

Minnesota Student Survey Tip Sheet: Buy-In

The Minnesota Student Survey (MSS) is the primary source of comprehensive data on young people at the state, county, and local level in Minnesota and is the only consistent source of statewide data on their health and well-being. It provides valuable information about issues vital to the health, safety, and academic success of young people. The survey is voluntary, confidential, and anonymous on the part of students.

Tips for encouraging student participation in the survey

The tone you set as the survey administrator affects how students respond. Students are more likely to take the survey seriously if you take it seriously. Students need to understand that responding honestly about their thoughts, feelings and behaviors regarding health and social factors is important. Every student's experience matters. Collectively, every student's experience contributes to the whole school's climate.

- Review the script in the survey instructions and practice your introduction. Students respond more favorably when you sound like yourself. Be prepared to answer questions.
- Remind students that this is not a test. There are no right or wrong answers.
- Some students may be hesitant to share personal information (see Minnesota Student Survey Tip Sheet: Confidentiality for more information). Let them know that if there are any questions they don't want to answer, they can simply skip them without letting you know.
- Explain the benefits of completing the survey. Say something like, "Even if it does not directly benefit you, it may benefit your classmates and school. Both your school and the community can use the survey results to bring in new resources and programs for students."
- Keep a positive attitude! Assume students will want to express their opinions and share their experiences.
- If a student does not want to take the survey, ask them if they would be willing to share the reason why. By knowing what their concerns are, you may be able to address them. While students ultimately have the choice to opt out, you might be able to provide assurances that could change their minds. As a reminder, students whose parents or caregivers opted them out of taking the survey should not be given the survey.
- Check with your school's onsite survey coordinator to see if there is an option for students to take the survey on another day, in the event that might be a barrier or concern for any students.

THANK YOU for your investment and support of the Minnesota Student Survey!

Resources

Help with survey administration

If you have questions or need help, please contact:

- Minnesota Department of Education: mde.studentsurvey@state.mn.us
- Wilder Research: mss@wilder.org or 651-280-2791
- Find survey instruments, survey administration instructions, parent notification letters, tip sheets and more: [MN Student Survey website](http://mnstudentsurvey.org) (<http://mnstudentsurvey.org>)

Help for students who have a heightened response to some survey questions

- **Know what resources are available on-site.** This may be a guidance counselor, school social worker, school nurse, or other on-site adult the student has a close relationship with.
- **Refer to the student resource sheet.** Share this sheet with students as needed. [Student Crisis Resource Handout](http://mnstudentsurvey.org/assets/Student-Crisis-Resource-Handout-MDE085582.pdf) (<http://mnstudentsurvey.org/assets/Student-Crisis-Resource-Handout-MDE085582.pdf>)
- **Refer to [Minnesota Student Survey Tip Sheet: Trauma-Informed Survey Administration](http://mnstudentsurvey.org/assets/MSS_TipSheet_TraumaInformed_12-1-21.pdf)** (http://mnstudentsurvey.org/assets/MSS_TipSheet_TraumaInformed_12-1-21.pdf)