The [Indiana Youth Survey](https://inys.indiana.edu/about-survey) (INYS) is a self-reported [survey of students in grades 6-12](https://inys.indiana.edu/about-survey). The INYS assesses students’ substance use, mental health, gambling, and risk and protective factors that can impact student success. All Indiana public and private schools are invited to participate in the 2024 Survey, free of charge, through funding provided by the Indiana Division of Mental Health and Addiction.

Indiana students have voluntarily participated in this confidential and anonymous survey for over 30 years. During that time, participation rates have varied, with as many as 166 Indiana school corporations (53% of all Indiana Corporations) participating in 2008. Participation rates were lower in 2020 (29% of all Indiana School Corporations) as the survey administration was interrupted by COVID precautions. Brown County Students have voluntarily participated since 2010. Participation rates of school corporations in our region have always been among the highest in the state.

The survey is administered in late January through the spring in both paper and on-line formats and takes approximately 30 minutes to complete. Participating school corporations share information about the survey, including the content, and seek parent consent for their children to voluntarily participate. Students are provided time during the school day to complete the survey. No names or personal identifiers are collected. The survey is voluntary, responses are anonymous, and participation is confidential.

Prevention Insights, a center within the Indiana University School of Public Health, has conducted the survey and reported the resulting data since the survey began in 1991. Prevention Insights prepares a state level report of the data collected--including Indiana prevalence rates compared to national prevalence rates. The Indiana Youth Institute uses this data to compile County Snapshots for the Kids Count Databook. Participating schools get a free report of their own results as well as technical assistance to interpret the reports. Anyone can access the state level reports—the 2022 report can be found here. <https://inys.indiana.edu/survey-results>.

The purpose of the Indiana Youth Survey is to provide data for state and local planning with respect to the use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs (ATOD), gambling behaviors, and factors that research has shown to be associated with either increased or decreased likelihood of ATOD use. Effective prevention efforts must address unique community needs and assets. Increasingly, federal and state agencies use data like that supplied by the Indiana Youth Survey for allocating resources and grant funding decisions. In order to prepare competitive applications for federal and other grants, communities need to demonstrate that they can measure, track, and analyze the outcome measures like those contained in this survey. In fact, data from the Brown County 2020 INYS report was used in a recent grant proposal that received $500,000 in grant monies.

Our youth deserve prevention and education efforts that represent their unique needs. Youth voice is an essential part of identifying problems and finding solutions. It is our hope that all parents/guardians provide consent for their child(ren) to participate and urges all youth in grades 6-12 with parent consent to voluntarily participate in the survey. Data from this survey is critical to community wellness efforts and allows many community agencies, including our schools, to better align resources and programming with the needs and assets of Brown County youth.