



SBIRT IN SEATTLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS INFORMATION FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS

What is SBIRT and Check Yourself?

Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) is used to identify, reduce, and prevent substance use and promote mental health. The Seattle Public Schools SBIRT program is grant funded by King County's Best Starts for Kids initiative which invests in strategies that promote healthier, more resilient children, youth, families, and communities. SBIRT has three main components.

- **Screening:** Students take an interactive, friendly screening that provides instant personalized feedback about health behaviors. The secure, web-based survey can be done on any electronic device.
- **Brief Intervention:** If screening shows a need, short conversations with an SPS staff follow that focus on the student's strengths and abilities.
- **Referral To services:** If a student needs additional support, SPS staff may refer students/families to unique services based on their need.

The **Check Yourself** screener, developed by the University of Washington's Seattle Children's Hospital, is an engaging, research-based tool that students may take as part of the SBIRT program. King County youth and parents were involved in the development of this tool, and their feedback was essential in compiling a screener that is comprehensive, culturally responsive, and youth-friendly. The goal of the tool is to help spark conversations between students and their school support team that motivate students to make healthy choices. This model has been proven successful in supporting individuals in primary care settings, school-based health clinics, and emergency departments.

Which Seattle schools are involved in the project?

Seattle Public Schools piloted the SBIRT program during the 2018-2019 school year at Jane Addams Middle School, Madison Middle School, and Whitman Middle School and will be expanding its services to four additional schools during the 2019-2020 school year. These additional schools include Eckstein Middle School, Hamilton Middle School, Meany Middle School, and the Seattle World School. With support from the SPS' Prevention and Intervention Program, these seven schools will be providing universal SBIRT services for the duration of BSK SBIRT funding.

Is the Check Yourself screener optional?

Yes! The Check Yourself screener, along with all other components of SBIRT, are voluntary. SPS staff introduce SBIRT and the Check Yourself screener to identified students, explain the nature and reason for the screening, and ask them if they are willing to participate. If the student chooses to do so, the SPS staff then loads up the screening tool for their use. The first question on the screener also asks students to indicate their consent for participation. If they select not to consent, then the survey ends. Parents/guardians can also opt their child out of participation by contacting their school's administration, counseling team, or designated SBIRT staff.

Which students are taking the Check Yourself screener?

The Check Yourself screener is administered both universally and to designated students. All seven of our SBIRT middle schools will provide universal screening to all students in a particular grade level. Universal screening will allow our schools to identify concerns early, when they can be addressed with minimal disruption and before larger issues (such as drug addiction) develop. Additionally, designated students are asked to take the Check Yourself screener. Students may be individually identified for screening due to self-referral, low attendance, substance use disciplinary actions, or other objective student data sources.

What is asked on the screener?

Check Yourself is an interactive tool so the number and type of questions vary based on student responses. There are usually around 40 questions asked, and most students take about 10-15 minutes to complete the screener. Questions are asked about demographics, strengths, supports, goals, substance use, mental health, trauma, and safety.

Who sees the screening results?

The screener will be administered by the school's Prevention and Intervention Specialist or Counselor, and student results may be reviewed by relevant SPS staff such as counselors or nurses if needed. Students use a proxy ID when taking the screener, no student names or SPS student numbers are entered into the online screening tool. The results will provide valuable feedback that will help determine what supports a student may need to be successful. If sharing of identifiable screener results outside of SPS staff was requested, then written permission from the parent/guardian via FERPA release form would be obtained prior to disclosure.

How are parents/guardians notified about the Check Yourself screener and SBIRT program?

Each school develops and implements their own parent engagement plan in line with SPS School Board policies and applicable laws. SBIRT parent engagement activities include information tables at curriculum nights, parent education events, and postings on school and SPS websites. Parents/guardians also receive direct written notification regarding the program in the beginning of the school year as part of the Back to School packet for all students. Parents/guardians can review the Check Yourself tool upon request, similar to the procedure for reviewing the Healthy Youth Survey questions. Additionally, parents/guardians will be notified if their child's screener indicates high levels of risk.

For more information on SBIRT in Seattle Public Schools, please contact:

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