Mental Health in School

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When talking about mental health, society does not take it as seriously as it should. Mental health is one of the most important things in today's age and we do not even learn about it in school. When I was in high school, kids would just throw around the word crazy to one another. They would do this whenever some kids would have a mental breakdown or do something out of the ordinary. This is something society glances over when talking about mental health. It is something I have never heard on the news. A lot of schools also do not even treat mental health awareness whatsoever. In the article Prevalence of Mental Health Services Provided by Public Schools and Limitations in Schools' Efforts to Provide Mental Health Services from *National Center for Education Statistics* (2022). "Forty-two percent of public schools (or 35,200 schools) reported providing treatment to students for mental health disorders. Grabbing from this data shows that there needs to be more programs in school to help educate many students struggling with mental health. Having not even over 50% of public schools providing treatment for mental health for students should be a wakeup call. This shows me that they say mental health is not important enough to be taught even in our school systems. When I was in high school, we did not even have a mental health program. Simply because there was not enough funding for it. Then our school district would go on to put more funding towards our sports programs. Rather than making a program to help struggling kids dealing with any sort of mental disorder in school. This seems to me to be a noticeably big blooming flaw in our education system. It shows our system is outdated and it is time for some change to help future generations to be better. I say now is the perfect time for some change in our systems.

Schools first should at least start showing what mental health is. It will help students in need of this guidance. It could even have other kids help each other out. This could have kids be more friendly or even have them learn communication skills in the process. According to the article The State of Mental Health Issues in Children & Schools from the *University of San Diego - Professional & Continuing Education* (2022) it states, "1 in 6 American children aged 6-17 experience a mental health disorder each year...50–80% of school-aged children do not receive the mental health care they need." Considering this, we should push the narrative of having a better system in our schools to help these kids out. These kids need some aid, and our school system could help with this. We could put together a class like how PE is constructed to better educate kids on mental health. It could be a class you must take for at least a year (like how PE is) and learn how to deal with mental health problems in yourself and your peers. Doing so will reduce these numbers drastically. We as a society should not have 80% of school aged children dealing with this disorder alone. There should be more counselors in our school system to help our future generations deal with this. I can see from society's point of view why adding this could be a problem. Simply put it, money and finding the resources to make this change could be the problem. I have come to say there are solutions to this problem. We could try to find better funding to help provide this into our school systems. Charity events and even school funding events can help provide this necessity we need in schools. We could even bring It up to our government to discuss this topic and bring some awareness to mental health.

Adding this to schools can help students learn if they have any mental health problems and learn how to deal with them better. We do not shed enough light onto this topic in schools. Our schooling system would rather pay attention and shed light on sports and learning stuff that they will not even use after high school. They should be teaching them something that can one day save another life or even their own. According to Schaeffer, K. (2022). In CDC (Centers for Disease Control) survey "About three-in-ten high school students (31%) said they experienced poor mental health most or all the time in the 30 days (about 4 and a half weeks) before the survey. In addition, 44% said that, in the previous 12 months, they felt sad or hopeless every day for at least two weeks in a row such that they stopped doing some usual activities." Knowing this, we could better help these high school kids out or even have them do it amongst themselves. With them learning this knowledge of taking care of themselves mentally, they could help themselves and others around them. Which would then help these numbers out drastically. Having more counselors to help with this problem would help build a strong mental foundation for them. So, when they end up leaving high school, they will be better prepared. They would then be ready for life and all that life has to offer. They would be much better at controlling their emotions and even helping with adult life stress. Learning something that seems so small at times like mental health could really be an enormous difference in some people's lives.

Along with helping students be able to handle this on their own. It could one day save another life. By teaching it and having awareness of it we can reduce the percentage of teens taking their own lives. Maybe showing them ways to cope with it and showing them that even the school systems care about them. Could really help this percentage be reduced hopefully by a lot.

According to the article Teen Suicides Jump 29% Over the Past Decade, Report Finds from *Shannon Firth* (2022) "Suicides jumped 29% among adolescents ages 15 to 19 over the previous decade... Adolescent suicides rose from 8.4 per 100,000 during the 2012-2014 timeframe to 10.8 deaths per 100,000 in 2018-2020." As sad as it may be to hear these numbers it is the reality. Kids are leaving us from challenges we could be helping them with. Challenges even themselves could help with. These are the raw numbers a lot of society does not like talking about, but it is something that needs to be discussed and reduced. This alone should be a calling sign for us to do something new and better. To better help these kids that are struggling. To better educate future generations and help delete these challenges with them. I say it is time to help these kids out. Have a Program in school they can lean on for help.

Having that program can better mentally helps with how kids may preserve life. It could also help them out physically. Especially at young ages, being in good health both physically and mentally can help these kids to live better and longer lives. Help reduce the growing concern in America that kids today are not as fit as they used to be. Well, the reason for this is they are just not in the right mindset as they used to be. According to the article Why Mental Health Awareness Should Be Taught in Schools from *RTOR* (2021) "To live a happy life while coping with everyday stresses, we need to know how to handle our mental health. We can learn this while we are in school. Knowing the role mental health plays in their lives allows children to become happy adults. Happy, functional adults are better equipped to handle life." Learning this we could have a way into our schools to help this. Maybe trying to combine PE and mental awareness topics could help with this. Or even simply adding more counselors to school. This would help with students' self-image of themselves and have them feel good about themselves.

Even then lead them to healthier lifestyles for them. Being mentally good could lead to motivation to work out. Saying this there could be problems when coming with some kids just only wanting to play around during PE. Not taking the mental side of things seriously. But I feel if we were to bring the mental side of things in some sort of fun way kids would love to engage and be involved in learning it.

My friends and family and I suffer from mental health problems just like a lot of kids in America. Learning the fact that the number of schools that are teaching mental health awareness brings a smile to my face. I wish the number could be a little higher but the progress of society in realizing this ever-going problem is improving. I know for myself I wish there were something when I was in high school that could help me learn to better cope with my own mental battles. The way I eventually got my help was from counselors outside of school. I say we should put more emphasis on trying to add mental health awareness into our school system. Added counselors could help growing kids learn how to manage their own lives while trying to manage their own mental battles at the same time.

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