



STATE OF WASHINGTON

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

PO Box 47890 □ Olympia, Washington 98504-7890

Tel: 360-236-4250 □ 711 Washington Relay Service

January 10, 2022

Dear Tribal Leader

SUBJECT: Invitation to Comment on Healthy Youth Survey Removable Questions

In accordance with the Washington State Centennial Accord of 1989 and Chapter 43.376 RCW, we invite collaboration and consultation with Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations in policies, agreements, and program implementation that directly affect Indian Tribes and Tribal communities.

Purpose

The Washington State Healthy Youth Survey (HYS) is a collaborative research study conducted by the Department of Health, Health Care Authority, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, and Liquor and Cannabis Board. It focuses on health risk behaviors, such as violence and alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use that can result in injury and impact positive development among youth. The survey also includes questions about protective factors, hope, and community.

To view 2021 and prior HYS questionnaires, please visit: <https://www.askhys.net/Survey>

The HYS contains questions that have historically been included on a removable portion of the survey. Schools decided whether to ask these questions of their students in grades 8 – 12. The topics include:

- Sexual Orientation
- Gender Identity
- Sexual Behavior
- Sexual Violence

Sexual orientation was first asked on HYS 2014, and gender identity was first asked on HYS 2018. For HYS 2021, the sexual orientation and gender identity questions were included in the demographics section of the main survey for grades 8-12. District superintendents could request an exemption from including these questions on their survey to students.

The HYS questions about sexual behavior and experiences of sexual violence have been asked of students in grades 8 – 12 since 2012 and 2014, respectively. For HYS 2021, during a school's registration process, they chose whether or not to remove these questions from their students' surveys.

Survey

I would like to invite you to participate in a brief survey regarding how these topics influence your community, in what way the questions should be presented on the survey, how to ensure that Native youth are represented, and how to make the survey as useful as possible to Tribal programs and organizations.

Please share this link with those who you think may be interested in participating. This survey link will be open through **January 21, 2022**:

<https://redcap.doh.wa.gov/surveys/?s=AWMLYW9CFX>

Please note that Tribal School HYS Coordinators will receive a separate survey to complete.

We welcome you to contact the HYS Principal Investigator, Maayan Simckes, by phone (360-628-4373) or email (maayan.simckes@doh.wa.gov) with comments, questions, or for more information regarding the survey. You can also visit our website: AskHYS.net

Sincerely,



Cathy Wasserman, PhD, MPH
State Epidemiologist for Non-Infectious Conditions

Cc:

Umair Shah, MD MPH, Secretary of Health
Tamara Fulwyler, MPH, Tribal Relations Director