

# REALD Data and Disability Questions

## What is REALD?

REALD data stands for the types of information collected; it includes:

- Race
- Ethnicity
- Language, and
- Disability.

By law ([House Bill 2134](#)), the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) and the Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) must collect REALD data. They are required to do so whenever they collect, record or report other demographic data, such as gender, age and income. OHA and ODHS worked with Disability Rights Oregon and other disability advocates to develop the REALD disability questions in 2013 and 2014 during the rulemaking advisory committee process. The rulemaking advisory committee, with disability advocates, reviewed and updated the questions in 2020.

## Why we ask about disability

We know people can have avoidable differences in health due to disabilities. When we collect disability data the same way as other demographic data, we can:

- Better understand the diversity of people who live in Oregon, and
- Better address inequities.

Here are some studies that used REALD data to inform health strategies for people with disabilities:

- [Journal of Adolescent Health](#), Aug. 2021: This study used REALD data from OHA's 2015 and 2017 Oregon Healthy Teens Survey. These findings do not support the myth that students with disabilities are not sexually active and highlight the need for:
  - » Sexual abuse prevention
  - » Sexual health promotion, and
  - » Risk reduction efforts.[See here for more information.](#)
- [CD Summary](#), Oct. 2017: REALD data from OHA's 2015 Oregon Healthy Teens Survey informed this study. The study found significant disparities related to:
  - » Abuse
  - » Bullying at school
  - » The risk for pregnancy and STDs
  - » Unmet health care needs, and
  - » Resilience and support at school.

## How we ask the questions

“Disability” is in the name of the questionnaire. However, the disability questions ask about “functional difficulties.” The reason for this is because, even if people don’t self-identify as disabled, they can experience functional difficulties that:

- Hinder their access to health care
- Change over time, and
- Differ in severity based on age.

Most questions are based on [federal disability data collection standards](#). Those questions went through several rounds of cognitive and field testing. Certain questions must be on all surveys sponsored by the federal Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). These questions focus on how functional difficulties affect abilities to fully participate in society.

## How do we protect your privacy?

We want everyone who answers REALD questions to feel safe. We treat your answers as a confidential public health record.

## You get to decide

It’s up to you if you answer the REALD questions. For questions you don’t want to answer, you can choose “Don’t want to answer.” However, we hope you’ll answer these questions. We would like to use the data to help identify and address inequities for people with disabilities.



Office of  
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