

TN TOGETHER

TENNESSEE TOGETHER STUDENT SURVEY

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the Tennessee Together Student Survey?

The Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (TDMHSAS), Division of Substance Abuse Services (DSAS) is partnering with local school districts to support this statewide student survey to assess the extent of alcohol, drug, and tobacco use and prescription drug misuse among 8th, 10th, and 12th grade students in Tennessee and to evaluate the impact of prevention efforts aimed at reducing substance use.

What is the purpose of the Tennessee Together Student Survey?

The Tennessee Together Student Survey is funded through Governor Haslam's TN Together initiative, which is focused on addressing the opioid epidemic in Tennessee. Students in grades 8, 10, and 12 will be asked to complete a survey that will be used for research purposes only. Their responses to the survey will be used to provide information to your school district about students' use of tobacco (including e-cigarettes), alcohol, and drugs and misuse of prescription drugs.

What types of questions are included on the Tennessee Together Student Survey?

The survey captures student responses in the following areas of measurement, which include the four core SAMHSA Drug-Free Community (DFC) survey measures:

- Lifetime and past month alcohol, tobacco (including e-cigarettes), prescription drug misuse, and illicit drug use;
- Age of onset of alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, and prescription drug misuse;
- Ease of access to alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, and prescription drugs, and methods of obtaining alcohol or prescription drugs;
- Peer substance use;
- Riding in a car with someone who is intoxicated, or driving while intoxicated;
- Personal, peer, and parental approval of alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, and prescription drug misuse;
- Perceived risk of alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, and prescription drug misuse;
- Family communication about tobacco, alcohol, illicit drug use, and prescription drug misuse; and
- Exposure to prevention messaging regarding the dangers of prescription drug misuse.

How will participants' rights be protected?

The survey is anonymous and confidential. Identifying information will not be collected on the survey form. Additionally, students who choose to take the survey can skip any question they do not want to answer or may stop taking the survey at any time.

School districts will determine whether they will utilize active or passive parent consent. Survey administrators will ensure that only students with parent consent participate in the survey.

What are the risks involved in taking the survey?

Thousands of Tennessee students have taken a version of this survey over the years. Most students experienced little difficulty in answering the questions. However, because answering questions about personal and sensitive behaviors may be uncomfortable, students are assured that they can skip any question they do not wish to answer.

How will the survey be administered?

Schools can choose to have students complete the survey either online or via scannable paper and pencil forms. The survey takes approximately 40 minutes to complete. Scheduling and logistical arrangements for data collection are managed by local Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition (SAPCs) and/or the Tennessee National Guard Counter Drug Task Force in coordination with local school districts. Technical support for the administration and all survey administration materials is provided by the survey developer, EMT Associates, Inc. Completed surveys are returned to the survey developer for processing and analysis.

How will the data and results from the survey be used?

Weighted county-level findings will be provided to participating coalitions and published in a data dashboard on the TDMHSAS website. Answers from all youth participants will be summarized to protect participant confidentiality. Data collected from this statewide administration will be used in local and statewide planning efforts to reduce substance use and abuse in Tennessee.