



11 December 2025

Tēnā koe

Official Information Act request

Thank you for your email of 10 November 2025, requesting information about tokens of appreciation given to schools in the Youth Health and Wellbeing Survey.

I have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). Please find my decision on your request set out below.

The Youth Health and Wellbeing Survey (YHWS) is New Zealand's largest, nationally representative survey aimed at understanding youth health and wellbeing.

Data and insights from the YHWS informs policies and investment across government to help drive youth outcomes. With better information on young people, Government can improve the efficiency and effectiveness of services, which reduces costs to government and taxpayers.

These surveys run approximately every three years and the YHWS 2025 is the sixth version of this survey.

The total budget for the YHWS is \$1 million per financial year, with \$2.8 million delegated to cover the entire spend for the YHWS 2025. The 2025 survey includes questions from Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Health surveys to avoid duplication and cost.

The Ministry contracted market research company Ipsos to deliver the survey via a Consultancy Service Order (CSO). Ipsos has told us that tokens of appreciation are a recognised practice in surveys. They are designed to build good will, increase participation rates and support timely project delivery and are consistent with guidance for research of this nature.

For studies or surveys conducted with human participants, it is a requirement of the national Health Disabilities and Ethics Committee to offer koha to the participants; even more so when working with vulnerable individuals (i.e., children, disabled, beneficiaries, elderly, the unwell), who are contributing sensitive information (health or mental health data). This is intended to ensure fair recognition of the effort involved in participation.

The Ministry approved estimated costs for koha and tokens of appreciation to schools and participants through the CSO.

Ipsos has advised that they provided brownie boxes as part of initial engagement with schools and subsequently provided all 89 participating schools with a \$300 prezzy card in recognition of the time and effort provided by their staff in coordinating the survey.

In addition, for completeness on koha at schools, the approximately 9,000 students who participated in the main phase of the survey at schools received a \$25 prezzy card koha. In some schools, Ipsos provided food – such as chocolate bars and fruit sticks – for students as they participated, but this was not done in the majority of cases.

Additionally, at the conclusion of the survey Ipsos retired those tablets used in the survey that could not be reused or on sold. Ipsos elected to distribute tablets to ten randomly selected schools, after they were securely wiped to protect participant confidentiality. Donating the tablets allows the equipment to keep providing educational value rather than being discarded.

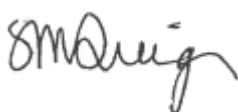
Similarly, students could keep the earphones from the survey, which could not be reused for hygiene reasons.

I will be publishing this decision letter, with your personal details deleted, on the Ministry's website in due course.

If you wish to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact OIA_Requests@msd.govt.nz.

If you are not satisfied with my decision on your request, you have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or 0800 802 602.

Ngā mihi nui

pp. 

Anna Graham
General Manager
Ministerial and Executive Services