

Health and Wellbeing Census

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

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

No one other than a small team of analysts and IT support staff 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 will not be asked to type in 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 routinely used to take any direct actions on individual children and young people as a result of the information they provide.**

However, if analysts within your local authority see anything in the answers provided by some children and young people that raises some concerns, they may need to do something to help these individuals. This would be the **only** time that the identify of individual children and young people would be sought by identifying these individuals from a separate database that holds the names of children and young people together with their Scottish Candidate Number, and for which the local authority also has access too. This should **not** happen very often so it is **highly unlikely** that anyone will contact children, young people or their families.

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

- Their sedentary behaviour
- Their perception on places to play
- Their use of alcohol (S2 pupils upwards)
- Their use of tobacco (S2 pupils upwards)
- Their use of drugs (S4 pupils upwards)
- Their relationships and sexual health (S4 pupils upwards)

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.**

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.

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.

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.

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

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

No. 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?

For further information, please contact your school or local authority in the first instance. Alternatively, please contact Jill Morton, Head of Benchmarking and Improving Evidence at the Scottish Government by e-mail jill.morton@gov.scot or by telephone on + 44(0)7917175112.