

GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

Idaho Youth Well-being Assessment (IYWA) FAQ for Families



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ASSESSMENT CONTENT

What is the IYWA?

IYWA stands for Idaho Youth Well-being Assessment. It was created by [Communities for Youth](#) and is administered in partnership with Idaho school districts. The Idaho Department of Education facilitates this partnership by connecting Communities for Youth with districts that wish to participate. The IYWA measures key components of student well-being, including health perceptions, behaviors, and outcomes; family; school; community; peers and friends; leisure time; substance use; and individual level factors (e.g., sense of purpose or self-awareness). The [IYWA At-A-Glance](#) and the [complete assessment](#) are both available on the Idaho Department of Education website. Superintendent of Public Instruction Debbie Critchfield and the department have vetted the questions found in the assessment.

What are the benefits of administering the IYWA?

The IYWA provides school districts with relevant, timely, actionable information about their students' well-being. This helps districts/schools make data-driven decisions that support the needs of their students. The IYWA also assists districts/schools in applying for grant-based funding related to student well-being, as the applications for such grants require data related to a specific area of prevention or well-being.

Who developed the assessment tool?

The IYWA was created by Dr. Megan Smith, a prevention scientist, adolescent health specialist, and associate professor at Boise State University. Additionally, Idahoans on the state superintendent's mental behavioral health committee (including administrators, counselors, legislators, community partners, health professionals, and Idaho Department of Education staff) provided context-specific input on the IYWA.

Is the IYWA valid and reliable?

Yes. All questions are validated and have been tested in adolescent populations on multiple national and global assessments to ensure reliability.

Does the IYWA encourage unhealthy or dangerous behaviors?

No. There is no evidence that reading about a particular behavior (depression, substance use, etc.) encourages that action. The IYWA uses the same measures that clinicians use in their offices, and it has been tested with adolescent populations worldwide.

ASSESSMENT IMPLEMENTATION

Is the IYWA required for all students in Idaho?

No. It is not required of anyone. Districts choose to participate in the IYWA.

If my district participates in the IYWA, does that mean all students have to take it?

No. According to [Idaho Code §33-6001\(7\)](#), public schools must obtain parent or legal guardian permission before students take any noncurricular-related questionnaire. However, districts must obtain at least 65% of their student body's consent in order to administer the IYWA.

How do parents/guardians opt in?

This process is up to each district, but parents/guardians will need to sign documentation from their school district giving permission for their child to take the IYWA. Stay engaged with your district's primary modes of communication (email, social media, etc.).

When and how is the IYWA delivered and administered?

The IYWA can be administered at any time during the school year. Districts determine the timeline by working with Communities for Youth, but it must include a consent window of at least two weeks. Once the district obtains at least 65% of their student body's consent, they receive a QR code and electronic link to the assessment, which they can use to administer the IYWA.

Is the IYWA available in multiple languages?

The IYWA is available in English, and districts may additionally request a Spanish version.

Do students need to answer all the questions on the IYWA?

No. Students can skip any questions they don't feel comfortable answering.

How quickly will IYWA results be available?

Communities for Youth sends participating districts a data summary report, and it is up to districts/schools to decide when and how to share the results with their stakeholders.

What action can districts take in response to IYWA results?

Districts can celebrate successes and pinpoint areas in need of attention. They can then set goals based on these areas of need and develop strategies related to these goals. To aid districts in this process, Communities for Youth provides a toolkit along with the data summary

report. This toolkit explains how to read the report, how to think about using the data, and what prevention services Communities for Youth provides.

PRIVACY

[Can I see my child's responses on the IYWA?](#)

No, and the school won't either. The most specific data available is the school-level data summary report that Communities for Youth sends directly to the district.

[How is student information protected?](#)

The IYWA is an anonymous assessment and does not collect any personally identifiable information. The data is housed at Boise State University, which has strict data security procedures in compliance with the Institutional Review Board.

[What happens to the IYWA data once it's collected?](#)

Once the IYWA is administered, Communities for Youth downloads the raw data and deletes the assessment. The data is held in a password-protected folder that is only accessed by the Community for Youth data analysis team. This team runs statistical analyses on the data, and they compile these findings into a data summary report that is then returned to the district. The data summary report includes results for each school in the district, as well as the district overall.

[Does the Idaho Department of Education have access to the IYWA data?](#)

The Idaho Department of Education has access to statewide, regional, and district-level data summary reports, but it does not have access to the results of specific schools. The department also does not have access to the raw data; this is only available to Communities for Youth for the purpose of running statistical analyses.

[Does the federal government have access to the IYWA data?](#)

No. IYWA data stays in Idaho.

COMMUNICATION

How can I communicate with my child about the IYWA?

If you opt your child into the IYWA, take time to explain the importance of the assessment and encourage them to answer questions honestly. If you deem it appropriate, this may open up a broader conversation about topics or items on the IYWA.