

# There is an urgent need to increase school mental health services.

## Facts about mental health in U.S. children

The U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences (IES) reported that 69 percent of public schools reported an increase in the percentage of their students seeking mental health services at school since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, and roughly three-quarters (76 percent) of schools also reported an increase in staff voicing concerns about their students exhibiting symptoms such as depression, anxiety, and trauma (IES, May 2022).

The IES findings are from the latest round of the experimental, monthly School Pulse Panel (SPP). The panel was designed to be nationally representative of public primary, middle, high, and combined-grade schools, with data collected between April 12 and April 26, 2022. Findings also note that nearly all of the nation's public schools (96 percent) reported providing mental health services for their students during the 2021-22 school year. However, 87 percent of public schools did not strongly agree that they could effectively provide mental health services to all students in need. The three most prevalent limitations identified by these schools that limit their ability to serve their students' mental health needs were an insufficient number of mental health professionals to manage their school's caseload, inadequate access to licensed mental health professionals, and inadequate funding.

[Review the full IES report.](#)



### **\*Notable Highlights from the 2021 Youth Risk Behavior Survey Data Summary and Trends Report**

42% of high school students experienced persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness during the past year.

- Female students were more likely than male students to experience poor mental health.
- Asian and African American students were less likely than Hispanic and multiracial students to experience poor mental health.
- Asian students were also less likely than white students to experience poor mental health.
- LGBTQ+ students and students who had any same-sex partners were more likely than their peers to experience poor mental health.

*\*Indicates data from the Youth Risk Behavior Survey Data Summary & Trends Report: 2011-2021. The report provides the most recent surveillance data, as well as 10-year trends, on health behaviors and experiences among high school students in the United States. Review the YRBS Survey results.*