Administration Protocol for the ANNUAL Strategies for Success (ASFS) Instrument

Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation

This document is to be used OSAP grantees who choose to gather annual student data for monitoring and evaluation purposes.

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# TIPS FOR APPROACHING SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

When you approach school administrators to conduct the survey, have these things in mind so that you will be prepared to respond in a way that will not only convince them to participate but they will ask that you please come back!

* Bring a copy of the survey and consent form for parents.
* If they participate in the YRRS, pull relevant data from that source in order to illustrate the need for these data. Develop a one-page flier or mini data presentation on these results.
* If they participate in the YRRS, explain that this is similar, but much shorter, as the ASFS only contains demographic questions, substance-related and mental health questions.
* As they will be collected annually, results will be available annually and in a very short turn-around as compared to the YRRS.
* Offer to present results to school staff and leadership.
* Like the YRRS, youth participation is voluntary and anonymous. The school will not be able to identify any specific individuals from their responses.
* Be prepared to explain why data collection is important:
  + To demonstrate the effects and effectiveness of prevention work
  + To provide us data quickly enough so we can adapt or change strategies (YRRS can’t do that)
  + Newly identified needs can attract more resources to school & community
  + Data will help them identify their own needs in terms of behavioral health as well (explain the co-relation between youth substance use and drop-outs)
* Ask how they can use this information themselves and how you can help them.
* Be prepared to explain the principles of informed consent from parents (schools may already have blanket consent to conduct surveys with youth from their parents or guardians, which is a form of parental consent). Explain how you will be able to separate youth whose parents do not consent to their participation.
* Ask whether Spanish surveys (in addition to English surveys) will be necessary. PIRE does have surveys (paper and online) available, and you should be prepared to offer this opportunity.
* Be prepared to explain the process of the survey – how long it is, who will collect it, etc.
* Request that surveys be collected in a classroom setting, or if at a lunch or an assembly, at a place where all students can answer privately (e.g., on a large lunchroom table not on laps). If using the online surveys, ensure that surveys can be completed privately.
* Teachers should not collect the completed paper-and-pencil surveys directly from the students in order to ensure the privacy of the youth.

# SURVEY ADMINISTRATION

Once you have selected the school(s), classroom(s), and received permission from the administration and the parents to survey the youth, the hardest work is over, but you still need to administer the survey and analyze it, which means you must be very organized and follow the instructions below.

**Basic Instructions**

1. You MAY NOT delete any of the questions in the survey document or add any without PIRE approval.
2. You MUST have surveys in English and in Spanish along with interpreters, as needed.
3. You MUST remind students not to put their name or any identifying information on the survey.
4. You MUST review the principles of consent as shown on the cover page or introduction to the survey. You can use the guidance script below. This is true for both the paper and on-line versions of the survey.
5. You MUST also provide a means for students to turn in their surveys and yet have their data remain anonymous. For paper surveys, one way to do that is to provide each student a manila envelope along with the survey so that they can place their survey in the envelope and seal it prior to turning it in.
6. Be prepared to calculate response rates if requested by your local evaluator.
7. You MUST keep all parental consent forms separate from the data.
8. The community program’s local evaluator MUST keep all paper surveys stored in a safe and lockable location for at least 3 years, and then have them destroyed in an appropriate manner that maintains the privacy of the information.
9. You MAY NOT survey any student who does not have parental consent (see further information below). This includes paper and online surveying.
10. You MAY NOT survey any student who does not wish to participate. This includes paper and online surveying.

**How do I protect the students’ anonymity and privacy?**

It is imperative that students feel that their responses are not only private but anonymous if you want your data to be in any way accurate. Therefore, you must create an environment that helps students feel that they are protected.

* Make sure students do not put their name anywhere on the survey itself. If a student does accidentally put their name on the survey, give them a new survey to complete. (Make sure you have extra surveys handy!) This is not an issue when completing the survey on-line.
* Students need to have adequate space between them so as to make sure students cannot easily see how others are responding or you need to set up privacy folders around each student. This may involve using a manila folder or something similar that you stand on-end to form a wall around the student’s survey while they take the survey. This is true whether the student is completing the paper questionnaire or the on-line questionnaire. Students should not be sitting so close to each other that they might see each other’s responses.
* Ask that the students not talk while taking the survey and not use cell-phones or anything that might distract. This is true for those not taking the survey as well.
* Ask students to respect their peers by not asking them how they responded to questions on the survey and make sure they know that they should not feel they need to share their responses with anyone.
* Make sure you have a way for students to return their completed surveys without anyone being able to see their responses.They need to know that not only can other students not see their responses but also that teachers or other adults in the room will not see their responses. Therefore, provide a box with a closed lid or a large envelope or some way that will allow students to return their survey without you looking at it first. This is not an issue if you collect the data using the on-line questionnaire.

**Script to use with students**

*Note to survey administrators: feel free to place the script below in your own words although do not veer off too far. It consists of the primary points for informed consent, so it is important to address each one.*

1. First, I want to explain why you are taking these short surveys. Our community is participating in prevention projects. It’s important that you take this survey so we can learn how well we are doing in meeting our goals among students. The purpose of this survey is to learn about alcohol and drug use and related attitudes among students. The results will be used to develop better alcohol and drug prevention and treatment programs in your school and community.
2. Some of the questions on this survey will be similar to questions on a survey you may have taken recently. This is a different survey though and it is being used for a different reason. This is **NOT** a test, and there are no right or wrong answers. Please answer each question by selecting the best answer, and you can skip any question that you don't want to answer.
3. This survey is completely anonymous. This is very important for you to understand. Please do not put your name anywhere on the survey itself. *None of your teachers, your parents or guardians, friends, and no staff person in the program will ever know what you say on this survey unless you choose to share your responses with them.*
4. Some questions may seem like they are assuming that you are already using drugs, smoking or drinking. If you have never used any of these things, just check off “0” or “never” in the answer.
5. We need you to be **honest** in your answers about your own experiences, thoughts, and feelings when answering these questions. You will be asked questions about yourself and those close to you, but *your individual answers are completely anonymous*.
6. Try to answer the questions according to how you feel now.

1. Do not write your name anywhere on the survey or enter your name in the online survey. If you have already put your name on the survey, please raise your hand and I will provide you with a new survey.
2. Mark your answers clearly on the sheet. If you change your mind about an answer, erase your first answer completely.
3. Please respond to the questions quietly and privately. Respect your neighbor and do not share or talk with them while you are doing this short survey.
4. If you have a question, feel free to raise your hand so I can respond to your questions individually.

**For Survey Administrators**

*Please make sure the location is quiet and conducive to taking the survey. Make sure students feel they can take the survey without others seeing their responses. In addition, make sure you have a way for students to return their completed surveys without anyone being able to see their responses.*

*Feel free to explain or clarify for students without giving out too many hints. You do not want to influence how the student responds. At the end of this document, there is a list of suggested ways to answer questions from the respondent. These FAQs should help you guide students so that the spirit of the survey can be maintained.*

***Please make note of all the questions that you get questions about, and what the question was. This information will help us improve our survey. Take one of the surveys and mark each question that you receive questions about.***

*Be very careful to sound non-judgmental. We wish for youth to answer honestly about their use and they may not be honest if they think that an adult is telling them the “correct” way to respond.*

*If there are students who cannot read well or are having a hard time understanding the questions, you may want to read the questions to them one at a time, and they will complete the questionnaire by marking their response. Alternatively, you may want to provide a recording of an adult reading the survey out loud and play it for all the students. (Quality will be important on the recording.)*

*Have surveys available in Spanish for students who may be more comfortable responding in their native language. Ask youth if anyone feels more comfortable taking the survey in Spanish (be careful, they also have to be able to read Spanish!) If you know that you will have monolingual Spanish speakers taking the survey, arrange for a bilingual survey administrator to be present.*

*Unfortunately, there are no surveys available in other languages. However, we do not expect to encounter any significant number of young Navajo speakers (or other languages) in this setting who do not also read English or understand English. However, if this is the case, be prepared to provide someone who can interpret, and alert your evaluator so she can be prepared for this need in the future. If this is an issue, please contact your evaluation team.*

*Have students turn in the questionnaire when they are done. Thank them and make sure they have responded to all the questions (ask them, but don’t peek).*

**Frequently Asked Questions for Survey Takers and Survey Administrators**

Q - Isn’t this the YRRS survey? How is it different?

A - Some of these questions are similar to the YRRS, so you may already be familiar with them. We use some of the same questions so we can determine if our sample of students is similar to the YRRS sample. But, this survey is being used for a different purpose and not all the questions are the same.

Q- How do I answer the question about my racial identity?

1. *Try NOT to tell the survey taker what their race or ethnicity is.* It is also advisable not to define race and ethnicity for them, as there are many conflicting ideas on this subject and there can be strong feelings about what these terms mean. *Tell them:* “How have you heard your family talk about itself? Have you heard any of these words below? You can check more than one answer if you have different kinds of people in your family.”

Q –Do I need to answer these questions about my gender or sexual orientation? Why are they important?

A- It’s important to us to have this information as it helps us understand the needs and concerns of the diverse youth we serve. Do not answer any question that makes you feel uncomfortable, but we hope that there is an option for most people there – including what you can fill in yourself. *Do not assume gender or sexual identity or reflect on what is ‘normal’. If a participant lets you know that they are unsure, or are feeling different than they have in the past, remind them that they can answer how they feel best fits their identity today.*  *If participants ‘act up’ around these questions, make sure to create a safe and bully-free environment for all, and advise your school leadership the occurrence and about the most appropriate way to respond.*

Q –Why do these questions assume we all smoke, drink or use drugs?

A- Unfortunately, the questions aren’t perfect. They are meant to ask many young people from different places the same thing, so sometimes they have to ask questions in that way. Adults do know that not all teens smoke or drink. If you don’t smoke or drink or use drugs, just answer the question in the negative. In other words, just answer that you haven’t done something.

Q-Who looks at these? Do my parents/teachers/principal?

A -Staff from (Program Name) will be handling the surveys once we have collected them. However, nobody has any way of knowing who answered what questions.

**Possible Questions About the Drug Use Questions**

**NOTE:** We had to use many of these questions as they match with federal standards. Do the best you can to describe what different drugs are, using local terminology you may know. Here are some examples below.

Q – Does drinking mean taking wine at mass or at church? Does smoking include ceremonial tobacco?

A – No, drinking wine or smoking tobacco as part of a religious ceremony are not what these questions are asking about. Do not include those in your answers. The questions are trying to understand if you are using alcohol, tobacco, or drugs in ways that are potentially harmful to you or others.

Q – What does beverage mean? (you may have to read this word to them)

A – Beverage is a drink. An alcoholic beverage is a drink such as beer, wine, or anything that contains alcohol that you might drink.

Q – What does Marijuana or cannabis mean? (You may have to read this word to them as it does not look like it sounds.)

A – Other names for marijuana are weed, pot, bud, mota, hierba (pronounced yair-bah). Cannabis is another name for marijuana, that is used now more often as a result of mecial use and legalization. *Do not say “dope” as that nowadays refers to methamphetamine or heroin, not marijuana.*

Q – What if I used medical cannabis that I or someone else was prescribed?

A – The questions are meant to capture any use of cannabis, even if medical. So it counts. So answer to the best of your ability the question.

Q – What is an e-cig or vape? Does it count if it was being used

A – These products come in a variety of shapes and sizes, but they can be cigarette or pen shaped or even look like a USB port. They are meant to be used to inhale the substance inside it – usually a liquid. The substance can be flavored or not, and you may or may not exhale smoke or vapor.

Q – What is Methamphetamine? (you may have to read this word to them)

A – Other names for Methamphetamine are meth, speed, crank, ice, hielo (pronounced yey-low).

Q – I don’t understand this question about prescription pain medicine.

A – For the first question, answer yes if you used it at all – with a prescription for you or without. For the second question, only answer yes if you use those medicines in a way that your doctor did not tell you to. Like if a friend or family member gave them to you, when they were meant for that person. Or maybe you took them without them knowing. If you don’t know what those medicines are, just answer “no”.

Q – What is a prescription pain medicine?

A – A prescription pain medicine or painkillers is a drug that is intended to help people manage strong pain that other medications, like Tylenol, aspirin, or Advil cannot help. It must be prescribed by a doctor to the individual who needs it. They are also called opioids.

Q – What are prescription stimulants (or other medications mentioned)? I’ve never heard of them. (You may have to read these words to the respondent.)

A – If you’ve never heard of them, that’s okay. If you don’t know what those medicines are, just answer “no”.