

**TO: PARENT/GUARDIAN**

**FROM:** Nebraska Department of Education and Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services

**SUBJECT: ACTIVE CONSENT FORM** for the Youth Tobacco Survey (YTS)

Your son/daughter's school is participating in the 2016 Youth Tobacco Survey (YTS). **This survey is endorsed by the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) and the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (NDHHS).** The YTS is a tobacco use survey of Nebraska public high school students. The survey was developed by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) as a surveillance and evaluation tool for the nation's campaign to reduce tobacco related death and disabilities. The YTS is conducted once every two years.

Your son/daughter is in a class that was randomly selected to participate in the YTS. Students will take the survey during a regular class period. Completing this survey poses no risk to your child. Survey procedures have been designed to protect your child's privacy. Students do not put their names on the survey and no student or school will be mentioned by name in a report of the results. On the following page, a consent form has been included for you to read and complete regarding your child's participation in the YTS.

The YTS is made up of multiple-choice questions. The YTS collects detailed information regarding the quantity and frequency of tobacco use (cigarettes, chewing tobacco, snuff, cigars, and e-cigarettes) by adolescents. It also measures knowledge, perceptions and attitudes on health risks associated with tobacco use, indicators of the impact of media and advertising, minors' access to tobacco products, school tobacco curriculum, tobacco initiation, addiction and cessation, and exposure to secondhand smoke. Some sample questions from the survey are included with this letter. To view the entire questionnaire and additional information about the project, please visit <http://bosr.unl.edu/sharp>.

The YTS has the support of the American Cancer Society, American Lung Association, and Health Education Inc. Student participation is encouraged and appreciated. The data collected are added to the State database and are extremely useful in the development of programs related to improving the health of our youth. However, participation is voluntary and there are no consequences if a student does not participate.

The Bureau of Sociological Research (BOSR) at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln will be managing the survey administration for NDE and NDHHS. Attached to this letter is a fact sheet containing frequently asked questions about the YTS, as well as a few sample questions from the survey questionnaire. If there is any additional information you would find helpful, please contact Kim Meiergerd at [kmeiergerd2@unl.edu](mailto:kmeiergerd2@unl.edu), or call 402-472-3692, and she will be happy to assist you.

## 2016 Youth Tobacco Survey Active Consent Form

Please read the section below and check the appropriate box.

I have read the information about the Youth Tobacco Survey being conducted by the Nebraska Department of Education, the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

<input type="checkbox"/>	YES - My child has my permission to participate.
<input type="checkbox"/>	NO - My child does not have my permission to participate.

Name of student \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of parent/guardian \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Please have your son/daughter return this form to his/her teacher within the next three days.**

Thank you so much for your assistance with this important project.

### Frequently Asked Questions about the YTS

**Q. Why should my child participate?**

**A.** The YTS is a statewide survey that provides tobacco-related information not captured through any other student survey endorsed by NDE and NDHHS. This information enables the state and communities to plan effective youth tobacco prevention initiatives.

**Q. Why is this survey being done?**

**A.** The NDE and NDHHS have utilized the YTS data to monitor changes over time in health risk behavior related to tobacco, to strengthen state and local grant applications, to plan more effective youth prevention programs at the state level, and to provide a standardized long-term mechanism to chart progress in reducing youth health risk behaviors related to tobacco. The YTS is a robust data source for state and local health departments as well as coalitions and agencies working to reduce tobacco use. It is an excellent data source for determining youth exposure to both pro and anti-tobacco messages and interventions.

**Q. Are sensitive questions asked?**

**A.** Yes. Often, any questions related to a health behavior are considered sensitive. To help solve health problems among our youth, we must first understand them. The only way to learn if youth are at risk is to ask questions about health-related behaviors. Care has been taken to write survey questions in a direct, but sensitive way.

\*Survey questions are posted at <http://bosr.unl.edu/sharp> for viewing.

**Q. Does asking a student about a risky health behavior (ie; tobacco use) increase the likelihood that he or she will practice that behavior?**

**A.** No. There is no scientific evidence that health-risk behaviors can be changed simply by reading a question about them.

**Q. Will students' names be used or linked to the survey?**

**A.** No. The survey has been designed to protect your child's privacy. Students do not put their name on the survey. No one from the school will see their responses.

**Q. Are students tracked over time to see how their behavior changes?**

**A.** No. Students who take part cannot be tracked because their names are not on the surveys.

**Q. How was my child selected?**

**A.** A scientific sampling process (random sampling) was used to select both schools and the classrooms within schools to participate in the statewide survey. Entire classes were selected rather than specific students.

**Q. How long will it take to fill out the survey?**

**A.** Approximately thirty minutes are needed to complete the written survey.

**Q. Who supports this survey?**

**A.** The YTS is supported by the American Cancer Society, the American Lung Association, and Health Education Inc.

A few **sample** questions from the questionnaire are shown below:

Have you ever tried cigarette smoking, even one or two puffs?

- a. Yes
- b. No

If one of your best friends were to offer you a cigarette, would you smoke it?

- a. Definitely yes
- b. Probably yes
- c. Probably not
- d. Definitely not

During the past 30 days, on how many days did you use chewing tobacco, snuff, or dip?

- a. 0 days
- b. 1 or 2 days
- c. 3 to 5 days
- d. 6 to 9 days
- e. 10 to 19 days
- f. 20 to 29 days
- g. All 30 days

How likely is it that you would ever use or wear something --such as a lighter, T-shirt, hat, or sunglasses--that has a tobacco company name or picture on it?

- a. Very likely
- b. Somewhat likely
- c. Somewhat unlikely
- d. Very unlikely

Do you think young people who smoke cigarettes have more friends?

- a. Definitely yes
- b. Probably yes
- c. Probably not
- d. Definitely not

How old were you when you first tried using an e-cigarette, even once or twice?

- a. I have never used e-cigarettes
- b. 8 years old or younger
- c. 9 years old
- d. 10 years old
- e. 11 years old
- f. 12 years old
- g. 13 years old
- h. 14 years old
- i. 15 years old
- j. 16 years old
- k. 17 years old
- l. 18 years old
- m. 19 years old or older

During the past 30 days, how did you get your own chewing tobacco, snuff, or dip? (You can **CHOOSE ONLY ONE ANSWER** or **MORE THAN ONE ANSWER**)

- a. I did not use chewing tobacco, snuff, or dip during the past 30 days
- b. I bought them myself
- c. I had someone else buy them for me
- d. I borrowed or bummed them
- e. Someone gave them to me without my asking
- f. I took them from a store or another person
- g. I got them some other way

Do you believe that tobacco companies try to get young people under 18 to use tobacco products?

- a. Yes
- b. No