

## Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS)



# A Guide to Conducting Your Own Youth Risk Behavior Survey

June 2016

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Where can I get more information? Visit [www.cdc.gov/yrbss](http://www.cdc.gov/yrbss) or call 800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636).

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National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD, and TB Prevention  
Division of Adolescent and School Health



### Introduction

The Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance Systems measures six categories of priority health-risk behaviors among youth: behaviors that contribute to unintentional injuries and violence; sexual behaviors related to unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV infection; alcohol and other drug use; tobacco use; unhealthy dietary behaviors; and inadequate physical activity plus obesity and asthma.

Forty-seven states, six U.S. territories, and 21 of the largest urban school districts in the U.S. — through a cooperative agreement with the Division of Adolescent and School Health, National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD, and TB Prevention at CDC — are funded to administer a Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) to scientific samples of high school student mostly during the spring or fall of odd-numbered years. Some of these sites also administer the YRBS to middle school students. For a full list of YRBS participation, please see [YRBS Participation Maps and History](#).

These surveys, along with a National YRBS and other YRBSs, constitute CDC's Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System. CDC provides both financial and technical support for these state, territorial, and large urban school district surveys. If your agency is funded by CDC to conduct a YRBS this document is not for you.

This document is designed for communities that plan to conduct a YRBS without technical or financial support from CDC. To obtain the best possible information about the prevalence of youth risk behaviors in your community, you should carefully consider these nine questions:

1. Whom will I survey?
2. Whose permission must I get to conduct the survey?
3. How do I develop my YRBS questionnaire?
4. When should I conduct my YRBS?
5. What survey administration procedures should I follow?
6. Who will administer my YRBS?
7. How will I analyze the data?
8. How will I report the results of my YRBS?
9. Should I have a policy for sharing my YRBS data?

This guide will help you answer each of these questions, but is not intended to replace expertise and experience in school-based survey research. You may find that additional technical support is needed as you conduct your YRBS. One source of that support might be the YRBS coordinator in your state. Check with your state education or health agency for the appropriate person to contact. You also might seek assistance from local colleges or universities or survey research consulting firms.

Finally, make sure to thoroughly review the YRBS website at <http://www.cdc.gov/yrbss> before you begin. In particular, review “Frequently Asked Questions” located in the Methods section of the YRBS home page.

### Questions to Consider

#### 1. Whom Will I Survey?

Begin by deciding what grade(s) you want to include. The YRBS was originally developed for high school students in grades 9 through 12. You also may choose to conduct a YRBS among middle school students in grades 6 through 8 or grades 7 and 8. There are separate YRBS questionnaires available for high school students and middle school students.

Then, decide how schools and students will be selected to participate. The quality and usefulness of the results will depend largely on the procedures you use to select schools and students. Only by using scientific sampling procedures can you ensure the results can be generalized to the entire student population. Moreover, if you want to compare your results with those from the national or a state YRBS, you must use comparable sampling (and administrative) procedures. If you do your YRBS only among schools and students that are selected without scientific sampling procedures, the results will apply just to those participating schools and students – not to all the schools and students in your community.

If you are using scientific sampling procedures, decide whether to ask all schools in your community to participate—a census of schools—or to scientifically select a certain number of schools to participate—a sample of schools. The census of schools will be appropriate if there are very few schools in your community.

Next, decide whether to ask all classes in each school to participate—a census of classes—or to scientifically select some classes to participate—a sample of classes. The census of classes might be appropriate in very small schools, but is rarely necessary in most schools. To scientifically select classes, compile a list of classes that all students in the desired grade(s) are required to take; for example, a required English class or a particular class period such as second period. Number the list sequentially, and then use either a table of random numbers or a sampling interval to select the classes that will participate in each school. It is strongly recommended that you select entire classes, because this approach is the least disruptive to students and teachers.

If you lack knowledge about scientific sampling procedures, an evaluator or assessment expert in your district or state education or health agency may be able to assist you. A staff member of a local college or university that offers courses in survey research, statistics, or educational psychology also may be able to help you choose the most appropriate sample design and provide guidance in scientific sampling procedures. It is always best to conduct your YRBS among the smallest number of schools and students possible to minimize burden on the education system. Except for very small populations, it is rarely necessary to survey all schools and all students. Regardless of how you select your sample, keep in mind that the higher your school and student response rates, the better your data will be.

### 2. Whose Permission Must I Get To Conduct the Survey in the Schools?

You may be required to secure authorization or permission to conduct a YRBS from the school board or another governing body or person. Investigate the clearance procedures for conducting student surveys in your community. Assemble a clearance package that includes information such as the rationale for conducting the YRBS in your community; when, where, and by whom the survey will be administered; the steps you will take to ensure confidentiality of schools and anonymity of students; and how the results will be used.

You also should obtain parent permission for students to participate. Two approaches to securing parental permission are available. *Active parental permission* means that you collect a signature from a parent for each student authorizing that student's participation. A student is not allowed to take part in the YRBS unless a parent has returned a signed form indicating approval of their student's participation in the survey. Only students whose parent has provided written approval in this manner can participate in the survey. *Passive permission* means that students are excluded from the survey only when a parent returns a signed form denying permission.

Active parental permission typically requires more time and resources and may reduce the number of students who participate in the survey because of the difficulty of both getting permission forms home to parents and having forms returned to school. As a general rule, expect the use of active parental permission to reduce student response rates by about 50 percent unless you implement extraordinary follow up procedures. If you use active parental permission, the following are some steps you can take to help maximize student participation:

- Mail or email permission forms and information about the survey directly to parents.
- Emphasize the importance of the survey to teachers and ask them to remind students to return the permission forms to school.
- Telephone or email parents to follow up on missing permission forms.

Sample passive and active parental permission forms are in Appendix A. Regardless of what type of parental permission you use, make sure that a copy of your YRBS questionnaire is available at the school for parents to review if interested.

### 3. How Do I Develop My YRBS Questionnaire?

The standard high school and middle school YRBS questionnaires can be downloaded from the YRBS website at <http://www.cdc.gov/yrbss>. From the YRBS home page, click on "Questionnaires" in the left-hand navigation menu to review the questionnaires and questionnaire rationales. No special permission is required to use the YRBS questionnaires as is or with modifications and there is no charge.

Each question in the standard YRBS questionnaire has been carefully developed. You may choose to modify the questionnaire depending on community needs and interests. If you decide to add questions, the questionnaire must still be short enough for students to complete in one class period. The standard YRBS questionnaire takes about 35 minutes to complete, allowing

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time for providing instructions, distributing materials, and collecting completed questionnaires in a single class period. The addition of too many questions may contribute to boredom or fatigue and could cause students to give inaccurate or incomplete responses. Any revision of the standard questionnaire should be undertaken with caution and with the guidance of a survey research expert. Keep in mind that it is easy to make a question different, but much harder to make a question better.

Every student must have their own YRBS questionnaire. CDC does not provide copies. Depending on available funds, you may opt either to print scannable questionnaire booklets or make copies of the questionnaire. In the second case, students can record their responses directly on the questionnaire or on a separate scannable answer sheet. Each option has implications for how the data are analyzed. If students record their responses directly on the questionnaire, the data will need to be entered into a database manually and cannot be electronically scanned. (See question 7, How will I analyze the data?).

Scannable questionnaire booklets and answer sheets are available through many printing companies. Scannable answer sheets must offer eight-option responses to match the format of the standard YRBS questionnaire. Before purchasing quantities of scannable questionnaire booklets or answer sheets, be sure the scanner you will use is compatible with the type of booklet or answer sheet you have chosen. Most printing companies should be able to match your scannable questionnaire booklets or answer sheets to your scanner. If students use scannable questionnaire booklets or answer sheets, you may need to provide number 2 pencils.

The YRBS website only provides the YRBS questionnaires in English. You may need to translate the questionnaire to meet the needs of the population in your community. To determine whether your YRBS questionnaire should be translated, ask in what language regular academic tests for classes such as math or social studies are produced. If students take these tests in English, then it is likely they can complete the YRBS questionnaire in English.

### 4. When Should I Conduct My YRBS?

Once you have picked the semester or quarter in which to conduct your YRBS, you must carefully plan the dates for the survey. In general, it is best to avoid administering the survey on a Monday or a Friday, before or after a school holiday, during the last month of the school year, or at any time when student attendance is apt to be low. Furthermore, try to administer the survey during as short a period as possible—ideally, on the same day or during the same week.

The YRBS's supported by CDC are usually conducted during the spring of odd-numbered years. To avoid interfering with these surveys or overburdening schools with multiple requests for survey participation, consider conducting your YRBS during an even-numbered year. Contact the YRBS coordinator in your state to make sure that your YRBS does not interfere with the state-wide survey. If you decide to administer at the same time as the national or state survey, please consider coordinating survey administration with those surveys. It will help both surveys succeed without overburdening the schools with too many surveys.

### 5. What Survey Administration Procedures Should I Follow?

The importance of setting standards and following prescribed survey administration procedures cannot be overestimated. Survey administration standards help protect the confidentiality of schools and anonymity of students, improve the quality of data collected, and increase school and student response rates. Both schools and students must feel confident every reasonable effort has been made to protect their privacy. To ease anxiety about how the survey will be conducted, inform students, parents, and other stakeholders of all the steps you are taking to ensure privacy.

**IMPORTANT:** If you cannot conduct your YRBS and maintain student privacy, then you should not do the survey.

One way to help ensure that the survey is administered to all classes in the same way is to develop a script for survey administrators to read to students when they conduct the survey. A sample survey administrator script is in Appendix B.

You might also consider assembling a student survey packet consisting of a YRBS questionnaire, a scannable answer sheet (if appropriate), a sharpened number 2 pencil, a blank sheet of paper for students to use to cover their answers, and a large box or envelope in which students can place their completed questionnaires or answer sheets.

With today's technology, you may consider on-line survey administration in a school's computer lab. However, CDC studies have shown (1) students who complete the YRBS in a computer lab perceive less privacy and anonymity than paper-and-pencil respondents; (2) intrusion by students and staff not part of the class taking the YRBS is more common in computer labs than in regular classrooms used for paper-and-pencil administration; and (3) item completion rates are lower using on-line survey administration than paper-and-pencil administration. CDC does not provide an on-line version of the YRBS questionnaire at this time.

Regardless of the mode of administration, establish a system that allows you to keep track of what schools and classes are participating. One way to do this is to assign sequential numbers to the schools as well as the classes in the schools. These identification numbers will constitute a unique school and class code that you can enter on a tracking document and then use later, as needed, to trace the school and class from which particular data have been collected. To ensure school and student anonymity, this tracking document should be kept in a secure location and then destroyed after data analysis is finished.

### 6. Who Will Administer My YRBS?

Because of the sensitive nature of the questions on the YRBS, survey administrators must be able to make students completing the survey feel as comfortable as possible, interact easily with students, and establish an atmosphere of trust and confidentiality. Keep this in mind as you select persons to act as survey administrators. Persons who may be appropriate survey administrators include: school nurses, psychologists, social workers, and counselors; classroom teachers; graduate students (e.g., those pursuing the fields of health education, survey research, assessment,

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and evaluation); and members of school or community groups, such as the School Health Advisory Council or PTA.

Consider requiring your survey administrators to sign an assurance of confidentiality (see Appendix C for an example).

If possible, hold a training session for the survey administrators to help ensure standardized administration of the questionnaire. During the training, review all the activities the survey administrators are responsible for. An example set of instructions for survey administrators is in Appendix D. In addition, the training should cover the following topics:

- the purpose of your YRBS,
- the schedule for administering the survey,
- survey materials,
- the importance of safeguarding student privacy, and
- how the results will be used.

If it is not possible to hold a training session, provide comprehensive written instructions to the survey administrators well in advance of the survey date. Follow up with a phone call to each person to confirm instructions and answer questions.

### 7. How Will I Analyze the Data?

Before data analysis can begin, the responses must be put into a computer-readable format. Two methods that are used to accomplish this are manual entry and electronic scanning:

- **Manual entry:** Manually entering the data into a database is probably more economical than electronic scanning if your sample is very small. Consider asking a local college or university to help with the task. Commercial services also are available.
- **Electronic scanning:** If students have recorded their responses on either scannable questionnaire booklets or scannable answer sheets, the forms should be run through a scanning machine. Be certain the scanner is programmed to accommodate the eight-option format of the YRBS questions.

After the data have been manually entered into a database or electronically scanned, they are ready to be analyzed. Begin by carefully editing your data to eliminate inconsistent responses. Information on standard YRBS editing procedures can be found in the “Data User’s Manual” for each survey year on the YRBS website at <http://www.cdc.gov/yrbss>. From the YRBS home page, click on “Data & Documentation” in the left-hand navigation menu, and then click on “User’s Manual” to review this document.

Once your data are edited, for your results to be representative of the population you surveyed, you must adjust or weight the data to reflect sample selection probabilities and nonresponse.

Staff from a local education agency assessment or evaluation department or consultants from colleges, universities, or survey consulting firms can probably assist with editing, weighting, and analyzing your data. Information on appropriate software packages to use for analysis can be found in “Software for Analysis of YRBS Data” located in the Methods section of the YRBS home page at [www.cdc.gov/yrbss](http://www.cdc.gov/yrbss).

### 8. How Will I Report the Results of My YRBS?

Effective reporting of the results of your local YRBS will allow you to provide a broad audience with valid, useful information on the risk behaviors of students in your community. Your audience may include some or all of the following groups:

- **Parents:** Parents may be more inclined to support school health policies, programs, and activities if they are informed about the risk behaviors of students.
- **Teachers:** Teachers will benefit from having more information about the prevalence of risk behaviors among their students and may modify their curricula to address particularly widespread risk behaviors.
- **Students:** Students may want to be involved in designing and implementing relevant policies and programs to address health risk behaviors.
- **Administrators and school board members:** Administrators and school board members can use the YRBS data to guide development of school health policies.
- **Agencies and organizations working with youth:** These agencies and organizations will be interested in using survey results to improve their own programs and activities.

Prioritize your target audiences by assessing their interest in and knowledge of health risk behaviors among youth. Then tailor the vocabulary, format, graphics, and style of your survey products to your primary audience. To reach a variety of audiences with varying degrees of interest in and technical understanding of your results, consider preparing

- an executive summary of the most important results and conclusions;
- a newsletter outlining the major results;
- a one-page summary, fact sheet, or brochure;
- oral presentations;
- press releases; and
- web sites.

To learn from others about the kinds of YRBS products you might develop review fact sheets and reports found on the YRBS website. You may also want to conduct an internet search using YRBS as the keyword. Note that posting your YRBS products on a website rather than making hard copies of them will reduce costs and make your products accessible to more people.



### **9. Should I Have a Policy for Sharing My YRBS Data?**

You should have a policy in place to govern how you will respond to requests for your YRBS data. Your agency or organization may already have a policy that will apply. If not, consider carefully what data you are willing to share and how the data will be shared. Determine if Freedom of Information Act policies apply to your data. Remember that you must make sure that the privacy of students and confidentiality of schools is protected at all times. Develop your YRBS data sharing policy before you finish conducting your survey so you are ready for any requests you might receive.

Appendix A – Sample Parental Permission Forms

Sample Passive Parental Permission Form

Our school is taking part in the 2017 Youth Risk Behavior Survey. This survey is sponsored by [name of agency]. The survey will ask about the health behaviors of 9th through 12th grade students. The survey will ask about nutrition, physical activity, injuries, and tobacco, alcohol, and other drug use. It will also ask about sexual behaviors that could lead to pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV.

Students will be asked to fill out a survey that takes about 35 minutes to complete.

Doing this paper and pencil survey will cause little or no risk to your child. The only potential risk is that some students might find certain questions to be sensitive. The survey has been designed to protect your child’s privacy. Students will not put their names on the survey. Also, no school or student will ever be mentioned by name in a report of the results. Your child will get no benefit right away from taking part in the survey, but results of this survey will help your child and other children in the future. For the survey results to be accurate, it is important that all students, regardless of whether they have engaged in health-risk behaviors, are given an opportunity to participate in the survey, but the survey is voluntary. No action will be taken against the school, you, or your child if your child does not take the survey. Students may skip any questions they do not wish to answer. In addition, students may stop taking the survey at any point without penalty. If you would like to see the survey, a copy is available [identify location or name and contact information of whom the parent should call].

Please read the other side of this form for more facts about the survey. Complete the section below and return it to the school within 3 days **only if you do not** want your child to take part in the survey. If you have additional questions about the survey your child’s teacher or principal cannot answer, please call [name of agency contact] at [phone number]. Thank you.

Please complete this section of the form only if you do not want your child to participate in the survey.

Student’s name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

I have read this form and know what the survey is about.

[ ] NO, my child may **not** take part in this survey.

Parent’s signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

### Sample Active Parental Permission Form

Our school is taking part in the 2017 Youth Risk Behavior Survey. This survey is sponsored by [name of agency]. The survey will ask about the health behaviors of 9th through 12th grade students. The survey will ask about nutrition, physical activity, injuries, and tobacco, alcohol, and other drug use. It will also ask about sexual behaviors that could lead to pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV.

Students will be asked to fill out a survey that takes about 35 minutes to complete.

Doing this paper and pencil survey will cause little or no risk to your child. The only potential risk is that some students might find certain questions to be sensitive. The survey has been designed to protect your child's privacy. Students will not put their names on the survey. For the survey results to be accurate, it is important that all students, regardless of whether they have engaged in health-risk behaviors, are given an opportunity to participate in the survey, but the survey is voluntary. No action will be taken against the school, you, or your child if your child does not take the survey. Students may skip any questions they do not wish to answer. In addition, students may stop taking the survey at any point without penalty. If you would like to see the survey, a copy is available [identify location or name and contact information of whom the parent should call].

Please read the other side of this form for more facts about the survey, check whether or not you want your child to participate in the survey, sign the form, and have your child return it to his or her teacher as soon as possible. If you have additional questions about the survey your child's teacher or principal cannot answer, please call [name of agency contact] at [phone number]. Thank you.

Student's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I have read this form and know what the survey is about.

Check one:

YES, my child may take part in this survey.

NO, my child may not take part in this survey.

Parent's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

### Appendix B – Sample Survey Administrator Script

STEP 1 – VERIFY THAT ALL ASSEMBLED STUDENTS HAVE COMPLETED THE APPROPRIATE PERMISSION FORM PROCESS REQUIRED FOR THIS SCHOOL AND THAT NONPARTICIPATING STUDENTS (IF ANY) HAVE AN ALTERNATE ACTIVITY.

STEP 2 – INTRODUCE YOURSELF AND THE SURVEY TO THE CLASS.

Thank you for participating in the Youth Risk Behavior Survey today. This survey is being conducted on behalf of the [Agency]. Participating in this survey is voluntary and your grade in this class will not be affected, whether or not you answer the questions. However, only a limited number of students in a small number of schools in this [state or city] are participating in this survey, so the answers you give are important as you are representing thousands of other students.

You may skip any questions you do not wish to answer. This is not a test of you or this school. In order to help develop better education programs, educators and health officials must find out if students like yourselves are engaging in risky behaviors. These behaviors may include sexual behaviors; drug use; alcohol and tobacco use; lack of physical activity; poor nutritional habits; or behaviors that may lead to unintentional injury or violence.

STEP 3 – DISTRIBUTE QUESTIONNAIRES, ANSWER SHEETS, PENCILS, AND BLANK SHEETS OF PAPER. EMPHASIZE PRIVACY/ANONYMITY.

Throughout the entire survey process, I will maintain strict procedures to protect your privacy and allow for your anonymous participation. Because the survey is anonymous, no one will know your answers. Please **do not** write your name or anything else on the questionnaire or answer sheet. Your answers are private and we do not want to know your name. Results of this survey will never be reported by name, class, or school. When you finish the survey, cover your answer sheet with the blank sheet of paper provided.

PAUSE HERE TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS...

STEP 4 – INSTRUCT THE CLASS IN FILLING OUT THE QUESTIONNAIRE.

Now I would like you to look at the questionnaire. Please take a moment to read the instructions on the front cover of the questionnaire, but do not turn the page yet.

(PAUSE)

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When I tell you to begin, use the # 2 pencil you have been given to fill out the answer sheet. Do not use a pen or any other pencil. Notice that for each question on the questionnaire, there is a corresponding set of ovals on the answer sheet. For each question, choose the one answer that best fits what you know, believe, or do, then fill in the corresponding oval on the answer sheet. If you must change an answer, erase your first answer completely. Besides question 5, only one oval should be filled in for each question.

When you are finished, look over your answer sheet to make sure that you have not skipped any questions you wanted to answer. We have allowed 35 minutes for completing the survey but you may stop at any time. If you finish before that time, cover your answer sheet with the blank sheet of paper, and stay seated until I ask you to turn it in.

It is important that you answer the questions based on what you really know, really believe, and really do. Do not pick a response just because you think that is what someone wants you to say. **Your teacher and I are not allowed to answer any questions during the survey. Simply do the best that you can.**

Please begin.

STEP 5– WHEN EVERYONE IS FINISHED, HAVE STUDENTS PLACE THE COMPLETED ANSWER SHEETS AND THE QUESTIONNAIRES IN THE CLASSROOM BOX/ENVELOPE.

STEP 6– THANK PARTICIPANTS.

Thank you for participating in the survey. The information you have provided will be used to develop better health education programs for students in this [jurisdiction]. If you have any questions related to the topics on the survey, please contact:

\_\_\_\_\_.

STEP 7– THANK THE TEACHER.

**Appendix C – Sample Assurance of Confidentiality Form**

[NAME OF AGENCY] is firmly committed to maintaining the confidentiality of individual respondents' data obtained through surveys.

**Procedures for Maintaining Confidentiality**

1. All survey administrators shall sign this assurance of confidentiality.
2. All survey administrators shall keep completely confidential the names of respondents, all information or opinions collected, and any information about respondents learned incidentally.
3. All survey administrators shall exercise reasonable caution to prevent access by others to survey data in their possession.

**Pledge of Confidentiality**

I hereby certify that I have carefully read and will cooperate fully with the above procedures on confidentiality. I will keep completely confidential all information arising from surveys concerning individual respondents to which I gain access. I will not discuss, disclose, disseminate, or provide access to survey data and identifiers. I will devote my best efforts to ensure that there is compliance with the required procedures by personnel whom I supervise. I understand that violation of this pledge is sufficient grounds for disciplinary action. I also understand that violation of the privacy rights of individuals through such unauthorized discussion, disclosure, dissemination, or access may make me subject to criminal or civil penalties. I give my personal pledge that I shall abide by this assurance of confidentiality.

**SIGNATURE.** I have read this and I agree to the Pledge of Confidentiality.

Survey Administrator Name: \_\_\_\_\_

PRINT

SIGNATURE

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Appendix D – Sample Survey Administrator Instructions

#### Activities to do before you get to the classroom:

1. Make sure appropriate school district and school building personnel (including teachers) are aware you are coming, when you will be there, and with which classes you will be working.
2. Make sure you have the following materials:
  - A copy of your signed survey administrator confidentiality agreement.
  - A copy of the **Script for Survey Administrators** to be read to sampled students.
  - A poster (optional) to be displayed at the front of the class, containing reminders for students. If a poster is not available, the reminders should be written on the chalk board or white board at the front of the class.
  - A list of the classes to be surveyed and their locations.
  - The survey packets for each class in the school you will be surveying. Each envelope should be appropriately labeled and contain the following items:
    - A copy of the **Classroom-Level Sample Information Form** for that class.
    - Enough copies of the questionnaires and answer sheets for all sampled students.
    - Enough sheets of paper for students to use to cover their work.
  - Enough #2 pencils for all sampled students. Let the students keep the pencils after they complete the questionnaire, if possible.
  - One large box or envelope in which the students can put their completed answer sheets.
  - A pre-addressed, postage-paid return envelope for shipping all the materials back using a **traceable method** (e.g., UPS or Federal Express).
3. Review the Survey Administrator Handbook.

#### Administering the survey in the classroom:

4. Record on the **Classroom-Level Sample Information Form** the number of students who are **enrolled** in the class and the **predominant grade** of the class.
5. Confirm with the teacher that only the students with parental permission are given a questionnaire.

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6. Spread students' desks throughout the classroom to minimize the chance students will see each other's responses.
7. Distribute a questionnaire, answer sheet, blank piece of paper, and pencil to every student.
8. Do not allow students or teachers to wander around the room or talk while others are completing the survey.
9. Encourage students to use an extra sheet of paper to cover their responses as they work.
10. Read the directions to the students before they begin. Remind students about the importance of the survey, that completing the survey is voluntary, that their responses are anonymous, and that their grade in the class will not be affected by whether or not they complete the survey.
11. Remind students **not** to write their name or anything else on the answer sheet.
12. Allow enough time for students to complete the survey without feeling rushed. About 35 minutes should be sufficient for the students to complete the survey.
13. Make sure that only #2 pencils are used.
14. Do not review the answers to the survey as answer sheets are returned, even if this means accepting incomplete data. Do not even appear to be looking at the answer sheets. Students must be confident that their privacy will be maintained and their participation will remain anonymous.
15. Respond to all student requests for question clarification with "Do the best you can."
16. If absentees will receive the survey at a make-up session, establish procedures to ensure their privacy as well. Make sure their completed answer sheets are placed with others from the same sampled classroom.
17. When all students have returned their answer sheets, record on the **Classroom-Level Sample Information Form** the number of students in the class who have completed the survey. Compare the number of completed answer sheets to the information on the **Classroom-Level Sample Information Form**. Try to resolve any inconsistencies between these numbers.



**Returning the answer sheets to the Survey Coordinator at the agency conducting the YRBS:**

18. Place the **Classroom-Level Sample Information Form** and all the answer sheets for **each** class in the survey packet envelope for that class. Make sure that all classroom survey packets are grouped together by school, if the answer sheets from more than one school are being shipped together. Return them by [DUE DATE] to:

Name, Title  
Agency  
Address  
City, State Zip  
Telephone Number

If the survey materials must be returned via mail, please use a traceable method (e.g., UPS or Federal Express).