
Understanding Middle Childhood: The Middle Years Development Instrument (MDI) Parent/Guardian Informed Passive Consent Letter

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AT A GLANCE

- A survey about social and emotional development, health, and well-being will take place in your child's school.
- Your child is invited to complete the survey unless you request to withdraw your child.
- Your child can choose to complete the survey, and can skip questions or stop at any time.
- If you would like to learn more about the survey, please visit <https://earlylearning.ubc.ca/monitoring-system/mdi/parent-caregiver-info/>.

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Your school and the Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP) at the University of British Columbia (UBC) invite your child to take part in completing the Middle Years Development Instrument (MDI). The MDI includes questions about social and emotional development, health, school experiences, connectedness, and out of school time. Students in Grades 4 to 8 will be invited to complete the MDI during class time in January/February. The MDI project is sponsored by your school district.

What is the purpose of this project?

The purpose of this project is to better understand aspects of children's social and emotional development, health, and well-being that contribute to their success in school and in life. This information helps us understand influences on children's health and well-being. The MDI gives children a voice in sharing their thoughts, feelings, and experiences in school, at home, and in the community, including how they spend their time outside of school. Schools, governments and communities can use MDI information to improve supports and services for children. To view the survey questions, please visit <https://earlylearning.ubc.ca/monitoring-system/mdi/parent-caregiver-info/>.

What will happen?

Students complete the MDI online, supervised by school staff. The survey takes 45-90 minutes of class time. Several of the questions ask about children's feelings and relationships. There is a place in the survey where your child can ask for help with any problems they are having. If your child asks for help, the teacher and principal will receive an email and they will follow up with your child according to school procedures.

Participation is voluntary

The MDI is voluntary. Your child may skip questions or stop the survey at any time. Participating or not participating in the survey will not affect your child's grades. It will not affect any services that your family receives from the school or school district.

If you do not want your child to complete the MDI, please return the attached form to your child's teacher or principal within 2 weeks upon receiving this letter. Your child can be withdrawn at ANY TIME prior to survey administration. You can also email the MDI project team at mdi@help.ubc.ca to withdraw your child. Once data have been included in reports, your child cannot be withdrawn. If your child does not take part, they will work on an activity that is related to their regular school work.

How is your child's privacy protected?

Your child's responses to the survey questions are **private and confidential**, and will not be shared with you or any school or school district staff. No information is added to your child's school record from the project. Your child and your child's school will not be identified in research publications or in public documents.

What information is shared with HELP (UBC)?

To take part in the MDI, your school district provides HELP at UBC information about your child, including their name, Personal Education Number (PEN), date of birth, gender, postal code, and whether they are First Nations, Métis or Inuit. Additional information including whether they have a disability or diverse ability, or if they are an English Language Learner or in a French Immersion program, is shared for research and reporting purposes. Your child's name is only used so that your child can log into the survey. It is removed from survey responses once the survey is complete.

How will the data be used and stored?

MDI data are stored in a secure environment. Personal information is separated from your child's answers to the survey. MDI data can only be used for approved research projects **under Federal, Provincial/Territorial privacy laws**. Researchers may apply for permission to use MDI data for research or statistical purposes. Approved researchers will be provided data that cannot be connected to any individual student.

Your child's data may be linked with other data to learn about the factors that influence children's well-being, health, and school success. Other data may include education and health information. The data that are linked **can only be used for research or statistical purposes, under an approved Research Agreement, or for program planning, evaluation, or research purposes through an Information Sharing Agreement**. More information is available at: <https://earlylearning.ubc.ca/about/privacy-and-ethics/>. For concerns related to the privacy of your child's survey data, please contact HELP's Privacy Officer at privacy@help.ubc.ca.

Project results

School reports are shared with the school district and schools, and are not shared publicly. HELP provides public community reports and neighbourhood maps of the survey results <https://earlylearning.ubc.ca/reports/>. If you are interested in learning more about how schools and communities use MDI data to support children, please visit our website www.discovermdi.ca.

Indigenous Data and Reports

HELP recognizes and respects that First Nations, Métis, and Inuit families, communities and governments have the right to access any and all data collected for their children. HELP, through guidance of the [Aboriginal Steering Committee](#), has established a protocol to support First Nations, Métis and Inuit governments and Indigenous-led organizations with data and reports for Indigenous children. HELP only reports MDI data for Indigenous Peoples through guidance and stewardship of the Aboriginal Steering Committee.

Where can you get more information on the project?

For more information, please visit HELP's website at <https://earlylearning.ubc.ca/monitoring-system/mdi/mdi-overview/>. If you have any questions or concerns please contact Marit Gilbert, Project Contact, via email at mdi@help.ubc.ca or by phone at 604-827-5504 or toll free 1-888-908-4050. You can also contact the principal investigator at the email provided below.

Who can you contact if you have concerns or complaints about the study?

If you have any concerns or complaints about your/your child's rights as a research participant and/or your experiences while participating in this study, contact the Research Participant Complaint Line in the UBC Office of Research Ethics at 604-822-8598 or if long distance e-mail RSIL@ors.ubc.ca or call toll free 1-877-822-8598.

Yours sincerely,

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If you want to withdraw your child, please, sign and return this section to your child's teacher.

Please return this form to the classroom teacher within 2 weeks if you do **NOT** want your child to participate. You can also email mdi@help.ubc.ca to withdraw your child ANY TIME prior to survey administration.

I do **not** consent for my child [NAME] _____ to participate in the Middle Years Development Instrument (MDI) survey taking place in January/February.

Parent/Guardian Name: _____ Date: _____

School: _____ Teacher: _____