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Scottish Government Health and Wellbeing Census

Frequently Asked Questions

2021-22 Academic Year

Why are local authorities asking children and young people about their health and wellbeing?

By law, local authorities and their partners are required to plan for children's services for their local area. To ensure that this is done effectively, it is important for them to understand the wellbeing and needs of children and young people in each local area. Your local service providers will use the aggregated results produced from this survey to help improve services for children and families.

What are children and young people being asked to do?

Local authorities are asking their local P5 – S6 children and young people to fill in an online health and wellbeing survey in the 2021-22 academic year.

Children and young people are being asked to complete an online questionnaire during class time that will take around 20-40 minutes. Schools will organise and arrange for children and young people to take part.

Are local authorities allowed to ask children and young people for this personal data about their health and wellbeing?

Yes, as local authorities are required by law to plan for children's services in their local area, they have a legal basis to ask children and young people about their lives and wellbeing to help them with this.

The individual data about children and young people is being collected by these local authorities for **statistical and research purposes only** for the performance of a task carried out for reasons of public interest.

Why does the local authority need this data about the health and wellbeing of children and young people?

Local authorities need this information about children and young people in order to:

- plan and deliver better policies for the benefit of all children and families, or specific groups
- better understand some of the factors which influence the outcomes for children
- target resources better
- enhance the quality of research to improve the lives of people in Scotland
- provide a window on society, the economy and on the work and performance of local and central government

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Will anyone see the answers provided by children and young people?

No one other than a small team of analysts within each local authority will see the answers provided by children and young people. These staff are trained to keep data safe, confidential and anonymous. Children and young people are not able to enter their name into the survey. Their answers will be stored securely by each local authority, and their schools, teachers or parents/carers will not see any of the answers provided by individual children and young people.

All information will be confidential and secure. **Your local authority will not publish or make publicly available any information that allows individual children and young people be identified, nor will data be used to take any direct actions on individual children and young people as a result of the information they provide.**

As your child's answers are only to be used for statistical and research purposes, this means that nobody will use the information given by your child to actively identify individual pupil responses.

Glasgow City Council will not use the responses provided in the Health and Wellbeing survey to identify individual children and will not contact any pupils about the responses they have provided in the survey.

What topics will children and young people be asked about in the survey?

Children and young people will be asked questions that cover a wide range of topics, such as their:

- attitude to school
- perception of achievement
- perception on the pressure of school work
- physical activity/exercise
- eating behaviours
- general health
- general wellbeing (life satisfaction)
- mental wellbeing (S2 pupils upwards)
- physical or mental health condition
- sleep pattern
- feeling of discrimination
- relationship with peers
- self-perception (body image)
- social media and online experience
- relationships with family / environment
- relationships with parents/carers
- resilience
- involvement in decision making
- involvement in positive activities
- caring responsibilities
- experience of bullying
- aspirations and career planning
- involvement in positive activities

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- sedentary behaviour
- perception on places to play
- use of alcohol (S2 pupils upwards)
- use of tobacco (S2 pupils upwards)
- use of drugs (S4 pupils upwards)
- relationships and sexual health **(S4, S5 and S6 pupils only)**

It should be noted that at the start of each section of the questionnaire (as listed above) pupils will be given the option to answer the questions in that section or to skip that section altogether.

Who created the questions and designed the questionnaires?

The Scottish Government established a national Health and Wellbeing Questionnaire Content Group in April 2018 with a remit of creating a complete set of age/stage appropriate questions for use in a Health and Wellbeing Census, and then to draw on these questions to produce a recommended set of questionnaires.

The group was made up of representatives and analysts from Public Health Scotland, local authorities, schools, Education Scotland, and the Scottish Government.

By and large, the questions being used in the census have been derived from existing health and well-being surveys which have already been tested, used in existing surveys, and ethically approved.

Will the information about children and young people's health and wellbeing be shared with others?

Yes, local authorities will share the responses provided by children and young people with analysts at the Scottish Government using secure transfer systems. The law allows local authorities to do this, and the Scottish Government also has a legal basis for requesting and requiring this information from each local authority.

This information is shared so that the Scottish Government can use this information to develop and monitor national policies, to target and provide resources, and to provide Parliament, Ministers and the wider community with information in relation to the lives and wellbeing of children and young people. **Individual children and young people will never be identified from any published findings.**

Glasgow City Council will share pupils Scottish Candidate Number (SCN) as well as their survey responses with the Scottish Government but no other information that will identify them (such as their name or contact details) will be shared with the Scottish Government.

The Scottish Government will use the SCN to link the survey responses to other data they hold on pupils. However, they cannot identify individual pupils from this information as they do not hold data on pupils' names or contact details.

Will the Scottish Government share information about the health and wellbeing of children and young people with others?

The Scottish Government may, by law, further share data about the health and wellbeing of children and young people with other approved organisations and researchers. However, data access will only be granted once this has been thoroughly reviewed and approved by their own data access procedures, and will only be shared for further **statistical and research purposes**. **Individual children and young people will never be identified from any published findings.**

Any sharing or linkage of data about children and young people will be done under the strict controls, and will be consistent with their data policy and the [National Data Linkage Guiding Principles](#). At all times, an individual's rights under the General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and other relevant legislation will be ensured. **Individual children and young people will never be identified from any published findings as a result of any linked data.**

How do local authorities and the Scottish Government store the data about the health and wellbeing of children and young people?

Local authorities and the Scottish Government are each responsible for the secure storage, management of, and access arrangements to data held within their organisation, and to ensure that they each have a set of robust processes and procedures in place.

Glasgow City Council has a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) in place for this census.

How long will local authorities and the Scottish Government keep the data about the health and wellbeing of children and young people?

The personal data held by local authorities and the Scottish Government about the health and wellbeing of children and young people can be stored for longer periods as the data is being stored and processed solely for archiving purposes in the public interest, scientific or historical research purposes or statistical purposes and is subject to implementation of the appropriate technical and organisational measures required by the UK GDPR in order to safeguard the rights and freedoms of individuals.

Once the analysis of the survey data is complete, Glasgow City Council will delete the SCN from the final dataset before it is stored. This will render the data held by the council completely anonymous

It should be noted that the Scottish Government may retain the SCN with the survey responses for a longer period. Full details of this can be found in their privacy statement - [Health and Wellbeing Census - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

Will children and young people's answers affect the services they receive?

No. The answers given by children and young people will be combined to produce statistical summaries that, in turn, help plan for services in the future.

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Do children and young people need to take part?

No. It is up to parents, carers and children and young people themselves to decide whether children and young person should take part. Children and young people can be opt-outed by parents/carers notifying their child's school. Children and young people themselves can also say to their teacher that they do not wish to take part at any time. Not taking part will have no impact on a child or young person's schooling or any services they use.

What happens if a child or young person needs help, or wants to discuss something, after taking part in the Census?

At the beginning and end of the questionnaire, children and young people will be informed that if any of the Census questions have made them think of any problems, or has raised any issues they are having, then they are advised to speak to someone in relation to the information they have provided in the Census. For example, if pupils are having problems with other pupils (e.g. feeling that they are being bullied), they are advised to talk about this with their parents / carers / teacher / support worker, etc.

Will results from the Census be published?

Yes, The local authorities conducting their own health and wellbeing census in the 2021/22 school year will be encouraged to use and make available their aggregated results as part of their own evidence in identifying where action is needed to improve the health and wellbeing of their children and young people within their authority, that will also help them to start monitoring changes over time.

The Scottish Government will publish national results as part of their public task to provide a window on society, the economy and on the work and performance of government by publishing statistical publications and additional tables about the health and wellbeing of children and young people living in Scotland. As with any Scottish Government statistical publications, only aggregated level data will be published and no individual child or young person will be identifiable from the analysis.

What rights do parents/carers/children and young people have?

The UK GDPR gives individuals the right to object to the processing of personal data. However, where the processing of personal data is for scientific or historical research, or statistical purposes, these rights to object is more restricted.

Can parents/carers/children and young people object to the processing of children and young people's health and wellbeing data?

No. If children and young people take part in the survey, then as the processing this statistical data is necessary for the performance of a task carried out for reasons of public interest, parents/carers/children and young people do not have a right to object to the processing of this personal data by local authorities or the Scottish Government.

Can parents/carers/children and young people ask for data you hold about the health and wellbeing of children and young people to be deleted?

No. If children and young people take part in the survey, then as the processing this statistical data is necessary for the performance of a task carried out for reasons of public interest (and for no other purpose, such as direct marketing), local authorities

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or the Scottish Government are not required to erase this personal data as it is needed to be retained for this purpose.

Glasgow City Council will also be completely anonymising the data shortly after it is collected; once the data is anonymised, the council will be unable to identify the responses from any particular person and so cannot delete these responses even if asked to do so by that person.

Can parents/carers/children and young people ask to see what data you hold about the health and wellbeing of children and young people?

Parents/Carers are not able to request a copy of their child's survey responses. If your child takes part in the survey, they are providing information to Glasgow City Council in the expectation that it will be treated as confidential. The council will also be completely anonymising the data shortly after it is collected; once the data is anonymised, the council will be unable to identify the responses from any particular person and so cannot provide these responses even if asked by that person

As well as this, if children and young people take part in the survey, as the data local authorities and the Scottish Government will then be processing is lawfully gathered and processed for Research, Statistics and Archiving in the public interest, and that any results of the research or resulting statistics are not made available in a form which identifies individual children and young people, parents/carer/children and young people do not have a right to request access to the data they hold about children and young people.

Where can parents, carers or children and young people go to get more information, or who can they contact to further discuss the census?

Please contact your child's school in the first instance who will be able to advise.