

Youth Focus Group and Interview Consent Form



What is the Central Massachusetts Regional Public Health Alliance (CMRPHA)?

The Central Massachusetts Regional Public Health Alliance is a coalition of five municipalities (Towns of Millbury, Shrewsbury, Grafton, and West Boylston and the City of Worcester) working cooperatively to create and sustain a viable and labor-efficient regional public health district. The regional health district provides a comprehensive array of services to partner municipalities through a single organization managed by Worcester's Division of Public Health (WDPH). The inspiration to develop a regional alliance arose from the considerable disparity in size, available resources, and kinds and types of resources offered by each municipality.

Key Goals of the CMRPHA

- Build a road to sustainability
- Improve organizational effectiveness
- Mobilize a community-coordinated approach
- Make data-driven and evidence-based decisions
- Sustain public health accreditation

Why are we conducting focus groups and stakeholder interviews?

WDPH is currently completing an assessment under the **Massachusetts Collaborative for Action, Leadership, and Learning 3 (MassCall3) grant**, which is funded by the Massachusetts Department of Health and focuses on using evidence-based strategies to prevent and delay first use of alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana. These funds will support prevention work in Worcester, Shrewsbury, Grafton, and Millbury for the next three years.

In the last few months, as part of the grant's assessment process, we have administered a regional youth health survey in each town to examine risky and positive behaviors. We are now starting the next phase of the assessment process, which is conducting focus groups and one-on-one interviews with stakeholders within the four identified towns.

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Information collected from focus groups or stakeholder interviews will enhance the data already collected, inform our process, and serve as a guide for us as we formulate prevention strategies tailored to fit the unique needs of each community.

Participating in a focus group or stakeholder interview will pose no risk to your child, although some students might find certain questions to be sensitive. The results of this assessment will help your child and other children in the future by informing interventions aimed at improving their health and wellbeing. We would like all middle and high school students to take part in the focus groups and interviews, but participation is voluntary—there is no penalty for choosing not to participate. Students can choose not to answer some of the questions during the focus groups. The focus groups will be held virtually, and students can choose to turn off their cameras and can choose to change their names. In addition, students may stop taking part in a focus group or interview at any time.

Please sign below and email the completed form to WDPH/CMRPHA Behavioral Health Manager Jennifer Nakijoba at nakijobaj@worcesterma.gov if you would like your child to participate in this very important effort to support our region's youth. You may also email Jennifer or call her at 508-799-8531 with any questions.

Student's name: _____

Grade: _____

Student's school: _____

I have read this form and know what the focus group or stakeholder interview is about.

Parent/Caregiver signature: _____

Date: _____

Email address: _____

Phone number: _____