

A Guide to Conducting the Wisconsin Online Youth Risk Behavior Survey



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Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS)

Was developed in 1990 to...

Monitor priority health risk behaviors that contribute markedly to the leading causes of death, disability and social problems among youth and adults in the U.S.

These behaviors, often established during childhood and early adolescence include tobacco use, unhealthy dietary behaviors, inadequate physical activity, alcohol and other drug use, sexual behaviors that contribute to unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, and behaviors that contribute to unintentional injuries and violence.

And was designed to ...

Determine the prevalence of health risk behaviors and assess whether health risk behaviors increase, decrease or stay the same over time.

The YRBS also provides information on the co-occurrence of health risk behaviors, comparable national, state and local data, comparable data between subpopulations of youth and monitors progress toward achieving the Healthiest Wisconsin 2020 objectives and other program state and national indicators.

The components of the Youth Risk Behavior Survey System include...

National, state, and local school-based surveys of representative samples of 9th through 12th grade students administered every two years.

The Wisconsin Youth Risk Behavior Survey is conducted as part of a national survey effort by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). This effort has included similar surveys conducted in 48 states, 4 territories, and 16 cities over the past 18 years. The Wisconsin survey is conducted by the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) and provides data representative of the state.

Wisconsin Online Youth Risk Behavior Survey

Wisconsin school districts, private schools, tribes, CESAs, and county agencies (i.e., public health, human services, 51.42 boards) can use the Wisconsin Online Youth Risk Behavior Survey (OYRBS) system to gather local student self-reported data on health behaviors, attitudes and perceptions, and protective factors. These data can help raise awareness of important health issues, influence societal norms and perceptions, show the need for funding, and capture the need for and monitor the impact of prevention programs for school-aged youth.

DPI provides at no cost:

- A web-based survey system to conduct voluntary, anonymous, online student surveys at the school, school district, community, county, or CESA level.
- A guide to administer the survey including survey design guidance, checklists, timelines, sample letters, and more.
- Valid and reliable questions on use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs; weapons and violence; intentional and unintentional injuries; depression and suicide; risky sexual behaviors; nutrition; physical activity; and other health behaviors.
- A flexible survey building tool with questions for middle school and high school students.
- The ability to incorporate local YRBS data in the DPI School Improvement Planning tool at <http://goal.learningpt.org/winss/sip/>.
- Multiple report options:
 - Frequency tables and graphs and trend data that can be disaggregated by age, grade level, gender, race/ethnicity, and academic grades.
 - Executive summary report that highlights overall and important survey results.
 - PowerPoint slide presentation providing a question-by-question look at the survey results.
 - Comparison table providing a side-by-side look at local, state, and national YRBS results (high school only).
 - Health behavior fact sheets that provide risk behavior data (e.g., suicide, alcohol use) and suggestions for strategies and resources to address the behavior.
- A dataset for further analysis.
- Comparable state and national YRBS results.

The successful administration of a local student survey often relies on partnerships with internal and external staff and agencies. Partners that have experience in surveying, such as pupil services staff, AODA coordinators, public health and human services agencies, and CESAs can help with coordinating, designing, and implementing a survey. In addition, these partners often have experience analyzing and using data. Another positive benefit of these partnerships is the elimination of multiple surveys because the survey system can collect data on risk behaviors, protective factors, attitudes and perceptions at the local, county, and CESA levels. Reducing the number of surveys will decrease the burden placed on schools, staff, and students.

Those who are utilizing the OYRBS need to provide:

- A project coordinator dedicated to manage the survey administration process. Planning and preparation time of two to four months is recommended.
- Computer labs or a similar setting with a high speed internet connection to support the survey process.
- Sampling and data analysis expertise for steps such as student selection, weighting data, and data analysis and interpretation, if these steps are desired.

To consider whether the OYRBS system will meet your needs, consult DPI's website: <http://dpi.wi.gov/sspw/yrbsindex.html>

To access the OYRBS survey administration site go to yrbs.learningpt.org/adminlogin.aspx. If you are a first time user you will need to register and create a login account and this can be done at that website.

The Wisconsin Online Youth Behavior Survey complements, but does not replace, the statewide Wisconsin Youth Risk Behavior Survey, which is conducted every two years in a random sample of public high schools. The latter provides results valid only at the state level.

Guidelines and Limitations

The OYRBS is not a test of the individual or school. The survey is meant to provide schools, parents, and partners with an understanding of the student population's health risk behaviors, attitudes, perceptions, and protective factors so that relevant school health programs may be developed.

Procedures designed to ensure confidentiality and anonymity must be maintained throughout the survey administration and feedback process in order to protect student privacy rights and obtain accurate information. In addition, protecting student privacy means following local parent permission procedures and informing students that participation in the survey is voluntary.

All survey administrators must keep confidential the names of respondents, all information or opinions collected, and any information about respondents learned incidentally. Data should not be reported by classroom or any subgroup of five or fewer students.

Survey administrators must exercise reasonable caution to prevent access by others to survey data in their possession.

It is recommended that all staff involved in the survey process sign an "Assurance of Confidentiality." (A sample is included in the Appendix to this administration guide).

Survey Options

The OYRBS allows for the creation of surveys for middle school students (grades 6 through 8) and high school students (grades 9 through 12).

A survey can be created by selecting from several clusters of questions related to health behaviors. Middle school and high school surveys can include questions that address the following health risk behavior categories:

- Height and Weight
- Safety
- Weapons
- Physical Fighting
- Threats and Personal Safety
- Sexual Violence
- Depression and Suicide
- Tobacco Use
- Alcohol Use
- Marijuana Use
- Other Drug Use
- Sexual Behavior
- Weight Loss
- Eating Habits
- Physical Activity
- Other Health Issues
- Social Support

The decision regarding which of the questions will be included in an OYRBS questionnaire is left to the site administering the survey and is one of the milestones of the OYRBS planning process.

To learn more on the survey development process, go to <http://dpi.wi.gov/sspw/oyrbsindex.html>.

Survey Strategies and Sampling

The quality and usefulness of your OYRBS results depends largely on the procedures used to select the participating schools, classes, and students. There are two valid approaches for selecting your OYRBS middle and/or high school sample. A **census** includes all students in the school district, school, or grade level. A **sample** uses a subset of students as representative of the entire student population of a school district or school.

In order to accurately say that the results you obtain from questionnaires filled out by a sample of students are truly representative of all students (in statistical terms, called “making inferences”), the sample must be **scientifically selected**. A scientific sample is one in which each student in the population has a known (and greater than zero) likelihood (“probability”) of being selected into the sample. This is known as a probability sample. The results from a probability sample can be generalized to the entire student population from which the sample was drawn. The results from a poor (unscientific) sample may **only** be used to refer to students who participated in the survey.

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction urges each school district to consider carefully whether a census or a probability sample is to be employed in the survey design. Remember, unscientific samples cannot be used for inference to the general student population from which they were drawn and have limited value.

As you consider whether and how to do a local OYRBS it helps to think about how you will use the results. That can help you pick the design that fits your districts’ needs and resources. All three survey options described below will yield results that can be generalizable to the entire student population.

It is recommended that all school districts with a middle school or high school population of 2,000 or less use a census rather than a sample in their survey design.

The following table provides guidance for planning your sample.

Table 1: Planning Your Sample
Reference Chart for Sampling Options

Method of Surveying	Group of Students Involved	Approximate # of Students to be Surveyed*	Results are representative of...	Resources Needed
Middle or High School Student Population of <u>2,000 or More</u>				
Census: District or School	<u>All students</u> in grades 6-8 and/or 9-12	100% of all middle and/or high school students	All middle and/or high school students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Capacity for data analysis
Random Sample: District or School	Randomly selected <u>sub-group of students</u> in grades 6-8 and/or 9-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 1,000 for a population of 2,000-4,000 students ▪ 1,200 for a population of 5,000-7,000 students ▪ 1,300 for a population of 8,000-10,000 students 	All middle and/or high school students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Specialist for selecting the sample ▪ Data analysis
Targeted Census	<u>All students</u> in a specific school, grade or class	100% of students in a specific school, grade or class	School, grade or class of students who are surveyed only (<u>cannot be generalized</u> to other schools or the entire district)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Capacity for data analysis
Convenience Sample	Non-randomly selected <u>sub-group of students</u> ; any school, grade or class	Determined by the school or district	Students who are surveyed only (<u>cannot be generalized</u> beyond students who took the survey)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Capacity for data analysis
Middle or High School Student Population of <u>Less Than 2,000</u>				
Census: District or School	<u>All students</u> in grades 6-8 and/or 9-12	100% of all middle and/or high school students	All middle and/or high school students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Capacity for data analysis
Random Sample: District or School	Randomly selected <u>sub-group of students</u> in grades 6-8 and/or 9-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 600 for a population of 750-1,999 students ▪ 400 for a population of 500-749 students ▪ 350 for a population of under 500 students 	All middle and/or high school students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Specialist for selecting the sample ▪ Data analysis
Targeted Census	<u>All students</u> in a specific school, grade or class	100% of students in a specific school, grade or class	School, grade or class of students who are surveyed only (<u>cannot be generalized</u> to other schools or the entire district)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Capacity for data analysis
Convenience Sample	Non-randomly selected <u>sub-group of students</u> ; any school, grade or class	Determined by the school or district	Students who are surveyed only (<u>cannot be generalized</u> beyond students who took the survey)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Capacity for data analysis

* This column lists only approximate numbers of students that should be surveyed. The number of students in the sample should be calculated by a sampling expert and based on the exact number of students in the population.

The sampling decision and the survey strategy are of critical importance to the OYRBS. It may be necessary to contract for professional assistance to select a student sample.

Please note—the use of either passive or active consent is an important decision. Active consent will lower the anticipated participation rate by as much as 50%. Therefore, a larger number of students must be drawn for the sample (if scientific sampling is selected for the survey design), in order to achieve the appropriate sample sizes noted in the tables above. Attendance rates must also be considered when deciding on the number of students to be included in the sample. For example, if the attendance rate is 85% and a sample size of 1000 is required, then 1,176 students should be included in the sample ($1000 / .85$) to reach the required number of participants.

For the same and other reasons, obtaining responses from all selected sample members, when conducting a sample, is extremely important. Not only is it important that you receive enough completed surveys in order to achieve sample size, but in many cases the sample will be drawn in such a way that certain students “represent” other students with similar gender, grade, school, and other characteristics. For the inferences about overall student behavior, or behavior for certain groups defined by these characteristics, to be valid, every effort should be made to get all sample members to complete the questionnaire. This will require some additional record keeping and follow-up.

Parental Consent

An important step before administering the OYRBS to students is to contact parents and obtain permission for students to participate. There are two basic types of parental permission—passive and active.

Passive parental permission means that a parent can have their child excluded from the survey by returning a signed form denying permission. Passive parental permission is easier to use but we encourage you to consult current federal and state laws and school district policies before committing to passive parental permission.

Active parental permission means collecting a signature from the parent of each child authorizing the child's participation. A child is not allowed to take part in a survey unless a parent has returned a signed permission form indicating his/her child may participate in the survey. As a general rule, the use of active consent will reduce the expected response rate by 50%. This means that a greater number of students must be included in the sample to achieve the minimum number of responses required for statistical inference as described in Table 1 of this document.

Sample active and passive permission forms are provided in the Appendix. Sample survey fact sheets with answers to frequently asked questions are also found in the Appendix. One of these survey fact sheets should be copied on the second side of the parental permission form before the form is given to parents.

Changes in federal law affecting student surveys administered by school districts or third parties occurred with the passing of the No Child Left Behind Act. Topics include creating a student survey policy, parental notification, and protection of pupils' privacy. In the Appendix you will find a DPI Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Information Update on student surveys.

Standard Reports

The OYRBS Administration website will provide, at no charge, a number of survey report products that put your student data in an easy-to-read and useable format.

Standard reporting examples are provided on the next two pages.

Standard Report Examples

Detailed Summary Tables

The screenshot displays the 'Youth Risk Behavior Survey' interface. The header includes the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction logo and a 'Reports' tab. A left sidebar contains navigation links such as 'Logout', 'Account Management', 'User Management', 'Survey Management', and 'Report Management'. The main content area shows a 'Cluster Summary' for 'Tobacco Use' in February 2008. It includes a 'Note' that all numbers are percentages and a table with columns for grade levels (9th, 10th, 11th, 12th, Other) and 'Declined'/'Total'. The table contains three sections of data: 'Have you ever tried cigarette smoking, even one or two puffs?', 'How old were you when you smoked a whole cigarette for the first time?', and 'During the past 30 days, on how many days did you smoke cigarettes?'. Each section includes a 'Graph - Trends' link and a table of percentages.

	9th	10th	11th	12th	Other	Declined	Total
Have you ever tried cigarette smoking, even one or two puffs?							
Yes	33.3	41.2	82.4	30	21.1	0	42.3
No	66.7	58.8	17.6	70	78.9	0	57.7
Declined	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
How old were you when you smoked a whole cigarette for the first time?							
I have never smoked a whole cigarette	66.7	64.7	35.3	70	84.2	0	64.1
8 years old or younger	6.7	11.8	11.8	0	0	0	6.4
9 or 10 years old	6.7	5.9	11.8	0	0	0	5.1
11 or 12 years old	0	5.9	11.8	0	5.3	0	5.1
13 or 14 years old	13.3	5.9	11.8	20	10.5	0	11.5
15 or 16 years old	6.7	5.9	17.6	10	0	0	7.7
17 years old or older	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Declined	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
During the past 30 days, on how many days did you smoke cigarettes?							
0 days	73.3	70.6	47.1	70	94.7	0	71.8
1 or 2 days	0	5.9	17.6	10	0	0	6.4
3 to 5 days	6.7	5.9	0	0	0	0	2.6
6 to 9 days	13.3	5.9	11.8	0	0	0	6.4
10 to 19 days	0	0	0	10	5.3	0	2.6
20 to 29 days	0	0	5.9	0	0	0	1.3
All 30 days	6.7	11.8	17.6	10	0	0	9.0
Declined	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
During the past 30 days, on the days you smoked, how many cigarettes did you smoke per day?							
I did not smoke cigarettes during the past 30 days	73.3	70.6	47.1	70	94.7	0	71.8
Less than 1 cigarette per day	0	5.9	5.9	0	0	0	2.6
1 cigarette per day	13.3	5.9	5.9	10	5.3	0	7.7
2 to 5 cigarettes per day	6.7	5.9	23.5	10	0	0	9.0
6 to 10 cigarettes per day	6.7	5.9	15.9	10	0	0	15.1

High School Comparison Report

Report: Comparison Report

Survey ID: 1717

Survey Name: Washburn County HS

Respondent Totals for 2008 Cooperative Ed Serv Agcy 11	
Grade Level	# of Respondents
9th	125
10th	123
11th	126
12th	83
Other	0
Declined to answer	1
Total	458

Keep in consideration that the Wisconsin and United States data is weighted data for 9th-12th grade students in 2007. This may account for differences between Cooperative Ed Serv Agcy 11 and the state and national data. The Comparison Report has percentages for the overall sample from those survey questions that are an exact match with the Wisconsin and United States YRBS. Therefore, not all questions on your survey will appear on the Comparison Report.

Results for 2008 Cooperative Ed Serv Agcy 11 compared with 2007 Wisconsin and 2007 United States			
Traffic Safety			
Question	2008 Cooperative Ed Serv Agcy 11 Results	2007* Wisconsin Results	2007* United States Results
	Percent	Percent	Percent
Among students who rode a bicycle during the 12 months before the survey, the percentage who rarely or never wore a bicycle helmet	68.1	88.5	85.1
Percentage of students who rarely or never wore a seat belt when riding in a car driven by someone else	14	13.3	11.1
Percentage of students who rode one or more times during the 30 days before the survey in a car or other vehicle driven by someone who had been drinking alcohol	29.5	31.5	29.1
Percentage of students who drove a car or other vehicle one or more times during the 30 days before the survey when they had been drinking alcohol	12.2	14.3	10.5
Weapons			
Question	2008 Cooperative Ed Serv Agcy 11 Results	2007* Wisconsin Results	2007* United States Results
	Percent	Percent	Percent
Percentage of students who carried a weapon such as a gun, knife, or club on school property on at least 1 day during the 30 days before the survey	28.8	12.7	18

Requirements for Survey Administration

This section summarizes the site requirements for administering the OYRBS. It is the responsibility of the school to ensure that adequate technical and staff resources are available to ensure a smoothly administered survey that protects the privacy rights of the students to both anonymity and confidentiality.

Recognizing that technical resources, staff availability and district policies vary, the following section of this document is meant to provide basic guidelines to survey administrators.

Computer Lab

The OYRBS is an online survey that relies on an Internet connection to access an electronic questionnaire on each workstation. The survey can be accessed when the respondent logs into the survey website at <http://yrbs.learningpt.org/>. Each participant then uses the mouse to fill in a “bubble” to respond to each question. (There are no open-ended questions and typing skills are not required to complete the survey). When the questionnaire has been completed, the respondent “submits” the survey electronically, via the Internet, to a secure server managed by a DPI third-party contractor. All data is kept confidential and analysis is performed on the American Institutes for Research (AIR) server. The survey is anonymous. Student and class identities are not associated with the completed questionnaires.

It is assumed that each site’s Information Technology staff will provide requisite access and that there is sufficient workstation capacity to accommodate the survey in a timely fashion. Participating students should have some exposure to the internet and/or e-surveys. Familiarity with the computer lab is helpful. The survey requires the use of the computer mouse and may require the use of arrow keys.

Please give consideration to the following when deciding on whether to administer the OYRBS:

1. Avoid busy times for computer labs, such as end of semester and school year.
2. The survey takes about 20-30 minutes to complete including 5 minutes to read instructions and get everyone connected to the appropriate website. It may be possible to do two classrooms during one class period, particularly if you are administering a questionnaire with 50 or fewer questions.
3. A reliable high-speed data connection to the Internet is required.
4. Each workstation should be equipped with a current Web browser, such as Internet Explorer or Firefox.
5. If possible, the testing facility should be reserved for the exclusive use of respondents during the hours of survey administration.
6. Since privacy is important for accurate responses, there should be space between workstations and walking or standing behind the workstations is discouraged. Some schools tape “blindings” to the sides of the monitor to reinforce feelings of privacy and discourage conversation.
7. Students should be directed to quietly occupy their time after completing their survey. For example, students could be given an online assignment to complete or allowed to access their school e-mail account.
8. On-site technical support should be available at the start of each survey session to assist students and ensure that all elements of the infrastructure are operational. It is useful to “bookmark” the survey site on each workstation to ease the startup process. It is helpful to have a technical support onsite during the entire survey session.

9. Mask the URL address by using the full screen browser view (usually “F11” key on keyboard). This will help reduce the probability of unauthorized access.
10. There must be at least one proctor in the computer lab at all times.

Other Requirements

In addition to the technical infrastructure, there are other matters to be considered in deciding whether to administer the OYRBS.

Some of the roles needed to organize the OYRBS are as follows:

- A project champion should be identified. The project champion must have authority to marshal resources and gain access to school administrators for required approvals.
- Each survey site will require a coordinator for planning and administration purposes. The project champion and site coordinators are responsible for developing the OYRBS plan.
- Every survey session must be proctored. The classroom teacher or some other adult fills this role.

The planning process (discussed in greater detail later in this document) includes the following steps:

1. Determining the most important purpose and audiences for your survey.
2. Selecting the survey questions.
3. Obtaining approvals and insuring conformance to district policies and federal statutes.
4. Deciding on a survey design (e.g., random sample, census).
5. Establishing a schedule for entire survey administration.
6. Preparing clearance materials and obtaining clearance.
7. Notifying parents, obtaining their permission (active, passive), and providing them an opportunity to review the survey.

The planning process can often take two-to-four months and will be a major factor in the success of your OYRBS.

One survey administrator will be allowed per survey site. Eligible survey sites include a school district, private school, tribe, county agency, and CESA. The OYRBS will allow a survey administrator to create other user accounts for a survey site. The two user roles that can be created are a survey creator and a report viewer. A survey creator can design surveys and schedule their administration. They may also review all the reports associated with the surveys they created. A report viewer can only review the survey reports they have been given access rights to. A survey administrator can create user accounts and surveys, and review reports associated with those surveys.

Planning Your Survey

Conducting the OYRBS on a regular basis (e.g., yearly, bi-annually) will yield valuable information about priority health-risk behaviors among youth. Many steps are involved, and several can be very time-consuming. Start early and establish a comprehensive plan, allowing sufficient time for each major activity and for identifying key roles and responsibilities.

This section describes the major steps for planning your OYRBS including:

1. Determining the most important purpose and audiences for your survey.
2. Selecting the survey questions.
3. Obtaining approvals and insuring conformance to district policies and state and federal laws.
4. Deciding on a survey design (e.g., random sample, census).
5. Establishing a schedule for entire survey administration.
6. Preparing clearance materials and obtaining clearance.
7. Notifying parents, obtaining parent permission, and providing them an opportunity to review the survey.
8. Administering the OYRBS.

A detailed timeline is provided at end of this section to help guide the planning process.

Determining the most important purpose and audiences for your survey.

At the start of your OYRBS planning process, decide what you ultimately hope to do with the data you will collect. It may help to think through the answers to the following questions:

What do you want from the OYRBS? In addition to information about the most prevalent health-risk behaviors among high (middle) school students and the ages at which these behaviors begin to appear, you may want to know how the prevalence of these behaviors varies among subgroups of high (middle) school students and how these behaviors change over time.

How will you use the results from the OYRBS to help school health program activities?

An important use may be to demonstrate the need for and the impact of these programs. Survey results could be used to design a local alcohol and drug prevention program, focus the content of teacher training programs, teaching materials, and parent presentations, among other things.

The way you define and state the purpose(s) of your OYRBS will affect the way you design and conduct the survey. If you have at least one clear purpose and keep it in mind throughout the process, you will be more likely to generate useful results. If you have too many purposes that are somewhat vague, you may not be able to satisfy any of them. Be realistic about what you expect to accomplish.

Partnerships.

The successful administration of a local student survey often relies on partnerships with internal and external staff and agencies. Partners that have experience in surveying, such as pupil services staff, AODA coordinators, public health and human services agencies, and CESAs can help with coordinating, designing, and implementing a survey. In addition, these partners often have experience analyzing and using data. Another positive benefit of these partnerships is the elimination of multiple surveys because the survey system can collect data on multiple risk behaviors, protective factors, attitudes and perceptions. Reducing the number of surveys will decrease the burden placed on schools, staff, and students.

Selecting the survey grades and questions.

Once the purpose and audiences for the OYRBS have been established, the first decision to be made concerns the scope of the program, that is the grade levels (6-12) which will be included in the survey process.

A survey site has the option of selecting some or all of the OYRBS core questions, i.e., questions selected by DPI. The middle school core questions total 63 questions, and the high school totals 99 questions. Numerous supplemental questions are available for both the middle school and high school survey. A maximum of 75 questions can be used for middle school students and a maximum of 105 for high school students. Requests to add new survey questions can be sent in an email to wioyrbs@dpi.wi.gov.

Obtaining approvals and insuring conformance to district policies and state and federal laws.

It is the responsibility of the planning team to ensure that the administration of the OYRBS conforms to all district policies and federal and state laws. The responsible school and district level officials should be asked to approve the plan before implementing. Note—it is especially important to understand policies concerning the nature of required parental consent (active or passive) and student privacy. See ESEA Student Survey Bulletin in the Appendix.

Deciding on a survey design.

The survey design is integral to achieving the objectives established for the OYRBS and drives both the complexity and duration of the program. Scientifically accurate levels and trends may be achieved by either a census in which all eligible students participate or a random sample in which each eligible student has an equal opportunity of being selected and the minimum number of participants is arrived at using a statistically valid process. A census or sample may be applied to all grade levels (6-12) or to selected grade levels in the population and inferences may be made only for those grades included in the survey. Scientific designs will permit comparisons with similar state and national groups.

The planning team may also decide on a “convenience” sample in which any number of students or any group of students, such as all ninth grade health classes, may be asked to participate. While this option reduces complexity, results are applicable only to

participating students, although this may be sufficient to achieve the purpose established for the OYRBS.

Please refer to the section entitled “Survey Strategies and Sampling” for additional information on this topic.

Establishing a schedule for survey administration.

The principal constraint to implementing the survey design will be the availability of computer resources within a suitable time period. If possible, survey participants should have exclusive use of the designated computer lab(s) during hours of administration. It is advisable to complete the survey administration as quickly as possible within the constraints imposed by survey resources. Avoid busy times for computer labs, such as end of semester (January) and school year (May-June). The planning team is responsible for preparing a detailed schedule and should determine whether time will also be reserved for makeup surveys. Preparation of the schedule will confirm the practical operational feasibility of the OYRBS survey design. Please see the section entitled “Computer Lab” for additional discussion on this topic.

Preparing clearance materials and obtaining clearance.

The essential clearance document is the parental permission slip (active or passive) which includes the survey fact sheet when mailed to parents. Letter templates are provided in the Appendix. Printed copies of the survey should be available for parents in the school administration office or some other accessible location to accommodate any parent wishing to inspect the questionnaire before granting permission. Keeping affected classroom teachers informed of the survey process and survey dates is another important step in the planning process. Additional materials, such as Teacher and Parent FAQ’s, can be helpful in the clearance process and examples are included in the Appendix. These documents can be modified to meet individual requirements.

The planning team must ensure that adequate control over permission slips exists and that parental and student rights are respected. Participation in the OYRBS is strictly voluntary and students and parents must be informed of its voluntary nature. Provision should be made for students who will not participate in the survey. Non-participants should be excluded from the computer lab while the survey is being administered.

Please note – the use of either passive or active consent is an important decision. Active consent will lower the anticipated participation rate by as much as 50%. Therefore, a larger number of students must be drawn for the sample (if scientific sampling is selected for the survey design), in order to achieve the sample sizes noted in the section entitled “Survey Strategies and Sampling.” Attendance rates must also be considered when deciding on the number of students to be included in the sample. For example, if the attendance rate is 85% and a sample size of 1000 is required, then 1,176 students should be included in the sample ($1000 / .85$) to reach the required number of participants.

Notifying parents and providing them an opportunity to review the survey and opt their child out.

The final step preceding survey administration involves directly notifying parents (i.e., mailing the consent forms) of the survey in a manner that provides information required for informed consent. The planning team is responsible for initiating the notification process in a timely manner and ensuring that the consent process conforms to all local policies and federal and state laws.

Sample active and passive permission forms for middle school and high school surveys are provided in the Appendix. Sample Survey Fact sheets with answers to frequently asked questions are also found in the Appendix. A survey fact sheet should be provided along with the parental permission form.

Changes in federal law affecting student surveys administered by school districts or third parties occurred with the passing of the No Child Left Behind Act. Topics include creating on school policies, parental notification, and protection of pupils' privacy. In the Appendix you will find a DPI Elementary & Secondary Education Act Information Update on student surveys.

Activity Timeline

The following table provides a time phased overview of required OYRBS activities and will help guide you through the planning process.

Prior to proceeding with the planning process, the survey administrator and the planning team should be selected. The role of the survey administrator is critical to the success of the OYRBS. This individual “clears the way” for the project team, acts as a liaison between the project team and school administration, sets schedules and coordinates activities between sites. The coordinator ensures that the program receives the appropriate visibility and that all of the requirements are fulfilled. The survey coordinator will also serve as the liaison with the DPI, for the life of the program. Please note – in the event that the scope of the survey involves only a single site, a coordinator is still necessary for the success of the program.

Activity Timeline

Phase	Description	Activity	Time to allow
Planning	Goal Setting	Determine the most important purpose and audiences for your OYRBS survey.	3-4 weeks
	Partnership Survey Selection	Make the effort now to involve partners (e.g., county health agency, CESA) to harness more resources and combine survey efforts to reduce the number of student surveys. Determine the survey scope (grade levels) and select the appropriate OYRBS questionnaire(s) based on the purpose and audiences. Go online to view the middle school and high school OYRBS questions that make up the core and supplemental questions.	↓
	Administrative approvals	Review district policies and federal and state laws to ensure that the OYRBS is in conformance to policies and regulations especially as they apply to student privacy, parental consent and confidentiality. Determine whether parent contact will be active or passive. Develop an administrative clearance packet including support letters, legal review (if required), and obtain required approvals from designated district and school officials. Present the proposal to required administrators for approval.	
Design	Survey Method	Determine whether the survey design is to be a census, a scientifically selected sample, or a convenience sample based on the goals established for the program and the size of the student population and school level participation. Decide on whether outside survey technical assistance will be required. Obtain lists of classes or students and draw the sample (if required).	4-6 weeks
	Select Survey Administrator	Go to DPI's OYRBS website and register the survey administrator. DPI will need to verify the authenticity of the survey administrator.	
	Scheduling	Decide on a proctoring strategy. Select school building survey administrators to provide instructions and monitor students as they complete the online survey for each survey site. Assess availability of computer resources and IT support. Develop a site based schedule and determine the length of the survey cycle. Review schedule with staff and rework if necessary.	↓

	Develop clearance materials	Develop required clearance materials. Permission slips and survey fact sheets will be needed at a minimum. The planning team may also wish to consider student / parent FAQ's, agency support letters, and letters from a district (school) administrator explaining the purpose of the OYRBS and the nature of the questionnaire. Control procedures for permission slips and the means by which parents may inspect the questionnaire should be finalized.	↓
	Develop Administrator Packet	The OYRBS administration packet is developed for survey proctors. This packet includes permission slips, a script to be read when handing out the permission slips and an administrator script to be read at the time of the survey. Copies of the survey and a teacher FAQ are also helpful and have been included in the Appendix to this document.	↓
Final Preparation	Proctor Training (Site based)	The survey administrators need to be informed of the goals of the program, the survey design, and the final schedule, which should be presented in a meeting or communicated via a letter. The clearance materials and the administrator packet should be reviewed. Consider whether this meeting provides the best opportunity to distribute the clearance materials to building/site survey administrators. A school building confirmation letter is included in the Appendix.	1-3 weeks ↓
	Send clearance materials	Clearance materials are mailed to the parents of all students selected to participate in the OYRBS. Plan on mailing the clearance materials home about five to seven school days in advance of the actual survey. If active consent is to be used, the planning team should allow for additional time for follow up requests (e.g., 2 to 3 weeks).	↓
Survey	Administer questionnaire	The time to administer the OYRBS survey will be based on the size of the sample and the availability of resources. Implement tracking system procedures and follow-up with non-responding schools or classrooms.	1-3 weeks ↓
Feedback	Reporting	Make sure the survey is closed. Survey results can be viewed, printed, and copied in multiple report formats. A dataset and codebook is provided for each survey for further analysis.	1-2 weeks

Appendix

Assurance of Confidentiality of Survey Data

[School District or Agency Name] is firmly committed to maintaining the confidentiality of individual respondents' data obtained through the Online Youth Risk Behavior Survey.

Procedures for Maintaining Confidentiality

1. All those who are involved in the survey and reporting of results shall agree to this assurance of confidentiality.
2. All survey administrators shall keep completely confidential the names of respondents, all information or opinions collected, and any information about respondents learned incidentally. Individual responses or data potentially traceable to an individual (e.g., student response cell size 5 or fewer) will not be shared for any purpose. Survey administrators shall exercise reasonable caution to prevent access by others to survey data in their possession.

Pledge of Confidentiality

I hereby certify that I have carefully read and will cooperate fully with the above procedures on confidentiality. I will keep completely confidential all information arising from surveys concerning individual respondents to which I gain access. I will not discuss, disclose, disseminate, or provide access to survey data and identifiers. I will devote my best efforts to ensure that there is compliance with the required procedures by personnel whom I supervise. I understand that violation of this pledge is sufficient grounds for disciplinary action. I also understand that violation of the privacy rights of individuals through such unauthorized discussion, disclosure, dissemination, or access may make me subject to criminal or civil penalties. I give my personal pledge that I shall abide by this assurance of confidentiality.

SIGNATURE. I have read this and I agree to the Pledge of Confidentiality.

Survey Administrator Name: _____

PRINT

SIGNATURE

Date: _____

PASSIVE PARENTAL PERMISSION FORM

Our school is taking part in the Wisconsin Online Youth Risk Behavior Survey sponsored by [name of sponsoring agency]. The survey will ask about the health behaviors of [enter grade level] through [enter grade level] grade students. The survey will ask about behaviors that result in unintentional and intentional injuries, tobacco use, and alcohol and other drug use. It will also ask about sexual behaviors that may result in HIV infection, other sexually transmitted diseases, and, unwanted pregnancies and dietary behavior and physical activity.

Students will be asked to fill out a computer-based questionnaire that takes about 25 minutes to complete. They will take the survey during regular class time.

Completing this anonymous survey will cause little or no risk to your child. The only potential risk is that some students might find certain questions to be sensitive. The survey has been designed to protect your child's privacy. Students will not put their names on the survey. Also, no class or student will ever be mentioned by name in a report of the results. Your child will get no benefit right away from taking part in the survey. However, the results of this survey will help children in the future by influencing health and safety programs. We would like all selected students to take part in the survey, **but the survey is voluntary**. No action will be taken against you, or your child, if your child does not take part. Students can skip any question that they do not wish to answer. In addition, students may stop participating in the survey at any point without penalty.

Please see the other side of this form for more facts about the survey. If your child's teacher or principal cannot answer your questions about the survey, call [name of contact] at [phone number].

Please read the section below. **If you do not want your child to take part in the survey, check the box, sign and date the form and return the form to the school no later than [Date].** Signing and returning this form will dismiss your child from taking the survey. If you have no objection to your child taking part in the survey, you should do nothing with this form. Thank you.

Child's name: _____ Grade: _____

I have read this form and know what the survey is about.

[] My child **may not** take part in this survey.

Parent's signature: _____ Date: _____

Phone number: _____

ACTIVE PARENTAL PERMISSION FORM

Our school is taking part in the Wisconsin Online Youth Risk Behavior Survey sponsored by [name of sponsoring agency]. The survey will ask about the health behaviors of [enter grade level] through [enter grade level] grade students. The survey will ask about behaviors that result in unintentional and intentional injuries, tobacco use, and alcohol and other drug use. It will also ask about sexual behaviors that may result in HIV infection, other sexually transmitted diseases, and, unwanted pregnancies and dietary behavior and physical activity.

Students will be asked to fill out a computer-based questionnaire that takes about 25 minutes to complete. They will take the survey during regular class time.

Completing this anonymous survey will cause little or no risk to your child. The only potential risk is that some students might find certain questions to be sensitive. The survey has been designed to protect your child's privacy. Students will not put their names on the survey. Also, no class or student will ever be mentioned by name in a report of the results. Your child will get no benefit right away from taking part in the survey. However, the results of this survey will help children in the future by influencing health and safety programs. We would like all selected students to take part in the survey, **but the survey is voluntary**. No action will be taken against you, or your child, if your child does not take part. Students can skip any question that they do not wish to answer. In addition, students may stop participating in the survey at any point without penalty.

Please see the other side of this form for more facts about the survey. If your child's teacher or principal cannot answer your questions about the survey, call [name of contact] at [phone number].

Please read the section below and check one box. Return the form to the school in three days. Thank you.

Child's name: _____ Grade: _____

I have read this form and know what the survey is about.

Check one:

My child may take part in this survey.

My child may **not** take part in this survey.

Parent's signature: _____ Date: _____

Phone number: _____

ONLINE YOUTH RISK BEHAVIOR SURVEY

School Building Information

Q: Why is the survey being done?

A: [Enter Name of District or Office] will use the survey results to help measure how many youth engage in health-related behaviors. The survey results will be used to create school health programs to help reduce these risk behaviors and promote health enhancing behaviors.

Q: What does the OYRBS measure and why are these things important?

A: The OYRBS focuses on health-risk behaviors that result in the most significant mortality, morbidity, and social problems during both adolescences and adulthood. These include: 1) behaviors that result in unintentional and intentional injuries; 2) tobacco use; 3) alcohol and other drug use; 4) sexual behaviors that may result in HIV infection, other sexually transmitted diseases, and unintended pregnancies; 5) dietary behaviors; and 6) physical activity. The OYRBS measures student attitude and perceptions related to health-related behaviors. In addition, the OYRBS measures assets and these assets have the power to protect youth from engaging in risk behaviors and at the same time promote healthy behaviors.

To determine the level of risk among adolescents, priority health-risk behaviors must be measured directly. Measuring only relevant knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, or intentions will not provide an accurate description of the level of risk, because the relationship between these factors and the priority of health-risk behaviors themselves often is weak, unproven, or nonexistent. For example, even though most people know that smoking causes lung cancer, many people still continue to smoke.

Q: If my school refuses, can't you just substitute another school?

A: Unfortunately, no. To guarantee the scientific validity of this study, we may only survey schools that were selected by the sampling process. Therefore, it's essential that all schools participate.

Q: Can't I just pick the classrooms for you?

A: No. After the classrooms are selected they should not be changed. Tampering with the classroom sample would result in data that could not be used to make important conclusions to all students in the district.

Q: Will student participation be anonymous?

A: Yes. Survey administration procedures have been designed to protect student privacy and allow for anonymous participation. Students will **not** put their names or other identifying information on the questionnaires.

Q: How long does it take to fill out the survey? Does the survey include a physical test?

A: Plan for one class period but the average student can complete the web-based survey in 20-30 minutes, so it may be possible to have two classrooms complete the survey in one class period. The survey does not include a physical test or exam.

Q: Doesn't a survey like this actually encourage students to engage in these behaviors?

A: The causes and determinants of health-risk behaviors are very complex. Students are exposed frequently to information about tobacco, alcohol, other drug use, violence, and sexuality through the media, parents, friends, and the broader community. Exposure to a small number of questions on any one topic is not likely to cause a change in behavior – either good or bad. If it were that easy, we could simply ask students about all the things we want them to do!

Q: Do student answer the question truthfully?

A: Research indicates data of this nature may be gathered as reliably from adolescents as from adults. To obtain truthful answers, students must perceive the survey as important and know that procedures have been developed to protect their privacy and allow for anonymous participation.

Q: How much work am I and my school expected to do?

A: Not much – in fact, most schools find the process to be surprisingly easy. Schools need to:

1. Provide a list of classrooms in use during a specific period of the day (usually 2nd), and the number of students in each class.
2. Chose a date for the survey
3. Assist us in notifying the teachers in the selected classrooms, and in coordinating the survey logistics with them.
4. Deliver to teachers, copies of survey script forms and survey fact sheets, to be handed out to all students in the selected classes.
5. Mail parent permission forms and survey fact sheets to the parents of students participating in the OYRBS.
6. Reserve a bank of computers during the survey date(s).

ONLINE YOUTH RISK BEHAVIOR SURVEY

Parent and Student Information

Q: Why is the survey being done?

A: [Enter Name of District or Agency] will use the survey results to help measure how many youth engage in health-related behaviors. The survey results will be used to create school health programs to help reduce these risk behaviors and promote health enhancing behaviors.

Q: What does the OYRBS measure and why are these things important?

A: The OYRBS focuses on health-related behaviors that result in the most significant mortality, morbidity, and social problems during both adolescences and adulthood. These include: 1) behaviors that result in unintentional and intentional injuries; 2) tobacco use; 3) alcohol and other drug use; 4) sexual behaviors that may result in HIV infection, other sexually transmitted diseases, and unintended pregnancies; 5) dietary behaviors; and 6) physical activity. The OYRBS measures student attitude and perceptions related to health-related behaviors. In addition, the OYRBS measures assets and these assets have the power to protect youth from engaging in risk behaviors and at the same time promote healthy behaviors.

To determine the level of risk among adolescents, priority health-related behaviors must be measured directly. Measuring only relevant knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, or intentions will not provide an accurate description of the level of risk, because the relationship between these factors and the priority of health-related behaviors themselves often is weak, unproven, or nonexistent. For example, even though most people know that smoking causes lung cancer, many people still continue to smoke.

Q: Will student participation be anonymous?

A: Yes. Survey administration procedures have been designed to protect student privacy and allow for anonymous participation. Students will not put their names or other identifying information on the questionnaires.

Q: How was my child picked to be in the survey?

A: Students were selected randomly to participate (or) all students in the school/grade were selected to participate.

Q: Does my child have to participate?

A: No. Participation in this survey is voluntary and your child's grade in this class will not be affected, whether or not they answer the questions. Students also have the option of leaving a question blank that they are not comfortable answering.

Q: How long does it take to fill out the survey? Does the survey include a physical test?

A: Most students take 20-30 minutes to fill out the web-based survey. The survey does not include a physical test or exam.

Q: Doesn't a survey like this actually encourage students to engage in these behaviors?

A: The causes and determinants of health-related behaviors are very complex. Students are exposed frequently to information about tobacco, alcohol, other drug use, violence, and sexuality through the media, parents, friends, and the broader community. Exposure to a small number of questions on any one topic is not likely to cause a change in behavior – either good or bad. If it were that easy, we could simply ask students about all the things we want them to do!

Q: Do students answer the question truthfully?

A: Research indicates data of this nature may be gathered as reliably from adolescents as from adults. To obtain truthful answers, students must perceive the survey as important and know that procedures have been developed to protect their privacy and allow for anonymous participation.

Q: Can I review a copy of the survey?

A: Yes, a copy of the survey will be kept at [Enter Location].

Q: What will be done with the results?

A: A report summarizing the student data will be developed and used to improve school health and wellness programs. Remember—no child and no class will ever be mentioned by name.

Q: Whom can I contact if I have questions about the survey?

A: Name: [Enter Name]

Title: [Enter Title]

Phone: [Enter Phone]

E-mail: [Enter E-mail]

SCRIPT FOR DISTRIBUTING OYRBS PERMISSION SLIPS

PURPOSE:

This brief script is used to emphasize the importance of student participation and to ask students to make sure that their parents review the information that you are mailing.

This script is to be read aloud to students on the day before the date designated for mailing permission slips to the homes of participating students.

“Our school will be participating in the Wisconsin Online Youth Risk Behavior Survey that was developed and sponsored by the Department of Public Instruction.

This survey is designed to focus on health-related behaviors, such as smoking or alcohol and drug use, that cause problems during both youth and adulthood. Your participation in the survey is very important.

Your parents will be mailed copies of a parental notification form and some questions and answers about the survey. It is very important that your parents read this information, so please make sure they look at the information when it arrives in the mail.

Script for Survey Proctors

Wisconsin Online Youth Risk Behavior Survey

Please read all of the script to students as it contains information that must be presented for students to make an informed choice on whether to participate. The script should be read before the survey starts—students shouldn't be taking the survey while the script is being read.

Good morning/afternoon. You're here because the [school district name, school name] is conducting a survey of students this morning/afternoon. On the survey you'll be asked direct questions about some of your health behaviors. The results will be used to improve health programming at our schools and in your community.

Your participation in this survey is **very** important, but it's also voluntary. You are not required to take the survey and you can also choose to skip questions on the survey you don't want to answer. All your answers will be anonymous—we'll have no way to track your survey, or how you answered the questions, back to you. Your answers **are private**. So during the survey I'll maintain strict procedures to protect your privacy.

This survey's not a test of you or this school. Whether you choose to answer the questions or not, your grades will not be affected. It's really important that your answers are based on **what you actually think or do**. So please try to answer the questions as honestly as you can, not how you think we'd like you to answer or how you think others would answer. If you have a question about the meaning of a survey question do your best to answer it on your own because I will not be allowed to help you.

You shouldn't talk during the survey, or look at another person's screen. Remember, your answers are private, but so are your neighbors'. For each of the questions on the survey, use your mouse cursor to click on the button of the answer that's the best match for what you think or do. When you come to the end of the survey, just hit the "submit" button. Your survey **will not be saved** on your computer. When you're finished...

Add instructions on where students should go or what they should do when finished. Please consider the impact on those students that will need more time to complete the survey when you plan the activity for those students who finish early.

Are there any questions?

The following "thank you" should be read before students start the survey if they'll be leaving the survey area individually when they finish. If they're instructed to stay at their computers until everyone is done, it should be read after the survey.

I want to thank all of you for participating in this survey. The information you provide[d] will be very important to the school district for planning health programs. Thank you!

Online OYRBS Administration Checklist

Passive Permission

- Have parent permission slips been mailed with sufficient time for parents to respond? (Minimum 5 days). Were students given information as to the purpose of the survey and impressed with the importance of insuring that the permission slip are reviewed by their parent/guardian?
- Has a school contact been provided in case parents have any questions?
- Are there copies of the survey available for inspection?
- Has the classroom teacher retained the permission slips that are returned for non-participants and prepared a list of non-participants?
- Have provisions been made for students who will not participate? (It's better if they are not in the computer lab with the participants).

Survey Lab

- Has sufficient time been allotted? Most middle school students will require 15-25 minutes to finish a 70 question survey and high school students will require 20-30 minutes to finish a 100 question survey. This excludes time for instructions.
- Will computer assistance be available?
- Has the computer lab been reserved for the exclusive use of survey participants? If this is not possible, an area should be reserved to keep students together in a group and to protect their privacy.
- Will the classroom teacher remain in the survey lab with the participating students? If not, the classroom teacher should escort the participants to the lab to ensure that only authorized students participate.
- Has someone been designated to read the survey proctor's instructions to the participating students prior to beginning the survey? (Note – it is **very important** that students are assured that no one from the school will have access to their responses and that the survey is anonymous). Randomly assign computers to students as they enter the computer lab. Do not let students sit where they choose.
- Has the survey site URL been bookmarked to facilitate the log on procedure? Do all survey proctors have the log-on information that is the survey ID and passwords?
- If students from a class will be taking the survey at different times due to facility constraints, have controls been established to prevent individuals from taking the survey more than once and that students are who they say they are?
- Is there enough space between computers to protect student privacy or have steps been taken to protect student privacy (e.g., such as tape “blinders” to the sides of the monitor)?
- Have provisions been made for students who finish early? At a minimum, they should have an assignment or a book to read.

(OVER)

- When a student finishes the last question of the survey they will be directed to a thank you page and informed to follow the instructions that were provided to them at the beginning of the survey. Please ensure that the students who finish early quietly begin their assigned task.
- At the conclusion of the survey, ensure that all computers are returned to the ready state.
- When all classes have completed the survey, (or at the end of the day), the browser history and cache files should be cleared.

Survey Completion

- Inform the survey administrator when the last student has completed the online OYRBS questionnaire.

**Survey administration technical assistance available at
<http://dpi.wi.gov/spw/oyrbsindex.html>.**

Bulletin No. 02.14

Created: April 11, 2003

Updated: August 4, 2003

Topic: Student Surveys

In January 2002, the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) was amended by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 2001 (also known as the No Child Left Behind Act). The amendment added an additional category (religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or student's parent) to the existing categories that impact student surveys and made minor changes to the existing seven categories. If a survey contains one or more of the identified categories, schools and contractors must protect student privacy and give parents the right to inspect the survey. The eight categories are:

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent
2. Mental and psychological problems of the student or the student's family;
3. Sex behavior or attitudes
4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior
5. Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships
6. Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or student's parent
8. Income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program).

A local educational agency (LEA) that receives funds under any U.S. Department of Education program is required to develop and adopt policies, in consultation with parents, concerning student privacy. The policies relating to surveying of students must address:

- The right of parents to inspect, upon request, a survey created by a third party before the survey is administered or distributed by a school to students, and

- procedures for granting a parent request to access the survey within a reasonable period of time after the request is received
- Arrangements to protect student privacy in the event of the administration of a survey to students, including the right of parents to inspect, upon request, the survey if the survey contains one or more of the eight categories of information noted above.

However, an LEA is not required to develop and adopt new policies if it has in place—and did so on the date of enactment of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 2001—policies covering the requirements set forth in the law.

LEAs must directly notify parents of these policies, and at a minimum, they shall provide the notice at least annually, at the beginning of the school year. Also, an LEA shall notify parents within a reasonable period of time if any substantive change is made to the policies. In the notification, the LEA shall:

- Provide an opportunity for parents to opt out of (remove their child from) participation in the administration of any survey containing one or more of the eight categories of information noted above, and
- Provide parents with the specific or approximate dates during the school year when the surveys are scheduled.

Confusion often exists about prior written parental consent, also known as “active” parental permission, and if it is required before a student may participate in a survey that asks for personal information described in PPRA (e.g., sexual behavior, illegal or antisocial behavior, and mental or psychological problems). Examples of common surveys used in Wisconsin that collect personal information are the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) and the Search Institute Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes and Behaviors. Currently, PPRA only requires active parental permission before minor students are required to participate in any survey, funded in whole or in part by the U.S. Department of Education that reveals information concerning one or more of the eight categories noted above. Most student surveys administered in Wisconsin, such as the OYRBS, are voluntary, and if administered properly (students are instructed on the voluntary nature), active parental permission is not required and “passive” parental permission is allowable. “Passive” means the parent is provided an opportunity to opt out of (remove the child from) participation. The district may assume parental consent if they hear no timely objection from the parent.

Specific questions related to this bulletin should be directed to:

Doug White, Director
Student Services/Prevention and Wellness Team
(608) 266-5198
douglas.white@dpi.wi.gov

References:

1. U.S. Department of Education, Family Policy Compliance Office, (2002). Hot topics: Recent changes affecting FERPA & PPRA. Washington, D.C.
2. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Division of Adolescent School Health, (2002). Parental Permission: Conducting a successful Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) with Active Parental Permission, Atlanta, GA.

School Building Confirmation Letter

[Date]

[Firs Name] [Last Name]
[Title]

Dear [Last Name]:

We would like to thank you and [School Name] for helping the [District Name] School District successfully conduct the Online Youth Risk Behavior Survey. The survey is scheduled for [Survey Date], during [Period #] period. Classrooms [Room#], [Room#], and [Room#] have been selected to complete the survey.

The following forms are enclosed to help you and [School Name] prepare for the survey:

1. Parent permission slip script. It is important to read the script before the permission slips are mailed to the parents/guardians.
2. An information sheet on the OYRBS for parents and students.
3. An information sheet on the OYRBS for teachers and other school staff.
4. A copy of the survey for parents and teachers to look at if they choose. Students should **not** see the survey prior to taking it, as doing so could bias their answers.

A few days before the scheduled date of the survey I will call you to make final confirmation, review survey administration directions, and to answer questions.

Thank you again for your help. Please feel free to call me at [Phone Number] if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

[District Contact]
Survey Administrator

