

Participant Non-Consent For Survey Participation

Title of Project: Geauga Regional Communities That Care Youth Surveys

Once again, our school will be administering an anonymous survey to our students to gather information about the use of tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs, perceptions of these substances, parents and friend's feelings about substance abuse, bullying, neighborhood and school climate, and other protective and risk factors. The goal of the survey is to better understand these issues in order to more effectively target efforts to prevent risky behavior and enhance the multitude of protective resources that are available to our children. The survey, sponsored by Geauga County Board of Mental Health & Recovery Services, has been administered every 3 years for the past ten years, in every local public school district, which serves the majority of Geauga youth. Research shows that the more students that participate, the more accurate the findings. In previous years, approximately 90% of Geauga County students have participated in taking this survey. It is anonymous and totally voluntary and no names or personal identifying information is ever collected.

No action is required if you consent to have your child participate in the "Communities that Care Youth Survey". However if you choose **to not** have your child participate in the Communities That Care Youth Survey, **please fill out the enclosed form** and return it to the school within two weeks of receipt. We will make sure your child is engaged in an alternate activity while the survey is being administered.

While we encourage all students to take the survey, the decision to participate is totally voluntary. As a parent, you have the right to prohibit your child's participation. Your child may also decide they do not want to participate. Students that do participate may skip any questions they do not want to answer and may stop their participation at any time. They do not need to give a reason for not participating. **Again, your signature of non-consent provided at the end of this document will stop your child's participation** prior to any survey information collection activities being completed. Upon your consent to participate in the survey, your child will be given the questionnaire to complete at a time designated by her/his school. Rarely, children may experience anxiety during the administration of questionnaires. Children who become upset during the survey may immediately end their participation, and may request information from school staff about resources that are available to them if they feel the need to do so.

The "Communities That Care Youth Survey" is a nationally researched and administered questionnaire that has been completed over 8 million times during the past 30 years, by students in 49 states and six countries. The survey (one for 4-6th grade, and one for 6-12th grade) can be reviewed at <http://www.geauga.org/pdf/Survey%20Instruments-2014.pdf>. In addition, the Geauga County Board of Mental Health and Recovery Services can be contacted to further describe the survey process, risks and benefits, and answer any questions about your child's rights as a participant at (440)-285-2282. Again, the survey is anonymous and totally voluntary and no names or personal identifying information is ever collected. Research shows anonymity encourages youth to provide the most honest answers. Information from past surveys has been used to implement a range of programs that have worked to prevent a variety of adolescent problem behaviors.

When the results of the survey are complete, a community training on the findings will be held by the Geauga County Board of Mental Health & Recovery Services. You and your child will learn more about factors that are either protective or risk factors (e.g., sports programs, boy scouts and girl scouts = protective factors; being bullied, substance use = risk factors), how our youth experience those factors, and how protective factors may be enhanced, or risk factors reduced, in order to improve the lives of our children and our community.

We appreciate your working with us, as we continue our efforts to help all children learn safe and healthy behaviors that will last a lifetime.