



SCHOOL DISTRICT OF WISCONSIN DELLS
CONNECT + INSPIRE + ACHIEVE
Everyone. Every day.

Youth Mental Health and Suicide Prevention

The School District of Wisconsin Dells serves approximately 1,802 students from pre-K to 12. The SDWD is a richly diverse school community that works diligently to connect with every student and inspire each of them to reach their goals and achieve at the highest possible level. While we are a smaller Wisconsin school district, we are one of the more culturally, economically, and linguistically diverse districts. At this point in the 2024-25 school year, approximately 15.4% of our student population has an Individual Education Plan (IEP), 5% of our student population receives support under the McKinney-Vento (homeless) program, 12.7% of our student population are English language learners, and 61.1% of our student population is considered economically disadvantaged. We strive to celebrate our diversity and recognize that access to support can be a challenge for our families. The Wisconsin Dells community provides various resources, including food, holiday gifts, lodging support, and clothing, for those in need within the community.

The SDWD has recognized that mental health services are one area that continues to be lacking within our community and across Wisconsin. The Wisconsin Office of Children's Mental Health annually collects data on Wisconsin youth and mental health trends. The 2024 report was released on January 10, 2025. This report compares data on numerous indicators over the past five years. Below are some of the data from the 2024 report:

- Youth anxiety has risen by 29%.
- Depression has risen by 42%.
- Youth engaging in self-harm increased by 21%.
- Youth seriously considering suicide increased by 41%.
- 53% of youth report being on their screens after midnight regularly.
- In the last 10 years, the rate of teens who are getting adequate sleep has dropped by 25%.
- The percentage of students who report feeling connected to their school has dropped by 37% in the last 5 years.
- Half of the kids in Wisconsin between the ages of 3-17 with a mental health condition receive no treatment.

Research has shown there are many actions that can help youth with mental health challenges find relief and support. These actions include access to adequate mental health supports, universal mental health screening through doctors' offices and schools, teaching kids coping

skills to address stressful situations, reducing screen time, and not allowing screen time before bed. No one action can completely change the mental health challenges our Wisconsin youth face, but they can help.

The SDWD has been diligent regarding living our mission, vision, and belief statements. We want all kids to achieve at high levels; we know that supporting their mental health is a component of being able to accomplish that. Our School Counselors implement classroom curriculum, helping students with things like managing stress, conflict, and healthy social interactions. They meet with students in small groups and one-on-one. They also conduct mental health and suicide screening at different grade levels to hopefully find students who have not shared their struggles with anyone. All of our SDWD teachers have been trained in Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA). YMHFA is a skills-based training program designed to help people recognize and respond to mental health and substance use issues, similar to how people are trained in first aid for physical injuries.

Therapy services are limited in the Wisconsin Dells area, and those services that are available are often backlogged, leaving families who are seeking help with long waiting times to get an initial appointment. Due to "Let's Golf About It," the SDWD has been able to provide intensive mental health therapy services to 75 students within the SDWD. The therapy is provided virtually by a WI-licensed therapist. These are 75 students who, for various reasons, were not able to get traditional in-person therapy but are now receiving the needed therapy. Because of "Let's Golf About It," these 75 students have had access to the mental health supports that they needed at no charge to their families and without having to miss a significant amount of school to do so.

Through "Let's Golf About It," the SDWD has provided over 680 therapy sessions over the last one and a half years at a total cost of \$90,000.00. They have provided 89 individual therapy sessions in just the last 30 days. Again, this has cost the SDWD and parents nothing but has provided significant support to our students. Currently, we have been able to provide for any student who requests and participates in the therapy sessions.

Attached are Suicide prevention resources provided by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.

[DPI Suicide Prevention English](#)

[DPI Suicide Prevention Spanish](#)