About "Parental Consent"

The Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug Use by Indiana Children and Adolescents survey is conducted for two purposes: (1) to provide local schools and their communities with valid estimates of the prevalence of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use among their students, and (2) to provide the state of Indiana with similar estimates of prevalence on a statewide basis.

Our Recommendations

1. Schools should follow the guidelines approved by their school boards, and should follow the advice given by their own attorneys.

2. Parental consent to participate in this survey should stress: (1) the fact that the survey is completely anonymous and completed in private, without any personally identifiable information that could be traced to an individual student, (2) the fact that participation is voluntary and that students can easily "opt out" of participation by submitting a blank survey form, (3) the need for non-drug-using students to participate to make sure that we produce accurate estimates of the percentages of students who do use, and (4) offer an opportunity for parents to inspect the forms.

3. If schools require written parental consent, schools MUST have in hand, signed parental consent forms from at least 90% of eligible students before we will ship forms to the schools.

4. Schools MUST agree to follow our guidelines for participation and student privacy. Forms must be collected in private, students must be informed that their participation is voluntary, students must be allowed to deposit forms directly into the secure envelope -- they may not be collected, and envelopes must be sealed immediately after students deposit the forms in them. Forms may not be checked or straightened by school personnel.

In order to assure accurate and valid results, we must know the exact size of the population being sampled.

If your school cannot administer the survey to a representative sample of students, you should refrain from participating in the survey. If you have any questions, please contact us prior to your agreement to participate in the survey.