

2023 BC Adolescent Health Survey: Parent Notification Letter

Dear Parent/Guardian,

McCreary Centre Society is a BC based charity who carries out the BC Adolescent Health Survey every five years. The survey results are used to improve youth health in your community and across BC. Schools, government, and communities use the information for planning and evaluating programs. The survey is funded by the BC government.

Your child's class is invited to take part in this youth health survey. We are inviting over 30,000 British Columbia students in Grades 7-12 to take part. The survey takes most students 30–45 minutes. Students will fill the survey out either on paper or online. A nurse will give out the surveys or a link to the survey.

Questions on the survey ask about school, community, and people in your child's life; physical, mental, and sexual health; injuries; violence and discrimination; alcohol and other substance use; leisure activities; technology; sleep; and nutrition. A couple of questions are related to COVID-19.

Your child may choose whether to take part, can skip questions they do not wish to answer, and stop the survey at any time. Students who choose not to participate will be assigned another activity by the classroom teacher. The nurse will follow COVID safety protocols in place at the school.

The survey is confidential

The survey is confidential and anonymous. No names are recorded. Any potentially identifying information will be removed from the survey before the responses are analyzed. No one will be able to link answers to a particular student. However, if students choose to put their names on the survey and say they were abused or are thinking about suicide or hurting someone, we have to report this to the appropriate child welfare agencies.

Only trained researchers connected to McCreary Centre Society and UBC will have access to the surveys. All original surveys (paper and online) will be stored securely at McCreary and on password-protected computers in Canada for 5 years and then will be destroyed. Survey responses are stored in a secured database on password-protected computers at McCreary for future use. Reports and fact sheets of survey results will be posted on www.mcs.bc.ca.

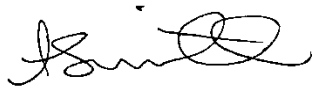
Risks and benefits

You or your child will not benefit directly from taking part. If they do take part, they ensure young people have a voice in planning services and programs and will help make change where it is needed. There might be a risk of another student peeking at your child's responses, or they may feel some questions are sensitive and feel a bit of discomfort or stress. The nurse will be available to respond to any questions or concerns students may have. Students are also given a card with contact information for support services.

If you or your child have any concerns or complaints about your rights as a research participant and/or your experiences while participating in this study, contact the Research Participant Complaint Line in the UBC Office of Research Ethics at 604-822-8598 or if long distance email RSIL@ors.ubc.ca or call toll free 1-877-822-8598.

Some students may benefit from having parental/guardian guidance in making the decision to participate. If you would like more information about the survey or the McCreary Centre Society, you can visit our website (www.mcs.bc.ca). You can also contact Annie Smith at the address below if you have any questions, concerns, or complaints.

Yours sincerely,



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