

# ALL STUDENTS COUNT COALITION: GENDER EXPRESSION

The Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS) is a biennial, school-based survey of adolescents in grades 9 through 12. The YRBSS, which is administered by the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC), has been conducted since 1991 by the majority of states and some larger school districts. The YRBSS monitors priority health-risk behaviors that contribute to the leading causes of morbidity and mortality among youth and adults. These are:

- unintentional injuries and violence,
- sexual behaviors,
- alcohol and other drug use,
- tobacco use,
- unhealthy dietary behaviors and
- inadequate physical activity.

The YRBSS also monitors two health outcomes: obesity and asthma.

The YRBSS is a system of surveys. It includes 1) a national school-based survey conducted by CDC and state, territorial, tribal, and 2) local surveys conducted by state, territorial, and local education and health agencies and tribal governments. The survey method is designed to be representative of the population of high school students in that state or municipality. The purpose of the YRBSS is to identify the prevalence and trends of health risk behaviors and outcomes to improve policy and decision-making related to youth education, health, and safety.

The **All Students Count Coalition (ASCC)** encourages state and local education or health agencies to include the optional gender expression question, **“A person’s appearance, style, dress, or the way they walk or talk may affect how people describe them. How do you think other people at school would describe you?”**, on their **Youth Risk Behavior Surveys (YRBS)**. This question is not on the national questionnaire.

The ASCC is a network of national and state organizations led by Advocates for Youth. We believe in a world where all students have access to learning in welcoming, inclusive, and affirming environments that lead to academic success. By collecting data measuring aspects of young people’s sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression (SOGIE), state and local education or health agencies, along with their health and community partners, will be better positioned to build inclusive learning environments that offer school programming, policies, and systems inclusive of the needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning (LGBTQ+) and nonbinary young people.

## Resources:

- **All Students Count Coalition**
- **Gender Expression & the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System: Identifying and Addressing Vulnerable Student Health Risks**
- **Gender Expansive Students at Greater Risk for Bullying, Increased Tobacco Use and Substance Use as Possible Coping Strategies**
- **Gender Expansive Students at Higher Risk for Suicidal Behavior**
- <https://advocatesforyouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/yrbss-site-data-final.pdf>
- **Identifying Health Risks and Disparities among Gender Expansive Youth through the YRBSS**
- <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/data/yrebs/index.htm>

For more information, check out our [website](#) or contact [ascc@advocatesforyouth.org](mailto:ascc@advocatesforyouth.org)