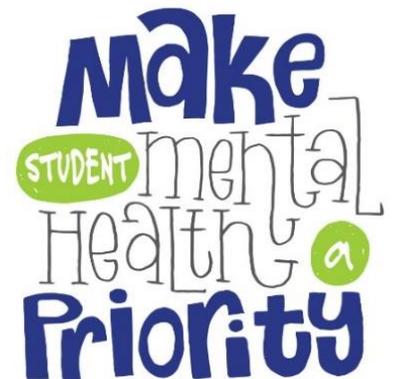


Student Mental Health Initiative: Conversations & Solutions with Kentucky Students

Office of Lt. Governor Jacqueline Coleman &
Members of the Kentucky Department of Education
Commissioner's Student Advisory Council

August 16, 2022



Student Mental Health Initiative

Student Advisors

ALEXANDRA PERRY

Senior, Ignite Institute

BENTLEY WHITE

Junior, Kentucky School for the Deaf

CHARLEIGH BROWNING

Senior, Marion County High School

JULEAH EDIE

Graduate, Rowan County High School

LOGAN JUSTICE

Graduate, Paul Laurence Dunbar High School

SOLYANA MESFIN

Graduate, Eastern High School

SPANDANA PAVULURI

Senior, duPont Manual High School

DELANEY DAUGHERTY

Senior, Butler County High School

DYLLAN A. TIPTON

Graduate, Spencer County High School

ROHIN DUTT

Graduate, duPont Manual High School

ROX LOCKARD

Graduate, Craft Academy

SAM SMITH

Graduate, Daviess County High School

SOLEILA ELLIOTT GONZÁLEZ

Graduate, Ballard High School

OLLIE FEGENBUSH

Senior, Montgomery County High School



<https://bit.ly/smhicheckin>

Student Mental Health Before the Pandemic (2018)

Nationally: the **CDC** reported that nearly **1 in 5 children** had a mental disorder, but **only about 20% of them received care** from a specialized mental health provider.

KY Youth Risk Behavior Survey

- 30% of high school students reported feeling sad or hopeless to the point of stopping some usual activities
- 57% of students ages 12-17 with a major depressive episode did not receive mental healthcare
- 15% of high school students reported seriously considering suicide

Youth Mental Health Matters

- Students wanted help addressing or improving their wellness but didn't know how or where to get it
- Stigma was a major barrier coming from many places (social media, peers, family, community, heritage, religion, etc.)

Student Mental Health During the Pandemic (2019-2020)

Nationally: between 2019 and 2020, there was a **21% increase** in children **diagnosed** with **behavioral** or conduct **problems**.

Kentucky Student Voice Team

Coping with COVID-19 Study

- Students were feeling more unmotivated, stressed, and anxious, but also more grateful and less worthless
- 45.8% of poor students reported feeling depressed compared to 26.5% of middle-class students
- Online learning was an extremely divisive subject:
 - 47% of students noted a negative change,
 - 11% noted a positive change
 - 38% noted a neutral change
- In tandem with the increase in emotional distress, there was an increase in desire for mental health services



Fall 2021 Student Mental Health Action Summits

A Brief Overview

Student Mental Health Action Summits by the Numbers

10 Events Held **7 In Person**
3 Virtual

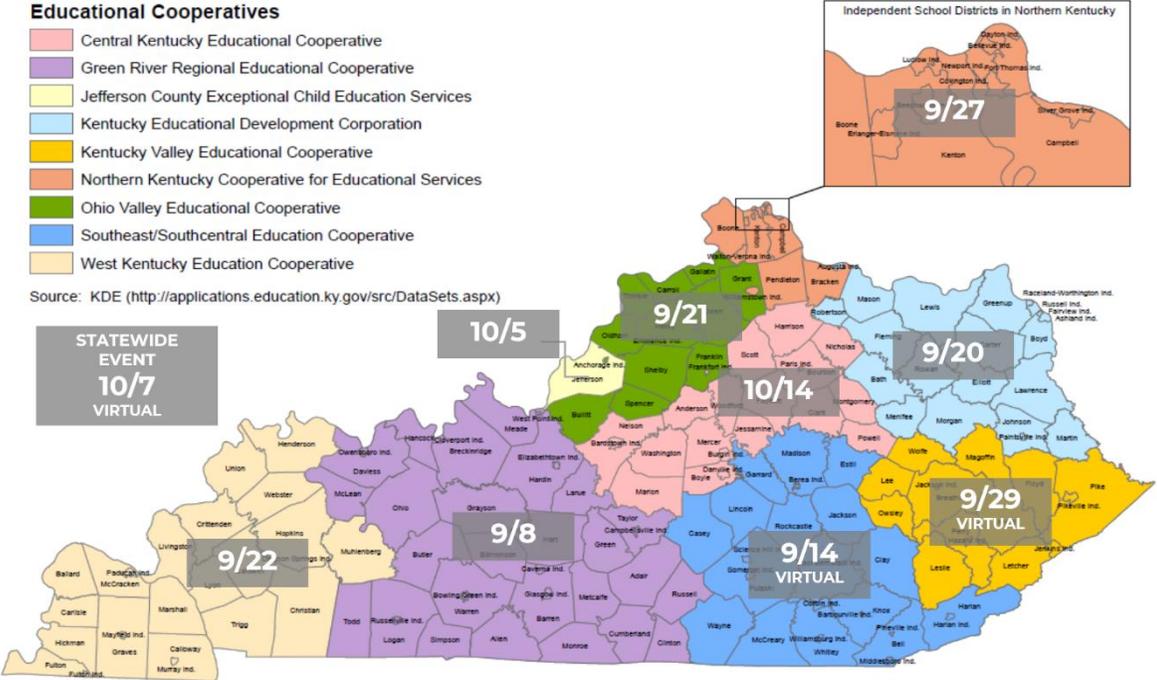
375 Students Registered*

300 Students Attended**

25 Breakout Sessions

- Educational Cooperatives**
- Central Kentucky Educational Cooperative
 - Green River Regional Educational Cooperative
 - Jefferson County Exceptional Child Education Services
 - Kentucky Educational Development Corporation
 - Kentucky Valley Educational Cooperative
 - Northern Kentucky Cooperative for Educational Services
 - Ohio Valley Educational Cooperative
 - Southeast/Southcentral Education Cooperative
 - West Kentucky Education Cooperative

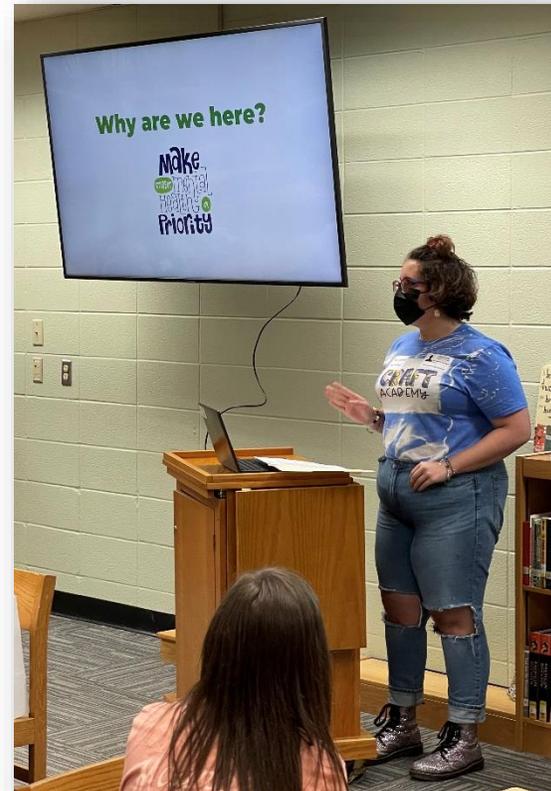
Source: KDE (<http://applications.education.ky.gov/src/DataSets.aspx>)



* Students were not required to register, therefore this number is an undercount.
 ** We did not check students in upon attendance, therefore this number is an estimate.

Action Summit Event Format

- **Welcome** from the **Lt. Governor**
- **Framing the issue** of student mental health by a **student advisor**
- **Students** transitioned into **breakout sessions**
 - Before students went to breakouts, we introduced a local mental health clinician who was in attendance
- **Breakout sessions:**
 - **Facilitated by students**
 - Had **one adult in the room** who played the role of scribe/timekeeper/monitor
 - After introductions/icebreaker, student facilitators led the students through a series of questions about student mental health



What We Asked & What We Heard

1) How does your school/home/life in general affect your mental health?

2) What mental health challenges have you or your friends faced in the past year?

(LOWER-PRIORITY QUESTION)
What motivated you to come to this event?

3) What mental health resources do you wish you had access to at school?

4) What recommendations on mental health do you have for policy-makers?

(LOWER-PRIORITY QUESTION)
What do students need to be mentally healthy?

What We Heard: In Summary

**Access &
Resources**

**Raising
Awareness**

**Stigma
Reduction**

**More
Clinicians**

Safe Spaces

Breaks

Training

Confidentiality

**Mental
Health
Days**

Peer Mentors

**Suicide
Prevention**

**Address
Bullying**

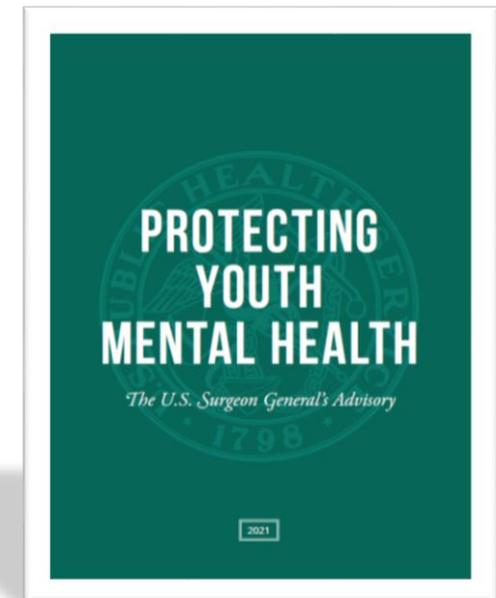
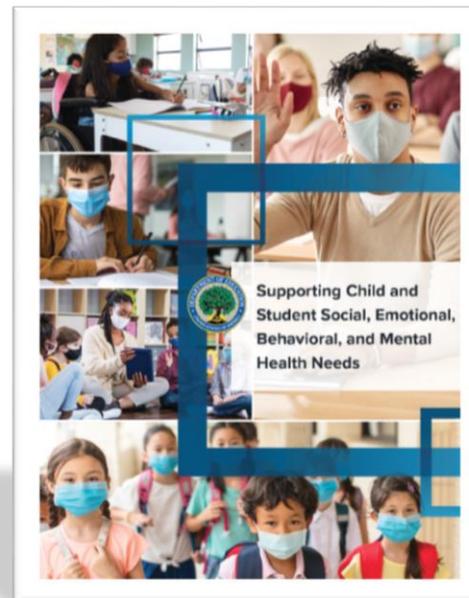
While we were listening to students...

Oct 2021

- President Biden's White House Fact Sheet: [Improving Access and Care for Youth Mental Health & Substance Use Conditions](#)
- U.S. Department of Education Report: [Supporting Child and Student Social, Emotional, Behavioral, and Mental Health Needs](#)
- American Academy of Pediatrics [Declaration of a National Emergency in Child & Adolescent Mental Health](#)

Dec 2021

- U.S. Surgeon General Advisory: [Protecting Youth Mental Health](#)



Student Recommendations

Student Recommendations

Provide
Comprehensive
Suicide
Prevention

Allow Excused
Mental Health
Absences

Expand Access
to Mental Health
Services and
Treatment

Increase Mental
Health
Awareness and
Education

Increase and
Improve Mental
Health
Professional
Development

Include & Elevate Student Voice

Student Recommendations

Include & Elevate Student Voice

- Incorporate student voice into **all levels** of decision-making.



Provide Comprehensive Suicide Prevention

- Make suicide prevention materials and resources available in **every classroom** and administrative office.
- Offer evidence-informed suicide prevention curriculum at least **twice** annually.

Student Recommendations

Allow Excused Mental Health Absences

- Allow students **six** excused mental health days per school year.

Expand Access to Mental Health Services & Treatment

- Fund a licensed mental health professional, **every day**, at **every** K-12 school.
- Offer **peer mentoring** and/or **peer support** for students who are not comfortable talking with an adult.

House Bill 44

Actions ↓ | Amendments ↓

Last Action 04/20/22: signed by Governor (Acts Ch. 228)

Title AN ACT relating to local school districts.

Bill Documents Acts Chapter 228 [📄](#)
Current/Final [📄](#)
Introduced [📄](#)

Bill Request Number 185

Sponsors B. McCool, L. Willner, T. Bojanowski, K. Fleming, J. Gooch Jr., J. Jenkins, N. Kulkarni, C. Massey, C. Miller, J. Miller, P. Minter, R. Palumbo, R. Roberts, S. Sheldon, P. Stevenson, B. Wesley, B. Wheatley

Summary of Original Version Amend KRS 159.035 to require a local school district's attendance policy to include provisions for a student's mental or behavioral health status.

Student Recommendations

Increase Mental Health Awareness & Education

- Foster **stigma-free** school environments.
- Require updated evidence-informed **mental health curriculum** for K-12 students.
- Offer opportunities to learn and practice executive **coping skills**.

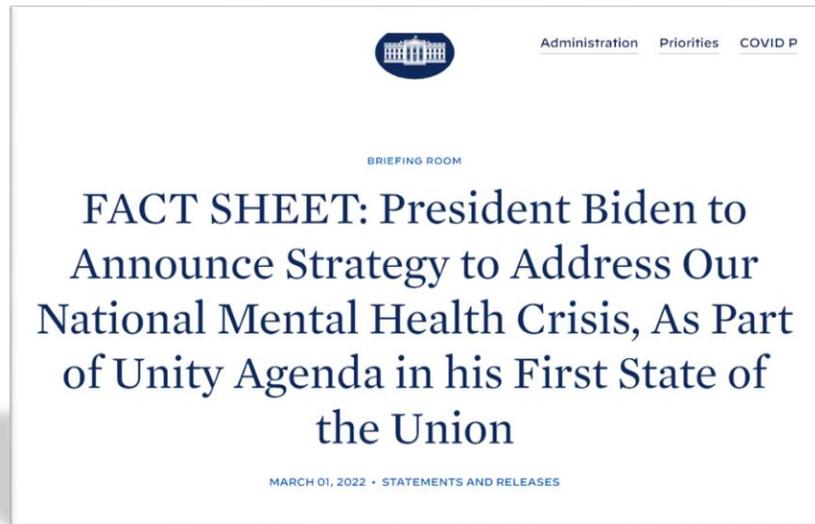
Increase & Improve Professional Development

- Require **annual** evidence-informed mental health professional development for **all** school staff.
- Ensure mental health professional development curriculum be evidence-informed and reviewed and/or **updated regularly**.

The Momentum Continues

Feb 2022

- Centers for Disease Control & Prevention Declaration: [Children's Mental Health an Ongoing Public Health Concern](#)



Mar 2022

- President Biden's State of the Union Address & [White House Fact Sheet](#)
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Announces a Strategy to Address Mental Health
- US HHS & US Department of Education [Announce Joint Effort](#) to Ensure Children Have Access to School-Based Health Services

The Momentum Continues

May 2022

- HHS Leaders Urge States to [Maximize Efforts to Support Children's Mental Health](#)
- [Student Mental Health Awareness Day](#) @ Kentucky State Capitol



July 2022

- The Biden-Harris Administration announced actions to strengthen school-based mental health services and address the youth mental health crisis:
 - Awarding the first of **nearly \$300 million** secured through the FY2022 bipartisan omnibus agreement to **expand access to mental health services in schools**
 - Encouraging **states to invest more** in school-based mental health services

Questions?

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

Heather M. Dearing, MSW | Deputy Chief of Staff
Office of Lieutenant Governor Jacqueline Coleman
heather.dearing@ky.gov

Make
STUDENT mental
Health a
Priority