



Dear Parent/Guardian,

### **2022 Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) Survey**

I am writing to ask for your permission for your child to take part in a survey in school. The survey will help us to find out about children's health. It is part of a bigger study being supported by the World Health Organization and involving children from 51 countries.

This survey is being conducted by the Health Promotion Research Centre, National University of Ireland, Galway and is funded by the Department of Health. Ethical approval has been obtained from NUI Galway Research Ethics Committee (Email: [ethics@nuigalway.ie](mailto:ethics@nuigalway.ie)). Your child's school is one of over 300 schools across the country that is being invited to take part.

The purpose of the research and what is involved for your child is described in the information sheet overleaf. If there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information, please contact us on the number below or look at our website [www.nuigalway.ie/hbsc](http://www.nuigalway.ie/hbsc). If you would like a copy of the questionnaire, please contact the HBSC research team on 091 494295 or at [hbsc@nuigalway.ie](mailto:hbsc@nuigalway.ie).

If you do **NOT** want your child to participate, please sign the attached consent form and ask your child to bring it into school tomorrow. You can decline your child's participation without giving a reason. Your decision will not affect your rights in any way. If we do not receive a form from you, your child will be invited to participate. You can withdraw your consent, without giving a reason, by contacting the school before the survey.

We hope that you will be happy for your child to take part in this 2022 Health Behaviour in School-aged Children survey. If you have any queries about this study, please do not hesitate to contact the HBSC Ireland research team on 091 494295 or [hbsc@nuigalway.ie](mailto:hbsc@nuigalway.ie). Thank you for your time.

Yours sincerely,

Prof Saoirse Nic Gabhainn

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## INFORMATION SHEET

The World Health Organization Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) study aims to find out about children's health. HBSC is an international survey involving more than 200,000 children from 51 countries. This is the seventh time that Ireland is involved.

### Q. Why is the survey being done?

A. The results will help us to measure and understand the behaviours that influence young people's health. The results will also help with future development of health-related policy and practice, creating better opportunities for young people's health.

### Q. How was my child picked to be in the survey?

A. Students from 300 schools across the country are being invited to take part. In all schools, classes were picked randomly in each year/grade.

### Q. What is involved in this research study?

A. Your child will be invited to complete a questionnaire in class. All information collected is **totally confidential** and it will not be possible to identify the responses from any individual child. Pupils will not be contacted again for follow-up.

### Q. What kinds of questions are asked on the HBSC?

A. The survey includes questions on diet, physical activity, injuries, relationships with family and others, perceptions of school as a supportive environment, alcohol and tobacco use, drug use, and the communities in which the students live. The survey includes questions on sexual health for those aged 15 years and older. Children are free to choose which questions they answer. Ethical approval has been obtained from NUI Galway Research Ethics Committee (Email: [ethics@nuigalway.ie](mailto:ethics@nuigalway.ie)).

### Q. How long does it take to fill out the survey?

A. The survey takes about 30 minutes to complete. The survey does *not* include a physical test or an exam.

### Q. Will students' names be used or linked to the surveys?

A. The questionnaire is **confidential** and students do not put their names on the survey. No information on any individual child will ever be made public. Reports will not include names of participating schools or students.

### Q. What if schools or students do not want to take part?

A. The decision to take part is completely voluntary, but we hope that as many people as possible will agree to help with this research.

### Q. Who will benefit from the study?

A. The results of this study will be relevant to everyone working with and for children; policy makers, teachers, parents, caregivers and young people themselves. Results from previous surveys have been used in developing national and international policies, on issues like health, education, play and recreation, drugs and alcohol, cancer prevention, community development, etc. HBSC data are also used to provide guidance to schools and teachers.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact us on 091 494295 or [hbsc@nuigalway.ie](mailto:hbsc@nuigalway.ie). You can also look on the internet at [www.nuigalway.ie/hbsc](http://www.nuigalway.ie/hbsc).