

# The 2021 Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey

## Parent-Student Information & Invitation

### WHAT IS THIS SURVEY ABOUT?

- The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) is conducting the **Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey (OSDUHS)** across the province during this school year.
- The OSDUHS is an anonymous student health survey and one of the longest in the world (since 1977).
- The survey covers topics about drug use, mental health (for example, anxiety, depression, self-harm, and suicidal thoughts), physical health (for example, physical activity, healthy eating), COVID-19 experiences, bullying, gambling, video gaming, and demographics.
- A drug use trend report and a mental health and well-being trend report will be available online in 2022.
- The survey findings are widely used by education and health professionals to guide programs and policies to improve youth well-being.

### HOW DOES IT WORK?

- About 13,000 students in grades 7 to 12 across Ontario will be invited to complete the OSDUHS online between March and June 2021.
- Your child's school was randomly selected (by chance) to participate.
- The survey is anonymous, which means students do not give their names or other identifying information in the survey, and they can never be identified or linked to school records.
- The survey will take about 20-25 minutes.
- The Institute for Social Research at York University will administer the online survey on CAMH's behalf.
- You can preview the survey questionnaire at [www.isryorku.ca/osduhs](http://www.isryorku.ca/osduhs).

### WHAT DO PARENTS HAVE TO DO TO GIVE PERMISSION?

- Please visit the website [www.isryorku.ca/osduhs/parent](http://www.isryorku.ca/osduhs/parent) to complete the online parental consent form.
- Please use the **school code** and the **class code** that were provided in the email to you from the school.

### WHAT DO STUDENTS HAVE TO DO IF THEY ARE INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING?

- Students with parental consent will be sent an email or notification from the school that will contain a link to the survey.
- Students will need the school code and the class code to enter the survey.
- The first page will ask students if they agree to participate. Those who agree can proceed to the survey.
- Students can complete the survey at any time, anywhere, using any electronic device.
- Participation is voluntary and students can stop at any time for any reason.
- There are no right or wrong answers, and students do not have to answer a question if they do not want to.
- Students should complete the survey on their own so that they can feel comfortable and give honest answers.

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS TO STUDENTS IF THEY COMPLETE THE SURVEY?

- There are no expected risks in completing the survey, although some of the questions may make students feel uncomfortable because they are about sensitive topics such as mental health problems and bullying. We ask these types of questions to help us understand how many young people are experiencing these things and what type of support they might need.
- At the end of the survey, students will be provided with contact information for youth services, such as Kids Help Phone and CAMH, if they feel they need support and/or information.
- The research ethics boards at CAMH and York University, as well as the school board and the school principal, have approved this survey.

## HOW WILL THE INFORMATION STAY PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL?

- Students do not write their names or give any identifying information in the survey.
- There is no way we can link a student's responses to school records.
- The online survey platform being used (Qualtrics) will not collect IP (computer) addresses.
- School principals and teachers cannot see students' answers.
- The survey results will be reported in a way that ensures complete confidentiality to the fullest extent possible by law.
- Data will be stored in a password-protected computer at CAMH and York University for an indefinite period. Upon request, the anonymous data file may be made available to other researchers.

### STUDY CONTACT

If you would like to receive more information about the OSDUHS, please contact the Study Director, Dr. Hayley Hamilton, at 416-535-8501 ext. 36353.

You may contact Dr. Robert Levitan, Chair, Research Ethics Board, CAMH, to discuss your child's rights. Dr. Levitan may be reached by telephone at 416-535-8501 ext. 34020.

**To see past OSDUHS reports and Frequently Asked Questions, please visit**  
[www.camh.ca/osduhs](http://www.camh.ca/osduhs)