

MIT Surveys

< MIT Health & Wellness Surveys: FAQ for 2015 Healthy Minds Study

What is The Healthy Minds Study?

The Healthy Minds Study (HMS) is an annual survey-based study examining mental health and related issues (depression, anxiety, substance use) and service utilization among college students. Since its national launch in 2007, HMS has been fielded at over 100 college and university campuses across the U.S., with over 100,000 survey respondents. HMS is one of the only annual surveys of college/university populations that focuses exclusively on mental health and related issues, allowing for substantial detail in this area. The study has a special emphasis on understanding service utilization and helpseeking behavior, including factors such as stigma, knowledge, and the role of peers and other potential gatekeepers. The study also includes an option to examine how mental health symptoms predict academic outcomes (e.g., grade point average and retention), which can be translated into an economic case for mental health services and programs.

What does the survey ask about?

The survey asks about the following topics related to mental health and service utilization:

Mental health (depression, anxiety, disordered eating, suicidal ideation, self-injury)
Lifestyle (substance use, physical activity, sleep)
Knowledge and attitudes about mental health services (stigma, beliefs about treatment effectiveness)
Experience with services (use of medication, therapy, satisfaction with services)
Social and academic environment (sense of belonging, social support)

What if I need to talk to someone about an issue right away?

If you would like to talk to someone immediately about questions or concerns relating to mental health or related issues, please reach out to any of our campus resources:

- Undergraduates can contact Student Support Services at 617-253-4861, members of their [house team](#) and their advisors.
- Graduate students can reach out to Graduate Personal Support [staff](#) in the Office of the Dean for Graduate Education at 617-253-4860, and their housemasters.
- MIT's [Chaplains](#) are available to talk with any member of our community.
- All members of our community may contact Mental Health Services at 617-253-2916 during the day, or 617-253-4481 during nights and weekends. Further information is accessible via [together.mit.edu](#).

Why is MIT asking about these topics, and how will the survey data be handled?

The Healthy Minds data will allow us to further evaluate and enhance our mental health, substance abuse and suicide prevention efforts, as part of MIT's membership in a four-year, data-driven assessment called the Jed and Clinton Health Matters Campus Program.

Participation in the survey is completely voluntary, respondents are free to skip any question that they do not wish to answer, and responses are completely confidential. MIT Institutional Research will receive de-identified survey responses for analysis; MIT will not have access to the survey responses with identifiers.

All responses will be reported in aggregate only, meaning responses from a given group of people are mixed together and reported out as a single set of numbers. In the case of any text responses, it means all comments from a given group are mixed together and reported as a single set of comments.

What if I reveal something on the survey that could be considered illegal or violate MIT policies?

Some of the questions on the survey ask about behavior that may be considered socially unacceptable, or may meet the legal definitions of a crime in some jurisdictions. The purpose of this survey is not to ask students to reveal their participation in illegal behavior (such as underage drinking or illicit drug use), and stringent confidentiality precautions are in place to protect respondent privacy.

Who is invited to take the survey?

This survey is being sent to all undergraduate and graduate students who are currently enrolled as regular, registered students, and do not have their contact information marked as confidential with the Registrar.

Will I get to see the survey results?

Yes, a summary report will be released after all of data is analyzed.

If I have a question, who can answer it?

If you have any questions about the Healthy Minds Study, please contact health-survey@mit.edu.