

70% of teens struggle with mental health

by Steven D. Wilson, Ed.D.



A recent national survey of youths aged 13-19 has uncovered that seven of every 10 teenagers are struggling with mental health issues.

The survey polled more than 1,500 teens from diverse backgrounds and was conducted online in May.

Nearly 80% of the teenagers surveyed said they wished there was a safe space or other environment in their school to talk about mental health. This is a key reason for placing counselors from The Children's Home in schools and other community locations where they are needed most.

"Having the capability to provide service directly inside school settings just makes a lot of sense and it eliminates the stress of solving access problems for parents, clients, teachers and agency staff," said Debbie Gingrich, vice president of behavioral health at The Children's Home. "Kids are more apt to ask for help if they know it is easily available and accessible and this study shows they want this kind of support.

"Treatment can often be part of the school day without the stigma of having to physically leave school or having parents worry how and when to go somewhere else for help," she said. The findings concluded that 55% of the teenagers surveyed said they have experienced anxiety, 45% reported extreme stress and 43% reported depression.

As the country continues to navigate the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, 61% of the surveyed teens said COVID has increased their feelings of loneliness and 64% said they believe living through COVID-19 will have a lasting impact on the mental health of their generation.

However, if help for mental and behavioral health is not accessible, many young people will simply let the problem worsen, according to the study. Findings concluded that 67% of teens said they pretend to feel better to not worry anyone and 67% felt pressure to keep their feelings to themselves.

This often exacerbates the problem. One teen in the poll stated, "I spend more time deciding what to listen to on Spotify than how to deal with my mental health."

"This study illustrates what we are seeing in the field," said Dr. Joseph Rieman, medical director of The Children's Home. "Teenage years are often challenging enough and when you factor in mental health concerns along with a pandemic changing the world overnight it can be overwhelming to anyone. It's important for parents, educators, clergy and anyone else who is around vulnerable teens to be aware of what this data is telling us."

The [findings](#) of the poll can be found here.



If you, or someone you know, has a teen who needs our help, email The Children's Home at referrals@tchcincy.org or call 513-272-2800.