



Dear Families:

Your child’s school is taking part in a very important project to understand health issues among students in Springfield. This initiative is a collaborative effort of Springfield Public Schools, the Public Health Institute of Western Massachusetts, the Gandara Center’s Stop Access Coalition, Springfield Youth Mental Health Coalition, Springfield Health and Human Services, and MA Gaming Commission.

All students in 8th, 10th, and 12th grade will be asked to complete an **online questionnaire** addressing many health topics. The questionnaire is based off a standard set of questions being asked of youth throughout the state. Questions address many health issues including substance use, in school and out of school activities, social media usage, exposure to bullying and violence, and coping with stress. A copy of the questionnaire will be posted on the Springfield Public Schools website at www.springfieldpublicschools.com. The questionnaire is completely confidential, and there is no way to link answers back to individual students. **The survey will be given online during one class period at school from October 15 through October 25.**

The purpose of this letter is to give you the opportunity to keep your child out of the survey if you do not want them to participate for any reason. If we do not hear from you, we will assume that it is OK for your child to participate. The student is under no obligation to take part in the survey. They may decide not to participate at any time.

PLEASE COMPLETE THIS SECTION BELOW AND RETURN TO YOUR CHILD’S HOMEROOM TEACHER **ONLY IF YOU DO NOT WANT YOUR CHILD TO PARTICIPATE** IN THE SURVEY.

Student’s Name: _____ Grade: _____

I have read this letter and I do not want my child to participate in the youth health survey.

[] NO, my child may not take part in this survey

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Phone number: _____

You do not need to return this form if it is OK for your child to participate.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Karen Bryant, Project Manager for Assessment & Research for Springfield Public Schools, at (413) 787-7100 or at bryantk@springfieldpublicschools.com, or Keleigh Waldner, Senior Manager of Communications and Research at the Public Health Institute of Western Massachusetts, at 413-794-2897 or at kwaldner@publichealthwm.org.

Thank you for your help with this important project!