


Adolescence Mental Health Crisis

An Advocacy Project By Conner Brumley





Before Covid-19 Pandemic



Depression

12.4% of Children (Ages 3-17) are diagnosed with mental illness, Depression is the #1 diagnosis.



Family & Community Barriers

14% of children lived in a high-poverty area, which impacts a child's ability to thrive, including mentally.




Increased Dropout Rates

High school students with depression (being the leading cause) are 1.5x more likely to drop out than their peers.



Increased Suicide Rates

8% of suicide committed by Females and 9% of suicide committed by Males were under the age of 24. That number has continued to increase since 2005.





Following The Covid-19 Pandemic



Depression

130,000 young Kentuckians suffer from depression, anxiety, and other mental illnesses (An Underreported Rate)



Inaccessible Treatment

35.6% of adolescents did not receive any care for mental-health-related illness.




Increased Dropout Rates

High school students with depression (being the leading cause) are 2.0x more likely to drop out than their peers.



Increased Suicide Rates

One in ten Kentucky High School Students attempt suicide. Of that, 12% Black students, 13% multiracial students, 23% LGBTQ+.



What Has Been Done (State)



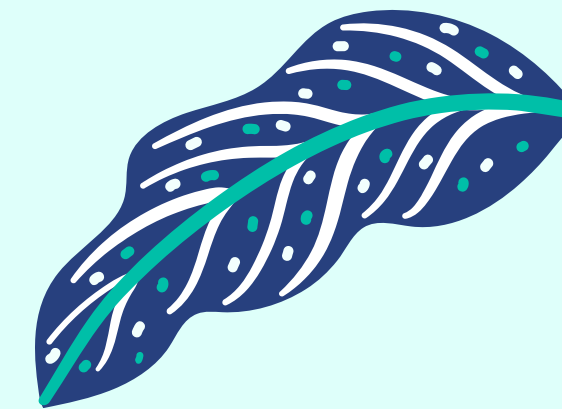
Senate Bill 102

Required schools to track the number of mental health professionals in their building to meet the 250-1 ratio of students to counselors.



60% Recommendation

The Kentucky Department of Education set forth a recommendation that school counselors should dedicate 60% of their time to counseling and direct student services.

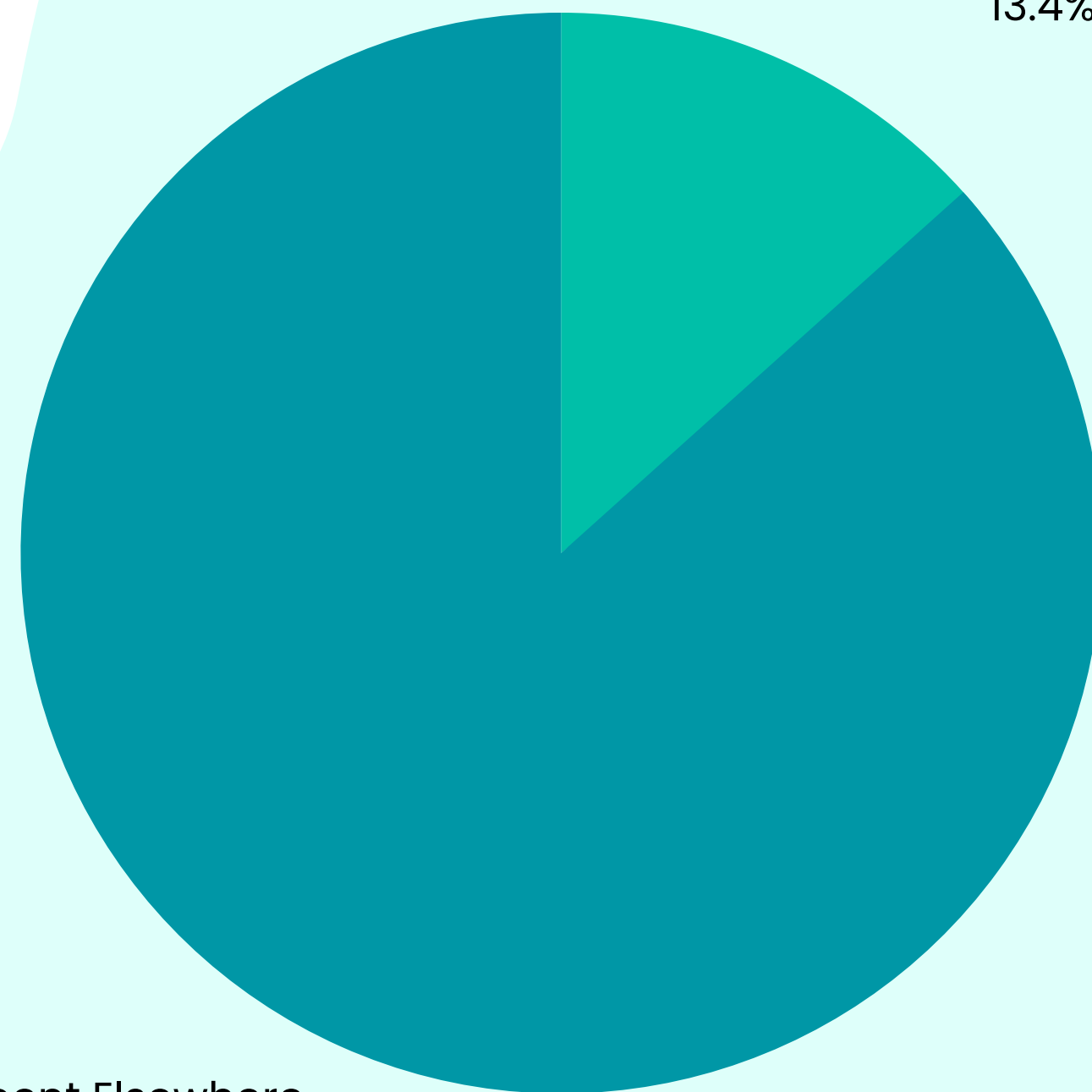


How Do We Further Fight This Growing Issue?

A young person, under 18 (on average), spends most of their life in one of two places. Home is #1, and school is #2. With so much time spent at school, we must target our efforts on benefiting the mental health of our youth, in our schools first.



Time Spent At School
13.4%



Time Spent Elsewhere
86.6%



What Needs To Be Done For Our Schools

Provide Funding For Senate Bill 102

Legislators failed to include funding to help schools hire more counselors. Many school districts are struggling to meet a requirement as a result. Other funding should also be provided to ensure the well-rounded mental health of our youth.


Educate Teachers On The Social Emotional Needs of Adolescents

KRS 156.095, detailing Professional Development Programs, could easily be amended to ensure all Kentucky teachers are receiving proper education on how to see and address mental health needs of students.

Expand KRS 158

While Legislators did include suicide prevention awareness information as a necessity to be shown to students, as stated in KRS 158.441, it needs to be expanded, not only to Elementary but to be discussed more than once per school year.

Additionally, a new section of KRS Chapter 158 should include required instruction on general social-emotional health. We are currently failing our students as we are failing to reduce student physical and mental health barriers, further stated in the Legislative Declaration On Goals For Commonwealth Schools (KRS 158.6451)





What We Must Guarantee For The Youth Of Kentucky

- Prioritize Meeting Basic Needs
INCLUDING Mental Health
- Ensure EVERY Youth Has Access To
Mental Health Care When And
Where They Need It
- Raise Awareness Of The Mental
Health Associated With Being Young
- Provide Support Systems In Place for
ALL Students, Both In And Outside Of
The Classroom



What WE Can Do



Write To Your Legislators

Most legislators fall into a committee that DIRECTLY deals with funding or bills regarding the Education system. EMAIL THEM!



Raise Awareness

If you are a student specifically, raise awareness of such mental barriers to school administration and counselors. Even reach out to local community bodies, even your local health department, to ensure they offer resources aiding in better mental health for our youth.



Support Mental Health Related Movements & Organizations

Whether monetary, through protest or through social media, supporting organizations directly fighting the mental health crisis of our adolescents is huge. Some of those include;

- National Alliance On Mental Illness Kentucky (NAMI)
- Kentucky Injury Prevention & Research Center
- Kentucky Youth Advocates
- Kentucky Student Voice Team

So Will YOU Join The Fight?

Resources Include; NAMI of Kentucky, the U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory, the Kentucky Violent Death Reporting System (KYVDRS), the University of Kentucky Office of Public Health, Kentucky Public Health, KIPRC, KyCIR, Annie E. Casey Foundation, The Parent Institute, and the Kentucky General Assembly.

