



06/11/2023

Dear Principal,

I am writing to you about an important European-wide study that will be conducted in secondary schools in the coming months.

The European School Survey on Alcohol and Drugs (ESPAD) is a collaborative effort of independent research teams in more than forty European countries and is the largest cross-national research project on adolescent substance use in the world. The overall aim of the project is to repeatedly collect comparable data on substance use among 15–16 year old students in as many European countries as possible.

The ESPAD has been conducted in Irish secondary schools every four years for the past thirty years. It is a valuable research project and one that the Department of Health are eager to remain involved with. This year, the TobaccoFree Research Institute has been awarded the competitive tender to administer the European-wide project here in Ireland.

Data collection is set to begin in the coming weeks and your school has been randomly selected by the researchers for participation in this study.

I am aware that an exercise such as this can be an intrusion into the already busy life of the school. The study has been designed, however, to minimise additional work on the part of the school.

Given the importance of tobacco regulation on the public's health and the input that this study will have on tobacco control legislation, I hope that you will be able to support this most worthwhile exercise. It is unquestionably one of the most important studies to be conducted on substance use among European teenagers.

I would like to thank you, in anticipation, for your co-operation in this research.

Yours sincerely,

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Hildegard Naughton T.D., Minister of State with Responsibility for Public Health, Well Being and the National Drugs Strategy