



## Definitions

(by complexity)

### Data Terms

- **Research:** Research is a way of asking questions in order to understand the world around you. By doing research you create new knowledge or ideas. There are three types of research: Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Methods. (ALR\*)
- **Data:** data=information. We typically use the term to refer to numeric files that are created and organized for analysis. (DP\*\*)
- **Variable:** Any finding that can change or vary. There are two types of variables: independent (is not affected by other factors) and dependent (can be changed by other factors). (DP)
- **Assent:** Anyone 17 years of age and below that agrees to participate in the research process. (ALR)
- **Consent:** Anyone 18 years of age and above that agrees to participate in the research process. (ALR)
- **Data aggregation:** A collection of datapoints and datasets. (DP)
- **Qualitative research:** Qualitative research is story-based. It is used to understand people's experiences, perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, through their interactions. This method focuses on answering the "Why?", "Who is involved?", and "For what purpose?" (ALR)
- **Quantitative research:** Quantitative research is numbers-based. It asks a question based on data that is missing or could be further investigated. This becomes a hypothesis which will either be proven or disproven using What? How? and Does...? Questions. (ALR)
- **Simple random sample:** a quantitative method where researchers randomly choose participants from a population. Each participant has an equal probability of being chosen. So, these tend to be less biased. The HKCS uses a sampling method similar to the U.S. Census but has a deeper consent process for the protection of students. (ALR)
- **Statistical significance** – indicates only that you have sufficient evidence to conclude that an effect exists. (ALR)

### Framework

- **Shared Risk and Protective Factors** – a model that involves a shared set of events or conditions that impact the likelihood of many different behavioral health outcomes. These shared factors can occur at the individual, family, institutional, or community-level. (SAMHSA\*\*\*)
- **Protective factor** – characteristics associated with a lower likelihood of negative outcomes or that reduce a risk factor's impact. Ex. Strong connection to family and/or friends (ALR)
- **Risk factor** - characteristics at any level that precede and are associated with a higher likelihood of negative outcomes. Ex. Substance misuse (ALR)

### Gender and Sexuality

- **Gender expression** - Appearance, behaviors, and personality features considered masculine or feminine in a given culture (ISDN\*\*\*\*). Gender expression does not necessarily reflect one's gender identity.
- **Gender identity** - The internal sense of being a woman, man, or other gender (ISDN).
- **Sex** - Sex is assigned at birth as either male, female, or intersex typically based on the appearance of the external genitalia. Gender identity, on the other hand, is self-defined based on one's internal sense of self (ISDN).
- **Sexual orientation** - Sexual orientation refers to a person's attractions to others, which may be boys or men, girls or women, transgender or gender non-conforming persons, or any combination of the above. Attraction is not only about sex. It can be sexual, romantic, physical, emotional, and spiritual. Transgender, genderqueer, and non-



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binary youth may identify in terms of their sexual orientation as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or straight. Some people use broader terms to describe their sexual orientation, such as queer or pansexual (ISDN).

- Transgender - A word used to describe a person whose gender identity differs from the sex they were assigned at birth (ISDN).
- Transitioning or gender affirmation – For some, transitioning or gender affirmation includes medical transition such as gender affirming hormone treatments or surgery. Some people who are transgender may choose to transition socially or medically (choosing to socially transition doesn't mean one has to medically transition). It is important to note that not all transgender people socially and/or medically transition until later in life or ever.

### Substance Use

- Substance use – the recurrent or one-time use of alcohol and/or drugs that does not cause significant impairment (ALR)
- Substance abuse/misuse - the recurrent use of alcohol and/or drugs causes significant impairment, including health problems, disability, and failure to meet major responsibilities at work, school, or home (SAMHSA)
- Substance use prevention or "Prevention" - Prevention activities work to educate and support individuals and communities to prevent the use and misuse of drugs and the development of substance use disorders (SAMHSA).
- Mental/behavioral health – A state of mental/emotional being and/or choices and actions that affect wellness (SAMHSA).
- Harm Reduction- Harm Reduction refers to policies, programs and practices that aim primarily to reduce the adverse health, social and economic consequences of the use of legal and illegal psychoactive drugs without necessarily reducing drug consumption. Harm reduction benefits people who use drugs, their families and the community (HRI\*\*\*\*\*).

### Substances and Behaviors

- Addiction—A chronic, relapsing disorder characterized by compulsive (or difficult to control) drug seeking and use despite harmful consequences, as well as long-lasting changes in the brain (NIDA\*\*\*\*\*).
- Dependence— A condition that can occur with the regular use of illicit or some prescription drugs, even if taken as prescribed. Dependence is characterized by withdrawal symptoms when drug use is stopped. Dependence can occur without being addicted but may lead to addiction (NIDA).
- Overdose—An overdose occurs when a person uses enough of a drug to produce a life-threatening reaction, a toxic state or death (NIDA).
- Psychosis—Delusional or disordered thinking detached from reality; symptoms often include hallucinations. Psychosis is a symptom not an illness and can be triggered by mental illness, physical injury, substance abuse, or stress or psychological trauma (NIDA).
- Self-harm – Self-harm is anything and everything someone can do to purposely hurt their body. (CTL\*\*\*\*\*)
- Vaping – Inhaling the aerosol or vapor from an electronic cigarette, e-vaporizer, or other device (NIDA).

### References

\* ALR indicates that Ellianna Lederman and/or Janice Stiglich, PhD from the A la Raiz/To the Root project at Boulder County Public Health, defined these terms.

\*\*DP indicates that definitions were adapted or directly cited from [Data Planet by Sage Publishing Resource](#)

\*\*\*SAMHSA indicates definitions adapted from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

\*\*\*\*ISDN indicates definitions adapted from the Independent School Diversity Network

\*\*\*\*\*HRI indicates definitions adapted from Harm Reduction International

\*\*\*\*\*NIDA indicates definitions adapted from the glossary of the National Institute on Drug Abuse.

\*\*\*\*\* CTL indicates definitions adapted from the Crisis Text Line