Mental Health and Well-Being of Students and Staff During the Pandemic

Results from the April 2022 School Pulse Panel
In April 2022, school administrators reported on the mental health and well-being of students and the mental health services schools provided during the 2021–22 school year.

STUDENTS SEEKING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Percentage of public schools reporting more students seeking mental health services from school since the start of the pandemic: April 2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All public schools</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools in high-poverty neighborhoods</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools in low-poverty neighborhoods</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools with less than 300 students</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools with 300–499 students</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools with 500–999 students</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools with 1,000 or more students</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

More than **two-thirds** of public schools reported an increase in the percentage of students seeking mental health services from school since the start of the pandemic.

**Higher** percentages of public schools reported **economically disadvantaged students** and **students with IEPs** seeking mental health services than other student groups.
STAFF CONCERNS ABOUT STUDENTS’ MENTAL HEALTH

Percentage of public schools reporting that more staff expressed concerns with students exhibiting depression, anxiety, trauma, or emotional dysregulation/disturbance since the start of the pandemic: April 2022

Approximately three-quarters of public schools reported an increase in staff expressing concerns about student depression, anxiety, and other disturbances since the start of the pandemic.

SCHOOLS PROVIDING MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING SERVICES

Percentage of public schools that have increased the types or amount of mental health services they provide since the start of the pandemic: April 2022

Approximately two-thirds of public schools reported increasing the mental health services they provide since the start of the pandemic.
Just over half of public schools felt their school could effectively provide mental health services to all students in need:

- Higher percentages of public schools in rural and town locations than in suburban locations strongly disagreed that their school can effectively provide mental health services to all students in need.
- Of public schools that did not strongly agree that their school could effectively provide mental health services to all students in need, insufficient mental health professional staff coverage to manage caseload, inadequate access to licensed mental health professionals, and inadequate funding were the most frequently cited limiting factors.

Percentage of public schools by the extent to which they agree that their school is able to effectively provide mental health services to all students in need and by school location: April 2022

![Graph showing percentages of public schools by location and level of agreement on providing mental health services.]

Of those public schools that did not strongly agree that their school could effectively provide mental health services to all students in need, factors that limit their schools’ efforts to effectively provide such services:

- Insufficient mental health professional staff coverage to manage caseload: 61%
- Inadequate access to licensed mental health professionals: 57%
- Inadequate funding: 48%
- Concerns about reactions from parents: 15%
- Requirements that the school pay for the mental health services: 14%
- Lack of community support for providing mental health services to students in their school: 9%
- Potential legal issues for school or district: 8%
- Reluctance among staff to label students with mental health disorders to avoid stigmatizing the child: 8%
- Other: 5%
- None of the above: 7%
- Don’t know: 4%

*Interpret data with caution. The coefficient of variation is between 30 and 50, which indicates that the standard error for this estimate is 30 to 50 percent of the estimate’s value.

*Reporting standards not met.

NOTE: For a complete view of the results, visit the School Pulse Panel dashboard. The statements in the callout boxes are based on comparison tests with a statistical significance level set at .05. Only those differences that are found to be statistically significant are referred to as “higher” or “lower.” However, not all significant differences are reported.