

MAYSI-2 FAQ

What is the purpose of the mental health screening tool (MAYSI-2)?

The purpose of this mental health screening tool is to identify the mental health needs of youth, including the potential presence of mental health conditions and suicidal risk. The MAYSI-2 questionnaire is designed to detect alcohol/drug use, angry or irritable behavior, feelings of depression and anxiety, somatic complaints, suicide ideation, and traumatic experiences.

How will the youth complete the MAYSI-2?

The MAYSI-2 screening asks a series of “yes” or “no” questions about things that sometimes happen to people. The youth is directed to answer these based on the last 3 months unless the question indicates “have you ever.” The MAYSI-2 may alert the probation officer to follow-up with secondary questions for any concerns about the youth’s mental health and/or safety. The youth is encouraged to be as truthful as possible so that the worker can give the family resources that best match with their needs. The questionnaire should only take about 10 minutes.

Why do parent(s)/guardian(s) have to leave the room?

Whether administered virtually or in-person, the MAYSI-2 screening should be conducted in an environment with minimal distractions. Presence of others such as parents, siblings, or friends may influence the youth’s responses and compromise the truthfulness and validity of the screening. If administering the MAYSI-2 is not possible in an environment where the youth is alone, one option is to have the youth use headphones.

How will the results be used and who will see the answers?

Only the probation officer will see the answers to the MAYSI-2. The probation officer will talk with parents/guardians about any mental health and/or safety concerns so they can provide at home support. If the youth discloses that they have ever been a victim of any form of abuse or neglect the probation officer is obligated to report this to the appropriate agencies, if not previously reported. The results will only be used to help determine if there is a need to provide referrals or information for services in the community. The results will not impact the youth’s charges, court obligations, or consequences.