom of the parental notification letter (on the front of this letter), sign it and return it to the school's front office. The school will make sure your child does not take the survey.