

# The 2023 Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey

## Study Abstract

**Purpose:** The Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey (OSDUHS) is an anonymous health survey of Ontario students in grades 7 to 12. The survey has been conducted every two years since 1977 with the purpose of identifying population trends and risk/protective factors related to student drug use, mental health, physical health, bullying and other behaviours. The OSDUHS is the longest ongoing school survey in Canada and one of the longest in the world, and is a leading source of information about the health of Ontario students.

**Sample:** The survey's target population is students in grades 7–12 enrolled in publicly funded Ontario schools. The expected sample size for the 2023 OSDUHS is about 14,500 students from about 295 schools. Schools will be randomly selected within each region. Within each selected elementary/middle school, two classes will be randomly selected to participate, one 7th grade and one 8th grade class. Within each secondary school, four classes will be randomly selected, one in *each* grade from 9 to 12.

**Procedure:** After approval from CAMH's Research Ethics Board, permission to survey students will be requested from each school board's Director of Education. School board participation may be conditional upon approval from a board's research review committee. After board approval, the Institute for Social Research (ISR) at York University – who administers the survey on CAMH's behalf – will send each school principal an invitation package. Approving schools will be asked to provide a list of all classes by grade, from which a random selection will be made by ISR. Teachers will be asked to distribute the parental consent/student assent forms to students, who, in turn, will seek the signature of a parent/guardian. Schools can choose the option of an online parental consent form procedure, which requires emailing parents the invitation/consent form link on CAMH's behalf. Only those students with parental consent can participate. The survey will be administered in the classroom by trained ISR staff. Students will be asked to complete an online questionnaire using either the school's device (e.g., a laptop) or a personal device with internet connection. The survey will be administered during a single class period, usually requiring 35–45 minutes for administration. Students will be told that participation is voluntary and anonymous, they can skip any question they do not want to answer, and that they can stop at any time for any reason. **The survey will be in the field across the province from November 2022 to June 2023.** Schools can schedule a date that is most convenient for teachers and students. Board permitting, school principals and teachers of the selected classes will be given a Tim Hortons gift card worth \$15 as a token of thanks for assisting. Schools with a sufficient sample size will be provided with a brief school-level report.

**Study Outcomes:** The data will be weighted such that the survey estimates are representative of the Ontario student population in grades 7–12 enrolled in publicly funded schools (just under one million students). The findings will be reported in provincial trend reports describing drug use and related harms, mental health and well-being, as well as our population health factsheet series, and infographics. OSDUHS findings are used by public health units, and other provincial agencies to inform policies and monitor established health objectives. OSDUHS reports and infographics are available at [www.camh.ca/osduhs](http://www.camh.ca/osduhs).

For more details, please see our Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) at [www.camh.ca/osduhs](http://www.camh.ca/osduhs).

To view the 2023 OSDUHS online questionnaire and information flyer, please visit [www.isryorku.ca/osduhs](http://www.isryorku.ca/osduhs).