

FAQ of the 2018 GYB Actor Training Experience Survey

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This FAQ was created following the presentation of the preliminary data generated by the survey project at the inaugural Got Your Back Acting Educators' Conference in May 2019, based on feedback which attendees had the opportunity to submit anonymously via an online questionnaire. Alongside the broader publication of the survey results, both through the article [The State of Acting Training in Canada: A summary of the results from Got Your Back's 2018 national survey](#) published by HowlRound Magazine and through our [Executive Overview of the results](#), this FAQ was created to clarify the most common or urgent feedback we received.

First off, we'd like to acknowledge that as educators and researchers we share this data from a place of learning, not a place of authority. We are in a continual state of growth within our own teaching practices and recognize that some of the mistakes highlighted in this summary are ones we have made ourselves. Our call for change comes from a place of collective responsibility. We must recognize and acknowledge the issues and mistakes we perpetuate in order to make lasting changes in acting education in Canada.

With that said, here are some of the questions we've heard so far:

Who is in possession of these written accounts of acting school trauma? How will these records be stored? How long will they be kept for? What privacy measures are being taken to ensure that this information is not spread?

Data was originally gathered using the Google Forms platform, however, since the survey closed, the data has been moved off of the Cloud and now resides on an encrypted drive, which is owned by the core authors of the survey: Sarah Robbins, Neil Silcox, and Jennifer Wigmore. Only the three authors have had, or will have, access to the raw data. The data will be kept for a minimum of three years.

Can the data be accessed under a "Freedom of Information" request?

Canada's *Access to Information Act* (the equivalent of the US' *Freedom of Information Act*) only mandates that government data be made available to the

public. Got Your Back, as a private entity, cannot be compelled to release any information to the press.

How can we find out if we have been named/labelled a bad teacher/institution?

The vast majority of respondents made no direct reference to any individual, and we will not be divulging any information publicly that isn't related to broader, systemic problems.

The purpose of this survey was not designed to uncover the names of figures who have caused harm to students in the past. It was fundamentally, about identifying the systemic and cultural problems that impact the equity of acting training, and to help define some ways we can create a better future for students.

Can you identify fake surveys?

With the exception of one respondent (who answered almost every question with profanity-laden hyperbole and comments which belittled the survey) we saw no reason not to accept every response as written in earnest.

Can you identify unfounded accusations and false accounts?

Like any survey that is designed to gather anonymized data from participants, we cannot ensure against the possibility of unfounded or false testimony. However, given that the nature of the survey was to compile data on student experiences in an anonymized fashion, we feel that it is very unlikely that respondents would have fabricated any descriptions provided.

In the event that criminal activity might be mentioned, are the police being notified?

Nothing reported in the survey rises to the level of criminality. Additionally, there is no way to put forward charges based on anonymous survey testimony.

Is the government going to be involved to investigate workplace harassment?

Both Federal and Provincial governments have enacted laws and provisions around harassment in the last five years, but neither Got Your Back's core membership or the authors of this survey are in a position to be pursue a government audit of workplace harassment in spaces of performance training.

How can you be held accountable for misuse of this information?

The authors of the research have taken every measure possible to ensure against the potential misuse of information collected.

This survey was designed in accordance with industry standards for research ethics regarding data collection from human participants. Likewise, the safe storage of this data is in accordance with industry standards, wherein the data is solely stored in an encrypted hard drive that is only accessible to the three authors of the project.

Upon release of the data, how can you ensure it will not be used as cause for cancelling arts funding?

The authors believe that the information gathered in this survey, and the best practice recommendations put forth based on that data, support the re-investment in performing arts education in ways that prioritize student and instructor safety, reflect a more diverse and inclusive artform, that builds a culture of consent, and allows for all students to be successful, all interests which require increased support from arts funding bodies.

If you'd like to learn more, or do more, we invite you to reach out to us at [Got Your Back Canada](#), or to read our [summary of the findings](#) in HowIRound Magazine, or the [full overview of the survey results](#).