

# Washington State Healthy Youth Survey

## Overview

Washington State has been administering the school-based Washington State Healthy Youth Survey (HYS) survey since 1988. The survey measures health risk behaviors and related factors that contribute to the health and safety of youth in Washington State.

Survey results supply data for program planning and are also used to measure progress toward statewide prevention and health promotion initiative goals. In 2018, 80% of Washington school districts and approximately 230,000 students participated in this biennial survey.

Multiple state agencies use survey data for strategic planning and surveillance of youth health risk behaviors and related factors. The survey is the source of data for multiple Results Washington measures.

The Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery (DBHR) uses the survey data for almost every aspect of the Community Prevention and Wellness Initiative (CPWI), including:

- Risk assessments and rankings to identify the highest risk communities in each county
- Data for CPWI community-level assessments, planning, and tracking progress on outcomes in their strategic plans
- Evaluating CPWI's statewide progress in reducing substance use, mental health problems, and the risk factors that predict those problems

DBHR also uses the survey data for:

- Reporting on Results Washington measures
- Implementing the rules of Initiative 1183, related to liquor licenses, and Initiative 502, which legalized the recreational use of marijuana for adults 21 and older. This initiative may impact

the pattern of alcohol and marijuana use among adolescents as our state's environment changes

- Assessing the co-occurrence of substance use and mental health problems across the state to guide strategic planning
- Reporting requirements for federally funded prevention-oriented projects
- Guiding strategic planning of prevention and intervention programs.

Data is disseminated through [www.AskHYS.net](http://www.AskHYS.net).

## Eligibility requirements

The HYS is administered to students in grades 6-12. Prior to 2014, it was administered only in grades 6, 8, 10 and 12. In 2014, eligibility was extended to grades 7, 9 and 11 in small school districts, where the low number of students limits the quality of the data. All schools with these grades are eligible to participate in the survey, including tribal schools. The costs to schools are limited to producing information materials for parents and staff time.

## Authority

Prior to Initiative 502, the survey was a voluntary collaboration of the agencies listed in the "Key partners" section of this fact sheet. However, Initiative 502, Section 28, authorizes the use of revenue to pay for the survey and requires the HCA to manage the survey.

## 2019-21 budget

Approximately \$600,000 over the biennium from the Dedicated Marijuana Account. The State Opioid Response Grant is funding the electronic survey (e-survey) pilot. The e-survey provides an ability to manage the survey administration in a more efficient manner as the number of middle and high school students taking the survey has substantially increased.



### **Key partners**

Administration of the survey is a collaborative effort among HCA/DBHR, the Department of Health; the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction; the Liquor and Cannabis Board; and the contractor, Looking Glass Analytics, Inc. Representatives of these organizations serve as members of the Healthy Youth Survey Planning Committee and the Healthy Youth Survey Leadership Committee, which guide every aspect of the survey development and implementation.

### **For more information**

Gwen Grams, [gwen.grams@hca.wa.gov](mailto:gwen.grams@hca.wa.gov),  
360-725-5259

<https://www.askhys.net/>