



2018 IOWA YOUTH SURVEY TALKING POINTS
May 2018

These talking points may be used to guide conversations with school officials and other interested parties about the Iowa Youth Survey (IYS). When possible, work with other community partners who also use the IYS to ensure all perspectives are covered.

- The IYS is a comprehensive survey of issues facing Iowa students.
 - The IYS includes questions about actions and beliefs on: healthy eating, community involvement, substance use, gambling, school engagement, bullying, mental health, safety, peer group and family support to name a few.
 - Many other student surveys focus on very specific areas and may miss the complex constellation of factors young Iowans experience.
 - The IYS has been administered in Iowa similarly since 1999, so trending data are available for most questions.
 - No student is required to answer any question he or she is uncomfortable answering, and all students can stop completing the survey at any time.
 - Results are confidential and individuals are not identifiable.
- A high rate of participation benefits the individual school, county and state by providing more representative data.
 - Student success is affected by all aspects of their environment. Schools cannot control the outside environment, but knowing what factors are present can help inform policies and processes to give students their best chance at success.
 - The survey is completed in one standard class period, providing a wealth of data for limited loss of classroom time.
 - Any students who do not complete the survey stop the survey wherever they are at when the class ends.
 - Each participating school district receives a report on their data for all questions found on the survey broken down by grade and gender.
 - Approximately 83 percent of school districts participated in the 2016 IYS, with data from nearly 85,000 students collected. High participation levels ensure a stable point of reference when trying to gauge improvement or identify areas of need.
- IYS data are useful in a number of ways by state and local planners, grant writers, elected officials, advisory groups and curriculum directors. Examples of how IYS data may be used at the local level include:
 - The IYS can be used in a needs assessment for the school and community.

- Health surveillance purposes – to identify trends, opportunities for improvement, and successes;
- Grant applications;
- Programmatic purposes, such as planning lessons, selecting services and curricula, and requesting support;
- Policy decisions at the school building, district, and state levels;
- Press releases and newsletters; and
- Discussions with school boards, parent committees, and other community partners.

Tips for talking to school officials:

- Consider showing exactly how you use IYS data.
 - This could be part of a needs assessment, requirements for a grant or in a grant application, or used to make programming decisions.
 - Share the handout or resource, especially if shared locally.
- Share how other community members use IYS data.
 - This could include mental health partners, safety planners, nutritionists and service organizations.
 - Dependent upon relationships and feelings across districts, presenting details on how nearby schools/districts utilize IYS data may provide insight and ideas.
- Invite other community partners to join you for a meeting with the school officials.

Questions about the IYS may be directed to IDPH at iowayouthsurvey@idph.iowa.gov.