Reducing the Stigma of Youth Mental Health in Alabama

Celebrating Alabama's Progress

Certified Public Manager Program

CPM Solutions Alabama 2024

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TEAM MEMBERS

Alabama Alcoholic Beverage Control Board

Tawanna Bedgood

**Alabama Department of
Environmental Management**

William McClimans

Alabama Department of Labor

Lara Griswold

Alabama Department of Revenue

Yolanda Davis

Tina Miller

Davina Williams

Alabama Department of Tourism

Emily White

The research, findings, and recommendations presented in this white paper do not represent the views of any agency or organization, but rather the collective educational research and analysis from the above diverse group of participants in the Certified Public Manager® Training Program.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Youth Mental Health Team would like to acknowledge, recognize, and provide thanks to the following individuals, agencies, and organizations for providing their assistance and support throughout this project:

Beverly Johnson

Director of Child and Family Services

Alabama Department of Mental Health

Brandon Folks

Senior Program Manager

Alabama Department of Mental Health

Brent Cosby

Account Manager

Beacon Children's Hospital

Sean Stevens

State Leader of Curriculum/Instruction and School Counseling

Alabama State Department of Education

INTRODUCTION

It is common for individuals to seek medical care when they are not feeling well and get annual physicals or wellness check-ups from a medical professional. We do this because we want our bodies to be healthy so we can have the best life possible. Mental health is an often-overlooked part of well-being that affects individuals socially, emotionally, psychologically, and physically. Mental health disorders or mental illnesses refer to a wide range of conditions affecting a person's behavior, mood, or thinking. Some examples of mental health disorders include anxiety, depression, eating disorders, and schizophrenia (Mayo Clinic, 2019).

Mental health shapes a person's life at a very young age, beginning in childhood, into adolescent years, and throughout adult life. Today, our youths' mental health has been affected more than ever before. Mental health and substance use is now Alabama's number one health concern according to the World Health Organization's 2015 survey (WHO Mental Well-Being). The discrimination, prejudice, and stigma against people with a mental health condition is a particularly serious concern. Over 50% of individuals will experience a mental health condition at some point in their lifetime, making such conditions more common than realized (Brainsway, 2024). Despite the prevalence of these conditions, only a fraction of people receive treatment. Approximately half of all children and adolescents with mental health problems in the United States received mental health services (Wang et al., 2023).

The following research will define the different types of mental health stigma and the barriers preventing individuals from getting the help they need. The Reducing the Stigma of Youth Mental Health in Alabama CPM Solutions Project Team will illustrate ways to reduce the stigma that is associated with youth mental health and offer recommendations to increase participation in obtaining optimum health by:

- Highlighting the importance of youth mental health in Alabama and across the nation.

- Examining barriers to receiving youth mental health treatment.

- Highlighting current efforts to reduce the stigma of mental health in Alabama.

- Providing information on what other states are doing to increase healthcare participation.

- Recommending proposals to reduce the stigma of youth mental health in Alabama and increase healthcare participation.

BACKGROUND

Stigma refers to the negative, discrediting, devaluing, unfair beliefs and shaming of a person because of characteristics or attributes that they possess. Generally, stigma can lead to negative experiences such as isolation, rejection, and discrimination. Mental health stigma can prevent a person from seeking or continuing necessary treatment. Stigma has also been reported to affect patients' families or relatives, along with professionals who work in mental health facilities. The following paragraphs identify the types of stigmas and how they relate to mental health (Subu et al., 2021).

TYPES OF STIGMAS

Cultural/Community - Each culture has its understanding, interpretation, and beliefs around mental health conditions. This includes their ways of coping with stress and discomfort, which may not include medical care.

In numerous cultures, the negative stigma surrounding mental health conditions and therapy can be a significant barrier to seeking professional help. Studies indicate that individuals from racial and ethnic minority groups in the United States are less likely to pursue therapy services. The desire for acceptance within one's community can often lead to a fear of shame or embarrassment, which discourages people from seeking mental health treatment (Modir & Akfaro, 2020).

Perceived/Internalized -People may internalize perceived prejudices, develop negative feelings about themselves, and feel shame and embarrassment about their mental conditions (Mental Health Stigma, 2023)

Institutional/Structural/Professional – In some cases, professionals may direct negative attitudes and feelings toward individuals with mental health conditions. This type of stigma

relates to how the institution and its operations can affect a person indirectly. This can include laws or policies that, intentionally or not, may discriminate against people with mental health conditions. (Mental Health Stigma, 2023)

Public/External – This type of stigma involves the negative or discriminatory attitudes and practices that others may have about individuals with mental conditions. This stigma comes from other people, even within their communities (Mental Health Stigma, 2023).

No matter the reason, mental health stigma affects people personally and presents a barrier for individuals to receive the quality of healthcare needed. However, support groups can reduce the barrier to mental health treatment by offering emotional support and validation for those experiencing various types of stigmas.

IMPACT OF YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH

Mental health conditions among young people in Alabama are a dire concern due to several factors which include socioeconomics, limited access to mental health services, and stigmas associated with mental conditions. While research shows that mental conditions are common throughout the United States, it is estimated that only half of the people living with a mental health condition ever receive treatment (National Institute of Mental Health, 2023).

Mental health conditions are widespread in the youth of Alabama and leaving these conditions untreated can have a detrimental impact on a person's overall health, quality of life, and education. One in five youths in the United States between the ages of nine to seventeen years old have a mental health condition. The most common of these mental health conditions in adolescents include anxiety, attention, behavioral, and mood disorders (Mental Health Disorders in Adolescents). Students with mental health conditions often find it difficult to concentrate or complete assignments. The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) reports that mental health conditions, such as depression, are the most significant cause of dropouts in high school students (National Alliance on Mental Illness, 2023).

Living with an untreated mental health condition can have an impact on a young person's social life. It can be difficult to form or maintain relationships and can lead to social isolation. Reports

from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention state that poor mental health can lead to substance use, criminal activity, or other risk-taking behaviors (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2021). The NAMI statistics show that 70% of youth in the juvenile justice system have a diagnosable mental health issue (NAMI, 2024). Leaving mental health conditions untreated during adolescence can result in problems that follow into adulthood such as health issues, lower socioeconomic status, a higher rate of incarceration, and a reduced life expectancy. People with depression have a higher risk of developing chronic health issues such as cardiovascular and metabolic diseases than the general population, and studies show that the leading cause of disability worldwide is depression. Studies also show that those with serious mental health conditions make up over 20% of people experiencing homelessness (National Alliance on Mental Illness, 2023).

The risk of self-harm or suicide increases in individuals with mental health conditions. Suicide is now amongst the leading causes of death in adolescents and young adults ages 10-24. According to interviews with family, friends, and medical professionals, 90% of people who die by suicide may have experienced symptoms of a mental health condition (National Alliance on Mental Illness, 2023). In fact, Alabama can foster healthier, more resilient generations of young people by making sure these mental health conditions are not overlooked, and that all youth have access to mental health care now and in the future.

BARRIERS TO MENTAL HEALTH CARE

The stigma of youth mental health is the primary focus of our research and recommendations, but other barriers prevent individuals from receiving healthcare. In the United States, access to treatment for mental health conditions remains out of reach for most people. In 2020, 21% of adults (52.9 million) had a mental health condition. Individuals with insurance still encountered issues such as lack of available providers, inadequate insurance coverage, high out-of-pocket costs, and lack of reliable transportation. Overcoming barriers to accessing mental health care in the United States is a key focus in improving access, coverage, and affordability of mental health care (Association of American Medical Colleges, 2024).

Insurance Acceptance

There is an ongoing issue of individuals being able to find a mental health provider that will accept their insurance for treatment. "A 2014 study found that only 55% of psychiatrists accepted private insurance as compared with 89% of physicians in other specialties in 2009-2010. This disparity is similar for those on Medicare and Medicaid." (Modi et all, 2022). Some low-cost options include your local state health department, some nonprofit organizations, private therapists that offer sliding-scale payment options based on income, and on-line therapy options. There are even a few possibilities for free therapy that include licensed professionals who offer group therapy sessions, university clinics, employee assistance programs, and Medicaid (GoodRx, 2024).

Access to Care

Access to care refers to the ease with which an individual can obtain mental health services. Individuals, specifically in rural areas, face challenges to receiving the care they need for their mental health conditions. Usually, individuals living in rural areas without reliable vehicles, face obstacles due to a lack of public transportation, and the need to travel longer distances to get treatment. Several approaches give individuals hope, such as mobile clinics, and expanding the availability of telehealth services (Rural Health Information Hub, n.d.).

Additionally, increasing mental health literacy is crucial in reducing the stigma within communities. Addressing the mental health stigma includes making resources available for individuals who need health care providers, insurance, and low-cost payment options. Ways to provide resources include reaching out to communities for support, healthcare facilities, providers, schools, and even social platforms to raise awareness of the importance of mental health literacy and solutions (Rural Health Information Hub, n.d.).

ALABAMA INITIATIVES

The Alabama Department of Mental Health (ADMH) serves more than 200,000 Alabama citizens with mental illnesses, developmental disabilities, and substance use disorders. Their mission is to serve, empower, support, and promote the health and well-being of Alabamians (Alabama Department of Mental Health – Connecting Mind and Wellness, n.d.).

The Alabama Department of Mental Health (ADMH) Office of Infant and Early Childhood Special Programs, the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE), and the Pediatric Access to Telemental Health Services Program of Children's of Alabama have partnered to train school systems' Mental Health Service Coordinators throughout the state on infant and early childhood mental health fundamentals. "The program will assist Mental Health Service Coordinators to better connect students in our public schools," said Commissioner Kimberly Boswell, Alabama Department of Mental Health (ADMH). The Mental Health Service Coordinators have a vital role in providing mental health support, connecting students with school counselors, therapists, and social workers, offering referrals to community services, and finding the right resources children might need.

Participants had positive reviews of the first two sessions held. A Mental Health Service Coordinator stated how they love the scientific connection and examples as it is so clear how impactful teachers and parents are on the behaviors of students and their ability to be healthy and productive. Another coordinator loved learning more about attachments in children and how trauma affects the brain mentally. The training series was held by Stacey Daugherty, Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant with the Alabama Department of Mental Health. The first two sessions were conducted in May 2022 and the series was completed on August 23, 2022 (ADMH, 2022).

But there is more, Alabama has several initiatives and resources to help reduce the stigma associated with youth mental health. These Alabama initiatives teach awareness, and how to attain the necessary resources to seek proper mental health care. The following campaigns and events serve our youth throughout the state of Alabama.

No Shame Campaign

In 2023, the "No Shame" Suicide
Prevention Campaign was introduced by
the Alabama Department of Mental Health.
The goal of the campaign is to prevent
suicide and reduce the stigma around
mental conditions by bringing hope instead
of judgment. The campaign educates the

public on the warning signs of someone in crisis. It also provides information on how to reach
out for help. The campaign includes the National Suicide and Crisis Lifeline phone number, 988
(Holloway, May 2023). While the 988 Lifeline is for individuals of all ages, the campaign
encourages youth to reach out to friends and trusted adults for support, citing that suicide is the
second leading cause of death for young people between the ages of 10 and 34 (Holloway,
September 2023). According to the annual report for the year 2023, the 988 Suicide and Crisis
Lifeline had 45,345 contacts, either by call, text, or chat. This includes 29,612 calls, 6,280 chats,
and 9,453 texts. A 988 therapist shared an experience that impacted her personally. During a call,
the caller was threatening suicide because he possibly hurt his mother. The therapist was able to
get him to leave the train tracks and get safely into his vehicle. A short while later, his father
arrived and was thankful for everyone's help. The therapist stated outcomes like this have
encouraged them to continue to care and want to help others who may be at a crossroads with life
and death (ADMH, 2023.).

Strike Out Stigma

Strike out Stigma coincides with Mental Health
Awareness Month. This is a day when the Alabama
Department of Mental Health (ADMH) teams up with
the Montgomery Biscuits to increase awareness about
mental health. The event helps people of all ages
realize that their mental health is as important as their
physical health. ADMH uses this event to share

educational materials and information about mental health. The information includes locations where individuals can receive mental health and support services. Although the impact of this campaign is unknown, it aims to connect individuals to initiate conversations that will lead to individuals being willing to seek help for themselves and others. The campaign has been ongoing for six years. (Alabama Department of Mental Health, 2022-b).

Alabama Crisis Center of Care/Crisis Centers

In a significant investment in state mental health services, Governor Kay Ivey placed a strong emphasis on creating a comprehensive mental health crisis care network, with support from House Majority Leader Nathaniel Ledbetter in the Alabama Legislature. This care network is known as the Alabama Crisis System of Care, which includes the crisis centers. The initial funding for three crisis centers was secured through an $18 million allocation in the FY2021 General Fund budget, with ongoing funding allocated in general fund budgets to sustain the current crisis centers and establish additional centers.

Crisis centers are locations where individuals can visit voluntarily, or where law enforcement, emergency responders, and EMS personnel can bring an individual experiencing a mental health or substance use crisis at any time. These centers offer services such as stabilization, assessment, psychiatric care, and connections to community support services (Alabama Department of Mental Health, n.d.).

The Alabama Crisis System of Care serves individuals of all ages, which includes youth. This initiative has helped to decrease the number of admissions to hospitals and provide connections and referrals to agencies and organizations to assist those in a mental health crisis to get help and achieve stability.

Crisis Centers in Alabama:
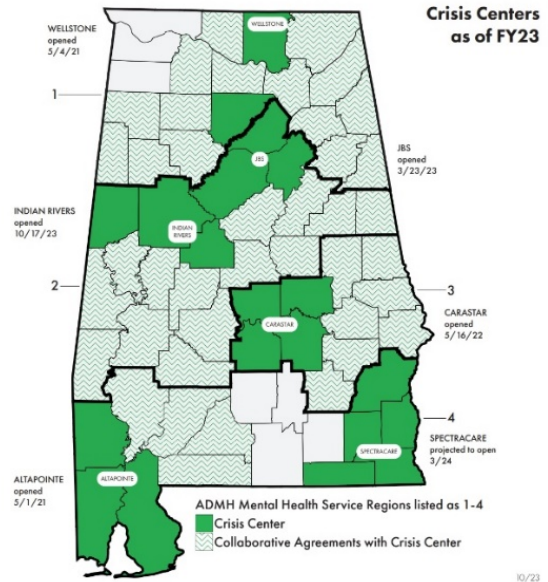
AltaPointe Behavioral Health Crisis Center
(Mobile)

Carastar Crisis Center (Montgomery)

**Indian Rivers Hope Pointe Behavioral Health
Crisis Care** (Tuscaloosa)

**Jefferson, Blount, St. Clair Behavioral
Services** (Birmingham)

**WellStone Emergency Services** (Huntsville)

SpectraCare Health Systems (Dothan)

Rural Crisis Care and Mobile Crisis Teams

In Alabama, 55 out of the 67 counties are considered
rural. This makes traveling to a Crisis Center a barrier to
care. To alleviate the burden on those living in rural
areas, ADMH now includes Mobile Crisis Teams
(MCT) as part of the Alabama Crisis System.

The objectives of mobile crisis services are in line with
the broader aims of crisis intervention, which include
alleviating the strain on hospitals and emergency
departments, lightening the load for emergency
responders, and enhancing access to care (Alabama
Department of Mental Health, n.d.-c).
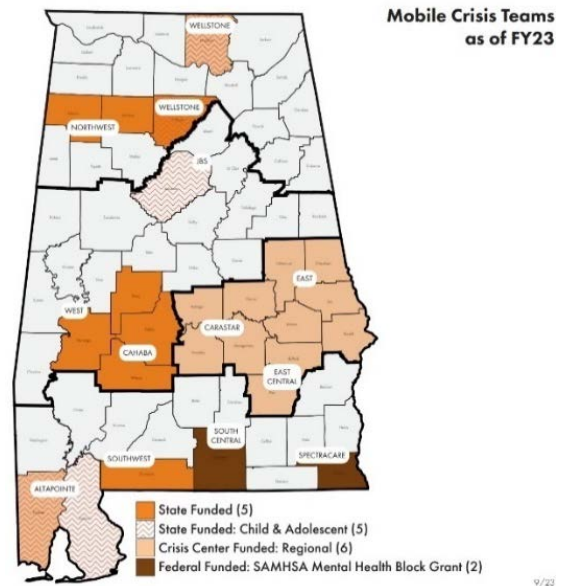
Key elements involve deploying a team of two people called Mobile Crisis Teams (MCT) that
deliver community-based support to individuals in crisis no matter where they are in the
community. MCTs are equipped with the necessary training to provide triage, evaluation, de-

escalation, peer guidance, collaboration with healthcare providers, counseling, developing plans to address the crisis, and continuation services. They can operate independently or in collaboration with law enforcement.

Mobile crisis intervention reduces avoidable emergency room trips and arrests among individuals experiencing mental health, suicidal, and/or substance use crises. Moreover, MCTs collaborate with 988 and the regional Crisis Centers to ensure crisis care is provided within the framework of the Alabama Crisis System of Care (Alabama Department of Mental Health, n.d.-d).

Funding from state and federal sources was provided to create seven community mental health centers, which combined, have eleven mobile crisis teams. Five of the teams provide support for children and adolescents. From January 2023 to May 2024, 6,225 people were served by mobile crisis teams, including children through the child & adolescent mobile teams. The mobile teams work diligently to provide mental health access in rural communities (ADMH Initiatives – Alabama Department of Mental Health, n.d.).

Connect Alabama

Connect Alabama is an app that provides Alabamians with instant information regarding mental health, prevention, and substance use. It also provides a services locator page that provides a directory of services available including location, demographics, and services rendered at each location. The app includes a special feature that allows it to function even when the internet is not available. Static information is accessible anytime and will update once an internet connection becomes available. The app was paid for by a partnership with the Alabama Department of Mental Health and the Alabama Department of Public Health. The app itself was created by VitAL which is part of The University of Alabama School of Social Work (Alabama Department of Mental Health, n.d.- e). The Alabama Department of Mental Health states, "Connect Alabama is an important tool, offering fast and reliable service to anyone of any age looking for help. It may take an individual many years to simply reach out for help with mental health conditions or a substance use disorder. We need as

many avenues as possible for an individual to seek treatment and information when they are ready to take the next step toward recovery" (ADMH, n.d.).

Mental Health Awareness Month

The month of May is designated nationally as Mental Health Awareness Month. The Alabama Department of Mental Health (ADMH) uses this month to raise awareness, bring hope, and reduce the stigma associated with mental health. They encourage people of all ages to reach out for help and provide information on lifesaving resources such as the Crisis Centers and 988 Lifeline. 2023's Mental Health Month theme was "Look Around, Look Within" which reminded Alabamians that many different factors affect mental health (Alabama Department of Mental Health, 2023-f). The 2024 theme was "Where to Start".

ADMH uses this month to educate the public on resources that are available and where to find needed resources, services and support. They want all Alabamians to know that help is available (Alabama Department of Mental Health, 2024-g). ADMH's Commissioner Kimberly Boswell said "For individuals and families that do not know where to start, the Alabama Crisis System of Care offers an access point to mental health, substance use, or suicidal crisis services and resources. Through the 988 Lifeline, Mobile Crisis Teams, and Crisis Centers located around the state, help is available. Alabama is continuously strengthening and building to support individuals seeking mental health care while spreading awareness and dismantling the stigma surrounding mental health" (Alabama Department of Mental Health, 2024-g).

RESEARCH FROM OTHER STATES

Georgia Initiatives

The Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD) website has the following statistics related to youth mental health. One out of eight teens suffer from depression, more than half of mental health disorders start by age 14, and suicide is the second leading cause of death. Nearly 40,000 students reported having attempted suicide and another 78,000 reported having seriously considered it on a 2018-2019 Georgia Student Health

Survey. Additionally, intentional self-harm was reported by more than 61,000 students (Clay, 2022).

A 2023 Georgia student health survey of middle and high school students found that nearly 52 percent of students felt sad, depressed, or withdrawn one or more times in the last 30 days, more than 25,000 students felt this way continuously (State of Georgia). On September 10, 2020, to help with mental health conditions, Voices for Georgia's Children (Voices) and DBHDD started the "Free Your Feels" (FYF) campaign which is designed to raise awareness about youth mental health.

The FYF campaign is a mental health awareness campaign designed to help Georgia's children stay mentally healthy by exploring their real feelings and sharing them fearlessly with others (peers, parents, teachers, etc.). It has created digital content that can be utilized by anyone interested in helping a young person by providing resources, tips, and tools. The FYF campaign goals are to eliminate the stigma of openly talking about mental health and knowing where to go to find resources or treatment. The overarching goals of the program are 1 – To Speak: We want to empower youth to speak out and express their real feelings, 2 – To Listen: We want to encourage adults and peers to check in with each other and listen judgment-free, and 3 – To Connect: We want to connect everyone to resources for further guidance or help (Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities, n.d.).

The FYF campaign is a resource storehouse for youth, educators, families, and other interested parties to help broaden the conversation about youth mental health. The FYF website contains a blueprint for implementation, youth and teen resources, educator and professional resources, parent and caregiver resources, features stories, and tips and tools. The FYF campaign is sponsored by Voices of Georgia's Children, DBHDD, Vox ATL, Silence the Shame, and Ser Familia.

In 2023, Silence the Shame organized three FYF Teen Summits. These summits were held in Augusta, Dalton, and Savannah, Georgia. The summits provide a place where youth and caregivers can access resources and share their voices. "Through the summits, partners (1)

Increase youth voice in the community and promote suicide prevention resources (2) Gain leadership buy-in to promote resilience support to students and families (3) Enhance mental health awareness and education for students to support peers in the community (4) promote help-seeking behavior and reduce negative public attitudes associated with mental health conditions" (Free Your Feels Impact Report - Georgia Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Disabilities et al., 2023). The FYF Teen Summits were attended by 155 youth, 65 caregivers, and 28 community partners.

The FYF campaign has impacted youth in Georgia by holding teen summits, creating podcasts, and connecting through social media. By dividing the information into these three areas, each group can quickly locate resources specific to them. The teens are encouraged to post to the #FreeYourFeels story wall with their mental health story or journey, messages of hope and encouragement. Teens are also able to like or respond to each other's messages.

Fortunately, the FYF Teen Summit resulted in positive results. Program participants completed an online survey for the cities of Augusta and Savannah. The survey showcases three areas (1) 61% strongly agree, and 27% agree that as a result of the summit, they feel more confident that they can identify ways to cope and maintain their mental wellness through periods of stress (2) 51% strongly agree, and 32% agree that the summit has taught them ways to share their voice around their wellness, written and verbally (3) 37% strongly agree, and 45% agree that as a result of participating in the summit they will advocate for their wellness. Some teens even shared how the summit helped them. For example, 15-year-old Ariel Mack stated "I think this is a safe place. When you say things here, you feel comfortable because you are not alone in this space" (Free Your Feels, n.d.).

Florida Initiatives

Florida has a variety of initiatives and programs aimed at the prevention and support of youth mental health. The Florida Department of Education requires students in grades 6 - 12 of Florida's public schools to receive at least five hours of mental health instruction each year beginning in 2019-2020. Subsequently, the Resiliency Florida Initiative was launched in February 2021 by First Lady Casey DeSantis to instill character development skills, which

includes problem-solving and teamwork in students to equip them to overcome challenges and adversities (Florida Department of Education, 2024).

Florida AWARE is a program awarded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration to the Florida Department of Education's Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services. Florida AWARE's purpose is to support the districts and provide youth who experience mental health issues access to support services. The program will follow a Florida Aware Vision Model that will (1) Define the problem (2) Analyze why it is occurring (3) Implement what we are going to do about it (4) Evaluate if it is working. Although there aren't definite numbers of how many youths participated, the program is ongoing (Florida AWARE, 2024a).

Florida AWARE has partnered with Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA), which is a free eight-hour course that educates participants on the risk factors and warning signs of mental health problems in adolescents ages 12 – 18. YMHFA teaches participants how to help an adolescent who is experiencing mental health issues through a five-step action plan: assess for risk of suicide or harm; listen nonjudgmentally; give reassurance and information; encourage appropriate professional help; and encourage self-help and other support strategies. Once the program is completed, participants become certified Youth Mental Health First Aiders registered with the National Council for Behavioral Health and receive a First Aider certificate, a list of local resources, and a complimentary training manual. As a result of the program, the impact is clear. As of 2023, 326,586 individuals have been trained in Youth Mental Health First Aid. Also, the Florida Legislature has passed a requirement that every school district expand access to mental health literacy training. Nearly 150,000 school personnel in Florida received Youth Mental Health First Aid training in the 2022-2023 school year (Florida AWARE, 2024b).

The "Be a Mindleader" campaign was started by Advent Health for Children and Heart of Florida United Way to provide information to children and their caregivers to facilitate conversations about mental health. According to Dr. Rajan Wadhawan, senior executive officer of Advent Health for Children, "A Mindleader speaks up when they're having a hard time and makes others feel safe to speak up, too." Advent Health for Children will also host school events that teach children skills to care for their mental health.

Advent Health also received a $6 million grant from Dr. Phillips Charities to establish the Center for Advancement and Support of Youth (CASY). CASY is a youth mental and behavioral health program for Central Florida that will expand access to pediatric mental health care (Seventh Day Adventist Church, 2023). On a positive note, 77% of parents said they were more likely to discuss mental health with their kids, and there was an increase in the number of parents who said they felt more comfortable striking up conversations, identifying warning signs of mental health conditions, and finding resources for their children after seeing the campaign (American Hospital Association, 2024).

Texas Initiatives

In the State of Texas more than 1.2 million children (17.2%) under the age of 18 reported having one or more mental, emotional, developmental, or behavioral problems. Twenty-two percent of youth reported seriously considering attempting suicide in the 12 months before the 2021 Texas Youth Risk Behavior Survey. The survey also found that 20% of students went so far as planning on how they would commit suicide (McAdams, 2023).

In 2011-2012, a study was conducted to determine if a school-based curriculum, "Eliminating the Stigma of Differences" (ESD), would improve attitudes and behaviors regarding mental health conditions. It also sought to determine if participating students would be more willing to seek treatment for mental health problems if needed. "ESD shows potential for improving the social climate related to mental health conditions in schools and increasing treatment-seeking when needed. ESD and interventions like it show promise as part of a public mental health response to youth with mental health needs in schools." Results showed that youth assigned to (ESD) reported greater knowledge and positive attitudes than youth in comparative interventions or no

intervention groups. Also, youth with high levels of mental health symptoms were more likely to seek treatment during follow-up if assigned to ESD than if they were assigned to comparative interventions or no intervention. ESD does show potential for improving the social climate related to mental health conditions (Link 2020).

In May of 2023, the Austin Public Health (APH) and Integral Care Texas started the "Ask, Listen, Talk, Repeat" campaign to help parents and caregivers start the critical conversation about mental health and make children's mental health a public health priority (Austin Public Health, 2023). The "Ask, Listen, Talk, Repeat" campaign seeks to raise awareness by creating a safe environment for kids to talk about mental health issues. Organizers believe the campaign will help reduce the stigma associated with mental health. A website, Ask ListenTalk.org, was created as a place for parents and caregivers to access resources to support their children. The website is broken into four main areas: Know the Signs, Start the Conversation, Support Your Mental Health, and Get Help. The "Get Help Page" includes a mental health care directory of locations in the area, support groups, hotlines, and other resources. However, organizers of the campaign believe the program will help lower the negative stigma that is still associated with mental health. The results and impact of campaign efforts are ongoing (Austin Public Health, 2023, Ask, Listen, Talk, Repeat).

Tennessee Initiatives

In 2021, the Tennessee legislature passed a law to create the K-12 Mental Health Trust Fund with a one-time investment of $250 million for mental health services for school-aged children. $225 million of original investment, which is never spent, would be placed in a trust to earn interest. The perpetual funding is based upon the $25 million and the interest earned. According to Representative Chris Hurt, the trust was created to perpetually fund children's mental health in good or bad economic times. Mental health expenditures are not expected to take place until the 2024 – 2025 fiscal year pending an assessment of mental health services available for children in Tennessee's 95 counties (Carlson, 2023).

Tennessee has several youth mental health initiatives, including BASIC: Better Attitudes and Skills in Children. The BASIC program is offered in 64 Tennessee elementary schools, which identifies children at risk of serious emotional disorders, and refers them to treatment. The BASIC program is staffed with full-time participants who offer mental health education to children and coaching strategies to teachers that promote the emotional development of children. This award-winning program improves the school environment and provides mental health education through interaction in the classroom. This program is still active, although current measures of impact are not yet established (Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, 2024a).

Funding through the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services allows employees of local community mental health centers to provide the School-Based Behavioral Health Liaison Program. In coordination with local school district leaders, school-based behavioral health liaisons are placed in schools that are determined to have the greatest needs. With parental/caretaker consent, liaisons provide services such as individual counseling sessions, mental health assessments and referrals, and training for school personnel on behavioral health topics. One success story includes a teen and her mom. The teen faced mental health symptoms after COVID and was bullied because of it, but no therapy seemed to help. The family moved to Knoxville, TN where a guidance counselor picked up on the teen's behavior and offered help. After only three sessions, the mom could see the difference in her daughter's behavior and attitude. Master-level counselors worked continuously to help her, even during the summer using telehealth sessions. The program has helped over 2,600 students in 15 schools across Tennessee (Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, 2024b).

Advancing Wellness and Resilience in Education, the Project AWARE grant program builds state and local collaborative infrastructure to plan and implement school and community mental health programs. Project AWARE employs district mental health professionals and features formalized agreements with mental health providers to locate services on school campuses.

The AWARE grant focuses on promoting mental health wellness and reducing stigma by engaging youth in outreach and activities that raise mental health awareness. The grant has

received three rounds of funding. For example, in Cocke County, the grant has allowed schools to have three Student Support Specialists and an AWARE director added to the school district. The funding allows for mental health resources to be available to the students. Resources include intervening in non-crisis and crisis situations or making referrals to community mental health professionals. The program is funded through the year 2026 (Tennessee Department of Education, 2024).

Maryland Initiatives

Recently, the Kennedy Krieger Institute launched "Chill out, Mind: A Teenager's Guide to Mental Health," an animated video series for teenagers that seeks to remove the stigma around depression, anxiety, and other mental health conditions. The video series also provides steps for adolescents who want to seek mental health care. The series features real-life stories that help teenagers understand how their minds work, why they feel the way they do, and how to navigate concerns about their mental health. Dr. Carmen Lopez-Arvizu, director of Kennedy Krieger's outpatient psychiatric services, served as the series consultant and is featured in the first episode. Future episodes focus on anxiety, and depression, among other topics. For parents, there is a landing page that includes mental health resources, a glossary of terms, and a list of common mental health myths with explanations for why they are incorrect.

Dr. Lopez-Arvizu stated even before the COVID-19 pandemic, there was an increase in young people reporting continued feelings of sadness. She emphasized that now we must move beyond awareness to education and address the most common barrier to care: stigma. Real-life stories help people to communicate and share their own experiences. Chris Mason-Hale, a community advocate stars in the first episode. He shares how he dealt with depression and learned to communicate with loved ones after a football injury in high school that caused him to be paralyzed. He stated how hard it is to communicate with the people who care about you the most. Furthermore, the hope is that the series will encourage kids to have these conversations with their friends, parents, and other trusted people in their lives (Chill Out, Mind, 2024).

RESEARCH OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES

Australia Initiative

Teen Mental Health First Aid (tMHFA) is an evidence-based program developed in Australia. Because of the growing adolescent mental health crisis, the National Council on Mental Being partnered with Johns Hopkins University and introduced the program to the United States. The program is designed to train teenagers on how to provide support to their peers who may be experiencing mental health challenges or crises. Survey data from the National Survey on Drug Use and Health shows that teens aged 12-17 experiencing a major depressive episode increased from 9% in 2004 to 15.7% in 2019. The program aims to increase mental health literacy, reduce stigma, and promote early intervention for mental health conditions. This program has been designed for teens in grades 10 – 12 (NIMH, 2024.).

tMHFA is broken down into three main sessions. The first session focuses on increasing awareness and understanding of common mental health conditions, as well as the importance of early intervention. The second session focuses on how to respond to peers going through a mental health condition. The third session provides a detailed plan of action for helping a peer through a crisis (Hart et al. BMC Public Health).

Research has shown that tMHFA is effective in improving teens' knowledge and attitudes towards mental health. A study published in the Journal of Adolescent Health found that tMHFA training led to increased confidence in helping peers with mental health issues and reduced stigma around seeking help for mental health concerns (S.H. Ng et al). A quote from a study in BMC Public Health states, "There was reliable evidence that tMHFA was associated with improvements in students' quality of first aid intentions towards peers with depression and suicide risk, students' confidence in helping peers with either depression or social anxiety/phobia, students' willingness to disclose personal MHPs, and positive attitudes towards

seeking help from adults. This study is the first to show effective stigma reduction in students one year after training" (Hart et al. BMC Public Health).

United Kingdom Initiatives

"Through our work with young people, emergency response, homeless charities, and with veterans, we have seen time and time again that unresolved mental health problems lie at the heart of some of our greatest social challenges." – The Prince of Wales (Heads Together, 2023)

With a view to getting a series of innovative new mental health services, Heads Together, a mental health initiative combining a campaign to confront stigma and shift the conversation on mental health, was spearheaded by The Royal Foundation of the Prince and Princess of Wales (Heads Together, 2023b). The 2017 Virgin Money London Marathon selected Heads Together as their charity of the year. This was the perfect catalyst for this campaign, as it attracted hundreds of runners to participate in a Mental Health Marathon. As a result, it raised €61.5m and encouraged an increased number of people in the UK to transparently speak about mental health while securing resources and services. The Royal Foundation was also inspired to develop several legacy projects of programs and applications such as Mentally Healthy Schools (The Royal Foundation, n.d.).

In 2018, Mentally Healthy Schools was launched by Catherine, Princess of Wales, in partnership with Anna Freud, Young Minds, Place2Be and The Royal Foundation. Mentally Healthy Schools is a free and easy to use website specifically designed to offer primary school teachers greater support and advice by providing reliable and practical resources including 600+ lesson plans, activities, assemblies and more, to make it easier for them to better support their pupils' mental health and wellbeing" (Heads Together, 2023c).

The site is divided into the following sections:

- *Classroom and wellbeing support***:** Provides free resources for teachers such as lesson and assembly plans regarding general mental health and wellbeing.

- *Whole-school or college approach***:** Funding by the Department of Education, for practical mental health and wellbeing tools and resources provided by trusted organizations and training providers.

- *Mental health data*: Provides different condition data and risk factors that may affect or challenge the mental health of children and young people.

The whole-school or college approach assists educational leaders in creating the vast advocacy to assist children and families throughout their schools and colleges.

"Adopting the whole-school approach develops a mentally healthy school that nurtures mental health and wellbeing. It involves commitment and collaboration between all divisions of the school, in addition to partnerships amongst senior leaders, teachers, school staff, parents, and the community and state at large" (Whole-school Approach: Mentally Healthy Schools, n.d.).

In 2022, just five years after launching the Heads Up Campaign and Mentally Healthy Schools, research shows that 1) there was a 42% (estimated at six million) increase in adults talking about their mental health, 2) over 54% of adults in Britain felt there was a reduction in mental health stigma, 3) the number of people performing activities to safeguard their mental health increased from 31% to 38%, and 4) of the 1.5 million users of the Mentally Healthy Schools application, 86% indicated that website has elevated confidence in their ability to have conversations about mental health with students (Five Years on: Changing the Conversation on Mental Health, 2022).

Additionally, all United Kingdom schools are challenged to organize and encourage their students to participate in the Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) Mini London Marathon in schools to raise funds for worthy causes. Depending upon age and abilities, students run, jog, walk, or wheel a specified distance in their school setting. Since 2020, over a million students have participated in this marathon (Mini London Marathon in Schools, n.d.-c).

RECOMMENDATIONS

The mission for the State of Alabama should be to empower every young person to be nonreceptive of the stigma that prevents them from embracing and speaking about who they are, acknowledging their struggles, and seeking the mental health resources they need. For far too long, young people have been too afraid to admit the struggles they face. In doing so, the result is broken homes and families. Creating a culture that educates all citizens on mental health through campaigns that foster awareness may reduce stigma, prejudice, judgment, and discrimination against those with mental health conditions.

The Reducing the Stigma of Youth Mental Health Team has researched and found vital information for improving our youths' mental health by researching best practices from Alabama, other states, and initiatives taking place outside the United States. There has been coverage of several programs, services, and other states' initiatives that reduce the stigma of youth mental health, improve educating youth on mental health, provide funding to make mental healthcare affordable, and improve access for healthcare in all areas. Based upon this research, the team recommends for Alabama to (1) implement an awareness campaign video series on social media platforms and in schools; (2) utilize teen mental health first aid in Alabama.

Implement Awareness Campaign Video Series

Based on the research from the Georgia "Free Your Feels" campaign and the Kennedy Krieger Institute's "Chill out, Mind" series, we recommend producing a video series on mental health awareness and making it readily available to the youth of Alabama. With up to 95% of youth ages 13-17 and 40% of children ages 8-12 using social media platforms, we recommend publishing the video series on social media platforms such as Tik Tok, Instagram, and Facebook (Office of the Surgeon General (OSG). The Florida AWARE program and the Texas "Eliminating the Stigma of Differences" study determined that promoting mental health education in schools had a significant impact on reducing mental health stigma in students. Therefore, we also recommend that the video series be made available in Alabama schools to help educate our young people and communicate with them by answering questions about their mental health concerns. Releasing the videos in Alabama schools and promoting the digital media through

printed material such as posters, would further spread access and awareness to students. We propose the videos educate on stigma, myths, and misconceptions about mental health as well as what makes them incorrect. The goal of these videos would be not only to get youth talking to each other, but to their parents, and other loved ones about their mental health. Most importantly, these conversations will guide them in the right direction to seek help from school administrators, community programs, and healthcare providers. Like the Kennedy Krieger Institute's "Chill Out, Mind" series, we recommend the video series include real-life experiences and allow for young people to interact and build relationships via social media.

Utilize Teen Mental Health First Aid

The Alabama Department of Mental Health (ADMH) currently offers training through a program known as Mental Health First Aid. This program is designed to assist adults in recognizing, understanding, and responding to the signs of a mental health crisis. It also gives attendees the skills needed to reach out and provide support to someone developing a mental health or substance use problem. Currently, the program is used by the Alabama Department of Education to train teachers, counselors, and other faculty in Alabama schools. While this is an excellent training program for adults, our research showed several other options that may be beneficial to Alabama youth. Based on our findings from Florida AWARE's Youth Mental Health First Aid program and Australia's Teen Mental Health First Aid, we recommend implementing a program designed specifically for young people. Teen Mental Health First Aid is designed to assist high school students grades 10-12 in recognizing the warning signs of a mental health crisis in other teens. This would guide teens to have a healthy outlook on their mental health, while also teaching awareness, support for their peers, and coping skills. It would also provide the youth of Alabama with information on who to turn to when additional care is needed. Teens trained using this program could lead conversations with their peers through support groups, rallies, or summits to create a safe space for others to speak up and seek help. We also recommend training the educators of Alabama's youth using a program such as Youth Mental Health First Aid that is designed more specifically for recognizing mental health crises in youth.

To fund the recommended video series and additional training for school faculty and students, we recommend hosting a charity event such as the Mental Health Marathon in the United

Kingdom that took place in 2017. An event such as this would raise the funds needed to develop the recommended programs while raising awareness for youth mental health in Alabama. An additional funding source could also include petitioning the Alabama Legislature to set up a trust fund for youth mental health services similar to Tennessee's K-12 Mental Health Trust Fund. This could create a sustainable funding source for youth mental health outreach and services.

CONCLUSION

The success of Alabama's youth depends on building and maintaining strong mental health, and reducing the stigma of youth mental health should be a top priority. We have discovered several Alabama initiatives that are making a difference in reducing the stigma of youth mental health, but there is more that can be accomplished. Our team's focus is to educate teens to eliminate the myths and stigma related to youth mental health. The implementation of the aforementioned recommendations will empower Alabama's youth to understand and seek treatment, if necessary, to maintain their mental health. The Reducing the Stigma of Youth Mental Health CPM Solutions Team firmly believes that the recommendations suggested will lead to optimum health care for those in Alabama, and to youth everywhere.

REFERENCES

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, Help-Yourself/Youth. (2024) Retrieved on 7/30/2024
https://988lifeline.org/help-yourself/youth/

Alabama Department of Mental Health. (2024). ADMH Commemorates Mental Health
Awareness Month. Retrieved from https://mh.alabama.gov/admh-commemorates-mental-
health-awareness-month/annual

Alabama Department of Mental Health. (2023) Annual Report FY 2023
https://mh.alabama.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Annual-Report-FY23-Final-web.pdf

Alabama Department of Mental Health. (n.d.-e). Connect Alabama App. Retrieved from
https://mh.alabama.gov/connect-alabama-app/

Alabama Department of Mental Health – connecting mind and wellness. (n.d.).
https://mh.alabama.gov/

Alabama Department of Mental Health. (n.d.). https://mh.alabama.gov/initiatives/

Alabama Department of Mental Health. (n.d.-c). Crisis System of Care. Retrieved from
https://mh.alabama.gov/crisis-system-care/

Alabama Department of Mental Health. (n.d.-d). Crisis Centers. Retrieved from
https://mh.alabama.gov/crisis-centers/

Alabama Department of Mental Health. (2023). Mental Health Awareness Month 2023.
Retrieved from https://mh.alabama.gov/mental-health-awareness-month-2023-2/

Alabama Department of Mental Health. (2023-a). No Shame – Sharing Hearts and Mind to
Prevent Suicide. Retrieved from https://mh.alabama.gov/no-shame-sharing-hearts-and-
minds-to-prevent-suicide/

Alabama Department of Mental Health Services. Retrieved on May 7, 2024, from
https://mh.alabama.gov/mission-vision-values/

Alabama Department of Mental Health. (n.d.-d). Rural Crisis Care and Mobile Crisis Teams. Retrieved from https://mh.alabama.gov/rural-crisis-care-programs/

Alabama Department of Mental Health. (n.d.-). Stepping Up Alabama. Retrieved from https://mh.alabama.gov/stepping-up-alabama/

Alabama Department of Mental Health. (2022-b). Strike Out Stigma Baseball Night: Ending the Stigma. Retrieved from https://mh.alabama.gov/strike-out-stigma-night-2022/

Alabama Department of Mental Health. (2022). Understanding Early Childhood Mental Health https://mh.alabama.gov/understanding-early-childhood-mental-health-for-alabamas-students/

American Hospital Association. (2024) How Advent Health Created a Multicultural Mental Health Movement. https://www.aha.org/news/blog/2024-07-17-how-adventhealth-created-multicultural-mental-health-movement#

Association of American Medical Colleges. (2024). Exploring Barriers to Mental Health Care In the U.S. https://www.aamcresearchinstitute.org/our-work/issue-brief/exploring-barriers-mental-health-care-us

Austin Public Health, City of Austin, TX (2023, May). *Ask, Listen, Talk, Repeat*. Ask, Listen, Talk, Repeat. Retrieved May 8, 2024, from https://asklistentalk.org/

Austin Public Health, City of Austin, TX (2023, May 18). *New Campaign Highlights Mental Health Crisis Among Children and Teens*. Austin Public Health News. Retrieved May 6, 2024, from https://www.austintexas.gov/news/new-campaign-highlights-mental-health-crisis-among-children-and-teens

Brainsway. Mental Health Stigmas. (2024) Retrieved from https://www.brainsway.com/knowledge-center/the-relationship-between-emotional-intelligence-and-mental-health/

Carlson, K. (2023, May 9). *Earnings from Tennessee's Mental Health Trust Fund for Kids Slow to Roll Out*. Tennessee Lookout. Retrieved from

https://tennesseelookout.com/2023/05/09/earnings-from-tennessees-mental-health-trust-fund-for-kids-slow-to-roll-out/

Center for Disease Control. (n.d.) About Mental Health. Retrieved from
https://www.cdc.gov/mentalhealth/learn/index.htm

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2021). Youth risk behavior survey. In *cdc.gov*.
https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/data/yrbs/pdf/YRBS_Data-Summary-Trends_Report2023_508.pdf

Centerstone's Research Institute. (2020, November 29). *System of Care Across Tennessee (SOCAT).* Retrieved from https://socacrosstn.wpenginepowered.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/DMHS-SOCAT-Annual2020_CRI_FINAL.pdf

Chill out, mind: a teenager's guide to mental health. (n.d.). Kennedy Krieger Institute.
https://www.kennedykrieger.org/community/initiatives/chill-out-mind

Clay, M. (2022, April 29). *Free Your Feels Campaign in FULL SWING… Get involved now!* Retrieved April 26, 2024, from https://gasystemofcare.org/free-your-feels-campaign-in-full-swing-get-involved-now/

Five Years On: Changing the conversation on mental health. (2022).
https://royalfoundation.com/wp-   content/uploads/2022/11/HeadsTogetherFiveYearReport.pdf

Florida AWARE Advancing Wellness and Resiliency in Education. (2024a, April 16). *Florida AWARE Program Model.* Retrieved from
https://wwwfldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/18612/urit/Florida-AWARE-Program-Model.pdf

Florida AWARE Advancing Wellness and Resiliency in Education. (2024b, April 16). *Training for Youth Mental Health First Aid.* Retrieved from
https://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/10978/urit/fl-AWARE-YouthMentalHealth.pdf

Florida Department of Children and Families. (2024, April 16). *Project LAUNCH Initiative*. Retrieved from https://www.myflfamilies.com/services/samh/childrens-mental-health-program/project-launch

Florida Department of Education. (2024, April 16). *Resiliency & Mental Health Resources*. Retrieved from https://fldoe.org/mental-health/index.stml

Free Your Feels (n.d.). Free Your Feels: A Blueprint to Implementation. Retrieved April 26, 2024, from https://www.freeyourfeels.org/_files/ugd/a57563_cde393b3037f4efcba6aac9843beac19.pdf

Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Development Disabilities (2020, September 10). Georgia Kids and Youth Face Mental Health Crisis. Georgia Kids and Youth Face Mental Health Crisis. Retrieved April 26, 2024, from https://dbhdd.georgia.gov/press-releases/2020-09-10/georgia-kids-and-youth-face-mental-health-crisis

Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities. (n.d.). FREE YOUR FEELS: A blueprint to implementation. https://www.freeyourfeels.org/_files/ugd/a57563_cde393b3037f4efcba6aac9843beac19.pdf/.l

Georgia Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Disabilities, Voices for Georgia's Children, Silence the Shame, VOX ATL, Boys & Girls Club of Greater Augusta, City of Savannah, Usher's New Look, & Jack & Jill of America Fayette Chapter. (2023). Free Your Feels Teen Summit (M. Ward, C. Elahee, S. Elahee, & I. Tucker, Interviewers). In *Free Your Feels*. https://www.freeyourfeels.org/_files/ugd/a57563_891d404a0b31437d8c951fc66887f2b6.pdf

GoodRx. How to get Mental Health Services and Therapy without Insurance. (2024). Retrieved from https://www.goodrx.com/health-topic/mental-health/therapy-without-insurance/

Hart, L.M., et al. Teen Mental Health First Aid: 12-month outcomes from a cluster crossover randomized controlled trial evaluation of a universal program to help adolescents better support peers with a mental health problem. *BMC Public Health* **22**, 1159 (2022). https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-022-13554-6

HeadsTogether. (2021, May 11). *Mentally Healthy Schools | Heads Together |* Join the conversation. Heads Together. https://www.headstogether.org.uk/programmes/mentally-healthy-schools/

 HeadsTogether. (2023, April 12). *About | Heads Together*. Heads Together. https://www.headstogether.org.uk/about/

HeadsTogether. (2023b, April 12). *About | Heads Together*. Heads Together. https://www.headstogether.org.uk/about/#:~:text=Heads%20Together%20is%20a%20me ntal%20health%20initiative%20spearheaded,a%20series%20of%20innovative%20new% 20mental%20health%20services

HeadsTogether. (2023c, April 12). *About | Heads Together*. Heads Together. https://www.headstogether.org.uk/about/

Healthline-What is Stigma. Retrieved fromhttps://www.healthline.com/health/what-is-stigma#takeaway

Holloway, K. (2023, May 26). No Shame – Sharing the Hearts and Minds to Prevent Suicide. Alabama Department of Mental Health. https://mh.alabama.gov/no-shame-sharing-hearts-and-minds-to-prevent-suicide/

Holloway, K. (2023, September 1). Suicide Prevention Awareness Month 2023. Alabama Department of Mental Health. https://mh.alabama.gov/suicide-prevention-awareness-month-2023/

Link, B. G., DuPont-Reyes, M. J., Barkin, K., Villatoro, A. P., Phelan, J. C., & Painter, K. (2020). A School-Based Intervention for Mental Illness Stigma: A Cluster Randomized Trial. *Pediatrics*, *145*(6), e20190780. https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2019-0780

Mayo Clinic. "Mental Illness - Symptoms and Causes." Mayo Clinic, 8 June 2019,
www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/mental-illness/symptoms-causes/syc-
20374968#:~:text=Overview.

Modi H, Orgera K, Grover A. *Exploring Barriers to Mental Health Care in the U.S.* Washington,
DC: AAMC; 2022. https://doi.org/10.15766/rai_a3ewcf9p

McAdams, G. (2023, December 1). *The State of Mental Health & Behavioral Health in Young
Texans*. Retrieved May 6, 2024, from https://everytexan.org/wp-
content/uploads/2023/12/Youth-Mental-Health-Data-Brief-2023.pdf

"Mental Health Disorders in Adolescents." *Acog.org*, 2017, www.acog.org/clinical/clinical-
guidance/committee-opinion/articles/2017/07/mental-health-disorders-in-
adolescents#:~:text=Anxiety%20are%20%the%20most%20common%20mental%20healt
h%20disorders%20in%20adolescents.

Mental Health Stigma. (2023, October 5). Psychology Today.
https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/mental-health-stigma

Mini London Marathon in schools. (n.d.-c). TCS London Marathon.
https://www.tcslondonmarathon.com/the-event/tcs-mini-london-marathon-in-schools

Modir, S., Alfaro, B., Casados, A. and Ruiz, S. (2020, August 4) Understanding the role of
cultural stigma on seeking mental health services. Retrieved on May 6, 2024 from
https://health.choc.org/understanding-the-role-of-cultural-stigma-on-seeking-mental-
health-services/

Ng, S. H., et al (2021). A Systematic Review of Youth and Teen Mental Health First Aid:
Improving Adolescent Mental Health. The Journal of Adolescent Health: Official
Publication of the Society for Adolescent Medicine, 69(2), 199–210.
https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2020.10.018

NAMI. (2024). Mental Health in Schools | NAMI: National Alliance on Mental Illness. Www.nami.org. https://www.nami.org/Advocacy/Policy-Priorities/Improving-Health/Mental-Health-in-Schools/

National Alliance on Mental Illness. (2023). *Mental health by the numbers*. NAMI. https://www.nami.org/about-mental-illness/mental-health-by-the-numbers/

National Institute of Mental Health. (2023). *NIMH» Statistics*. Www.nimh.nih.gov. https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/statistics

The National Council. (n.d.) Healthy Minds/Strong Communities. Retrieved from https://www.thenationalcouncil.org/

Rural Health Information. (n.d.) Mental Health. Retrieved from https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/toolkits/mental-health/1/barriers/

Seventh Day Adventist Church. (2023, May 10). Community Leaders Team Up to Help Break Stigma Around Youth Mental Health. Retrieved from https://www.nadadventist.org/news/community-leaders-team-help-break-stigma-around-youth-mental-health

State of Georgia (n.d.). *Georgia Student Mental Health Survey - Middle and High School 2024*. Georgia Student Mental Health Survey - Middle and High School 2024. Retrieved April 26, 2024, from https://app.powerbi.com/view?r=eyJrIjoiMzZiMTAzZWMtZmIzNC00Y2UwLTk4ZDctYzEwMzQ5NDRlNjhlIiwidCI6IjFhYTU1YzgzLTAzNDMtNGVjYi1iZDM5LWJkN2Y0Mzg3NmJkNyIsImMiOjN9

Subu, M.A., Wati, D.F., Netrida, N. (2021, October 18). Types of stigma experienced by patients with mental illness and mental health nurses in Indonesia: a qualitative content analysis. Int J Ment Health. Retrieved May 7, 2024, from https://ijmhs.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s13033-021-00502-x.

TCS London Marathon.

https://www.tcslondonmarathon.com/the-event/tcs-mini-london-marathon-in-schools

Telehealth. Improving Access to Telehealth. (n.d.). Retrieved
fromhttps://telehealth.hhs.gov/providers/health-equity-in-telehealth/improving-access-to-telehealth/

Tennessee Department of Education. (2024, May 13). *Project Aware*. Retrieved from
https://www.tn.gov/education/districts/health-and-safety/school-based-mental-health-support/project-aware.html

Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services. (2024a, May 13).
BASIC: Better Attitudes and Skills in Children. Retrieved from
https://www.tn.gov/behavioral-health/children-youth-young-adults-families/basic.html

Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services. (2024b, May 13).
School-Based Behavioral Health Liaisons. Retrieved from
https://www.tn.gov/behavioral-health/children-youth-young-adults-families/sbbhl.html

The Royal Foundation. (n.d). *Mental Health - Royal Foundation*. Royal Foundation. Retrieved
June 29, 2024, from https://royalfoundation.com/mental-health/

TN Voices. (2024a, May 13). *Youth Screen*. Retrieved from https://tnvoices.org/youth-screen/

TN Voices. (2024b, May 13). *System of Care Across Tennessee*. Retrieved from
https://tnvoices.org/programs/system-of-care-across-tennessee/

Wang, S., Li, Q., Lu, J., Ran, H., Che, Y., Fang, D., Liang, X., Sun, H., Chen, L., Peng, J., Shi,
Y., & Xiao, Y. (2023). Treatment rates for mental disorders among children and
adolescents. JAMA Network Open, 6(10), e2338174.
https://doi.org/10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2023.38174Zablotsky, B., Black, L. I.,
Maenner, M. J., Schieve, L. A., Danielson, M. L., Bitsko, R. H., Blumberg, S. J., Kogan,
M. D., & Boyle, C. A. (2019). Prevalence and Trends of Developmental Disabilities
among Children in the United States: 2009-2017. *Pediatrics*, *144*(4), e20190811.
Retrieved on May 6, 2024, from https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2019-0811

Whole-school approach: Mentally Healthy Schools. (n.d.).

https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/whole-school-approach/