

Dear SAHS Parent,

In February 2025, all grade 9-12 students at SAHS will be taking part in an **anonymous** survey during advisory time. An anonymous survey means that no students will share their names in any way that is associated with their survey. About 96,000 Maine students have been asked to take the survey this school year. The Survey will take one class period and will be completed during Advisory time. Below are the answers to some commonly asked questions about this survey.

What questions are asked on the survey?

The survey asks questions about health and health related behaviors. Some of the topics included are:

- Asthma
- What the student eats
- Physical activity
- Smoking
- Drinking
- Other drugs
- Preventing sunburns
- Disabilities
- Fighting and bullying
- Sex
- Depression and suicide
- Gambling

The survey also asks about factors at school, in their community, in their family, and among their friend groups which may support or threaten students' healthy choices. Questions include topics such as:

- Whether a student believes they will get caught if they are using tobacco or drugs
- Whether their friends use drugs
- Whether they take part in clubs or community service
- What support and rules they have at school and at home

The questions vary by the grade level of the student, and are written to be appropriate to the developmental age of the students. You *can* look at the questions that will be asked either by contacting your child's school or by visiting the MIYHS website.

Where does the survey come from?

The survey is the joint effort of the Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and the Maine Department of Education (DOE). This survey will be used to learn more about all Maine students. The results may be used to get funding, to help decide what programs to offer, or to judge how well current efforts are working.

Why should my child take this survey?

The results of the survey will help state programs, community groups and schools better serve your child.

How can I be sure that the survey will not harm my child?

The MIYHS survey was approved by the University of Southern Maine's Institutional Review Board on April 20th of 2016.

- Your child is free to do the survey or not. If your child chooses to not take the survey, the teacher will give your child something to do for the class period.
- Some students may find some questions to be sensitive. There is a risk that they may feel uncomfortable answering some questions.

- Any student can skip any question that he/she/they don't want to answer.
- If your child feels upset during or after the survey, school staff will be available to talk and provide resources and support.
- **The survey is designed to protect your child's privacy.**
- The answers from any one student are never reported individually. No student will ever be mentioned by name in any report.
- No information that connects your child to their own survey responses will be kept.

What if I have more questions about the survey?

- If you would like to see the survey, you may call the school office to set a meeting time before the survey date, or visit the MIYHS website: www.maine.gov/MIYHS
- If you have any questions about this survey, you may also call Hayley Pawlowski, MIYHS Project Coordinator at Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention at 207-287-5084 MIYHS.DHHS@maine.gov or Carolyn Gross, PhD, Health Education & Physical Education Consultant at Maine Department of Education at 207-441-9043 Carolyn.Gross@maine.gov
- If you have questions about your rights or your child's rights as part of this survey, you may call the USM Human Protections Administrator at (207) 228-8434 and/or email usmorio@maine.edu. The Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the University of Southern Maine has approved the use of this survey. The IRB is responsible for protecting the rights and welfare of survey participants.

If you do not wish your child to take the survey, please contact the school office. If we do not hear from you, we will assume you consent to your child's participation in the survey. Your child may also decide not to take the survey on the day it is conducted.

Sincerely,

Dylan Engler
SAHS Assistant Principal