

# Arizona Youth Survey 2010

## Frequently Asked Questions

During the 2009-2010 school year the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission, on behalf of the State of Arizona, will conduct a youth survey to gather the information needed to plan and monitor the performance of prevention and intervention programming that targets underage drinking, drug use, and juvenile delinquency in our schools and communities. The study will be conducted with eighth, tenth, and twelfth grade students.

### **What is the focus of the 2010 Arizona Youth Survey?**

The Arizona Youth Survey is based on the Communities that Care (CTC) survey that was developed by J. David Hawkins, Ph.D., Richard F. Catalano, Ph.D., and a team of researchers at the University of Washington. The focus of this survey is on health risk behaviors – such as juvenile delinquency and alcohol, tobacco and other drug use – that can result in injury and/or impede positive development among our youth. The survey also includes questions designed to measure risk and protective factors that research has shown to be highly correlated with these health risk behaviors.

### **Why should my school participate?**

The Arizona Youth Survey gathers information on the individual and environmental factors that are affecting your students. These data will allow you to better understand the needs of your students, can inform risk- and protective-factor prevention planning, and assess whether these approaches lead to better outcomes, such as reductions in substance abuse, juvenile delinquency, and improved academic outcomes.

Your school will be provided with a summary report containing your schools data, along with county and statewide results for comparison. If your school participated in the 2008 Arizona Youth Survey, the report will include 2008 and 2010 data allowing you to track trends over time. This information is provided at no cost to your school or school district.

### **Are any other schools participating in this survey?**

Yes schools from around the state will be participating in the survey. In 2008, 319 schools statewide participated in the Arizona Youth Survey. Some of those schools were selected to provide a comprehensive assessment of the entire state, while others were previously participating schools who wished to participate again.

### **What kinds of questions are asked?**

The survey includes questions related to alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use; juvenile delinquency, and related risk and protective factors. Collecting this information directly from youth provides us with a measure of these health risk behaviors that is not available from any other data source.

## **What if a student does not wish to participate?**

The student's participation in this study is completely voluntary. At the beginning of the class period when the survey will be administered, the teacher will read a prepared statement that informs the students that their participation is voluntary. They will be given the option to decline participation, or to skip any question that they do not want to answer. We recommend that any students who decline to participate in the survey be provided with an alternative activity to do while the survey is being administered.

## **Is student participation anonymous?**

Yes, completely. Each student will be given a survey booklet that contains the questions and a place for recording responses. The survey booklet will not have a place for students to enter their name, or any other personally identifying information. Before they begin, students will also be reminded that they should not write their name or other identifying information on the booklet. When completing the survey, students should also be arranged in the classroom so that their responses cannot be seen by the teacher administering the survey or by any of the student's peers. At the end of the class period, the survey booklets will immediately be gathered and placed in a sealed envelope.

## **What will the students be asked to do?**

The students will be asked to complete a self-administered survey questionnaire during one class period at school. The student will be asked to read each question and select one answer from a list of pre-identified responses. No physical tests or exams are involved.

## **How long does it take to complete the survey?**

The survey will take most students the full class period to complete. Although it is expected that the students will have sufficient time to complete the entire survey, they will be informed that they should answer as many questions as possible during the class period but not be concerned if they are not able to finish all of them. We recommend that students who finish before the end of class period be asked to work quietly at their desks while their classmates finish.

## **Is the survey available online?**

The survey will be available online using the popular online survey tool, Survey Monkey, as well as the paper version. Those schools choosing to administer the survey online will receive a URL address two weeks prior to their administration and all students will use this address to log into the survey.

## **What will the school be asked to do?**

The survey will be administered in a school classroom setting by the class teacher. The school will be provided with all necessary materials for completing the survey, including teacher instructions for administering the survey and a written script that will be read to the students at the beginning of the class that explains the purpose and voluntary nature of the study. Also, we will provide your school with a parent letter notifying them of the survey and a form that allows parents to request that their child not participate in the survey. This letter should be sent home with students in the eighth, tenth, and twelfth grades **one week** prior to the date of administration.

## When will the study be conducted?

The survey will be available for administration between February and April, 2010. Within a given school, the survey should be administered to all participating grades during the same day. This will help avoid students discussing the questions with classmates who have not yet completed the survey.

## How is the survey coordinated at each school?

Schools should identify one or two individuals who will be responsible for coordinating all of the school surveys in your building. This person might be the Safe and Drug-Free Schools Coordinator, or some other individual.

## Will the results be made available to me?

Yes. The principal of each participating school will receive a school-specific report that contains all the data collected from the school's students. Reports published by the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission will be limited to state, county and some city level reports and will not identify any of the schools that participated.

## How will this information be used?

Information from the 2010 student survey can be used to meet a variety of needs at the school, community, city, county, and state levels.

- ❖ The survey provides information that can be used to identify the nature and extent of various problem behaviors. This information can be used to inform resource and policy decisions, such as where prevention and intervention efforts are most needed.
- ❖ At the state and federal levels, there are a variety of competing interests for limited prevention and intervention resources. Data obtained through this survey have been successfully used to provide evidence for additional resources addressing a variety of problem behaviors.
- ❖ Survey data can be used for both entitlement and competitive grant processes for schools and communities.
- ❖ Information collected from this survey will also be used in federal and state level competitive funding opportunities.
- ❖ With continuing participation, the information collected from this survey can be used to assess the performance of prevention and intervention efforts, as well as changes over time in the factors that affect the healthy development of Arizona's youth.

If you have questions regarding the survey please contact Phillip Stevenson, Arizona Criminal Justice Commission Statistical Analysis Center Director or Michelle Neitch, Research Analyst, Arizona Criminal Justice Commission Statistical Analysis Center.

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