



Marcie Timmerman, MHA

**Education & Outreach Liaison**

Mental Health America of Kentucky



Elizabeth Atwell, LSW

**Executive Director**

Mental Health America of Northern  
Kentucky Southwest Ohio

# National Youth Mental Health Crisis

---

In 2021, the U.S. Surgeon General declared a Youth Mental Health Crisis in the United States.

*The declaration centered around these three statistics:*

- **57%** increase in youth suicide deaths BEFORE the COVID-19 pandemic
- **44%** of students felt persistently sad
- **11 years** – the average time between when a child exhibits symptoms and finally receives treatment.

*Office of the Surgeon General (OSG). Protecting Youth Mental Health: The U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory [Internet]. Washington (DC): US Department of Health and Human Services; 2021. PMID: 34982518.*

# 2024 State of Mental Health Report

[www.mhanational.org](http://www.mhanational.org)

---

- Kentucky Ranks **36<sup>th</sup>** in Youth Mental Health as measured by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA's) National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH).
- **40<sup>th</sup>** in Youth with Private Insurance that Did Not Cover Mental or Emotional Problems. Although we try to ensure parity, it only applies to plans that offer it, it doesn't require that all plans offer it. Self-insured plans, often our largest employers, aren't required to offer this.
- **26<sup>th</sup>** in Students identified with Emotional Disturbance for an Individual Education Plan (IEP). Additional assistance with schoolwork and self-regulation may be included in a plan for each individual child.

*Reinert, M, Fritze, D & Nguyen, T (July 2024). "The State of Mental Health in America 2024." Mental Health America, Alexandria VA.*

# Mental Health Screening

## MHAScreenings.org

### Take a Mental Health Test

Online screening is one of the quickest and easiest ways to determine whether you are experiencing symptoms of a mental health condition.

Mental health conditions, such as depression or anxiety, are real, common and treatable. And recovery is possible.

DEPRESSION TEST

+

POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION  
TEST (NEW & EXPECTING  
PARENTS)

+

ANXIETY TEST

+

ADHD TEST

+

BIPOLAR TEST

+

PSYCHOSIS & SCHIZOPHRENIA  
TEST

+

PTSD TEST

+

EATING DISORDER TEST

+

ADDICTION TEST

+

PARENT TEST: YOUR CHILD'S  
MENTAL HEALTH

+

YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH TEST

+

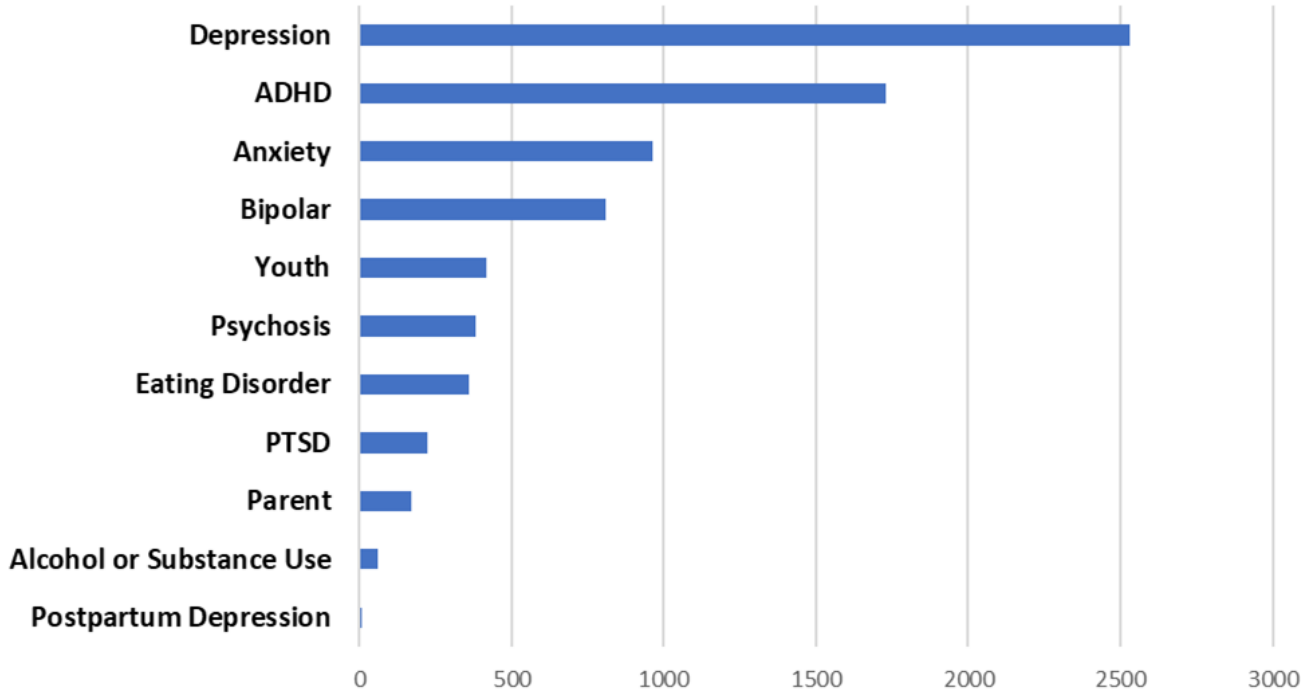
TEST DE DEPRESIÓN

+

...and  
more!

# Kentucky MHAScreening.org Data 2024

2024 Under 18 Screenings Taken



- Over 20,000 screenings annually since 2020 by people who tell us they're from KY.
- Under 18 year olds in KY are taking Depression, ADHD, Anxiety, and Bipolar screenings in addition to the others we offer.
- The increase in overall screenings since 2020 has been noted and cited by MHA National as proof we're reaching more young people through these internet-based channels.

- 1 screening does not equal 1 person, as people can take them multiple times.
- This is self-administered, self-selected data.
- Thanks to [MHANational.org](https://www.MHANational.org) for this service!

# Suicide Prevention Day in Frankfort



- Partnership between American Foundation for Suicide Prevention-Kentucky Chapter, MHA Kentucky, MHA NKYSWOH, NAMI Kentucky, and others to educate the public and policymakers around suicide prevention, suicide deaths, and related legislation.
- ***STAY TUNED FOR OUR KYGA26 DATE ANNOUNCEMENT!***



# ThriveKY Roadshows



1-4PM LOCAL TIME ZONE

APRIL 15 LOUISVILLE

MAY 6 SOMERSET

JUNE 3 MOREHEAD

JULY 8 HENDERSON

AUG 5 HOPKINSVILLE

SEPT 2 HAZARD

OCT 7 COVINGTON

NOV 4 RICHMOND

ADVOCACY  
FOR THRIVING  
COMMUNITIES

**2025**  
**ROADSHOW**

MORE INFO &  
REGISTRATION AT:

[TINYURL.COM/THRIVEKY2025](https://tinyurl.com/thriveky2025)

Program will include state & federal updates about safety net programs like Medicaid and SNAP and resources for housing and suicide prevention.

*\*CEUs for CCHWs and Social Workers available. CEU certificates will be provided for Peer Support Specialists, Targeted Case Managers, and others who can self-report.*



# Youth Mental Health Trainings We Offer:

---

- Youth Mental Health First Aid (adult-to-youth)
- teenMHFA (teen-to-teen) via MHANKYSWOH
- Question-Persuade-Refer
- Counseling on Access to Lethal Means (CALM), including CALM Conversations for communities via MHAKY
- Trauma-Informed Care
- Youth Peer Support Specialists via MHANKYSWOH
- Other topics as requested on an individual basis



# Annual Youth Mental Health Materials

<https://mhanational.org/supporting-young-minds/>

---

Materials on Social Media, Grief, Boundaries, Comparisons, and more for YOUTH and for ADULTS who work with youth.



# Select Other Trainings and Resources in Kentucky

---

- Sources of Strength
- Family Peer Support Specialists
- HOPE Squads
- & others!



# MHA of Kentucky Suggested Steps

---



**Lift Up  
Youth  
Voices**



**Convene &  
Collaborate**



**Plan &  
Prepare**



**Educate the  
Public**



**Statutory  
Follow-Up**



# MHA of Kentucky Suggested Steps

---

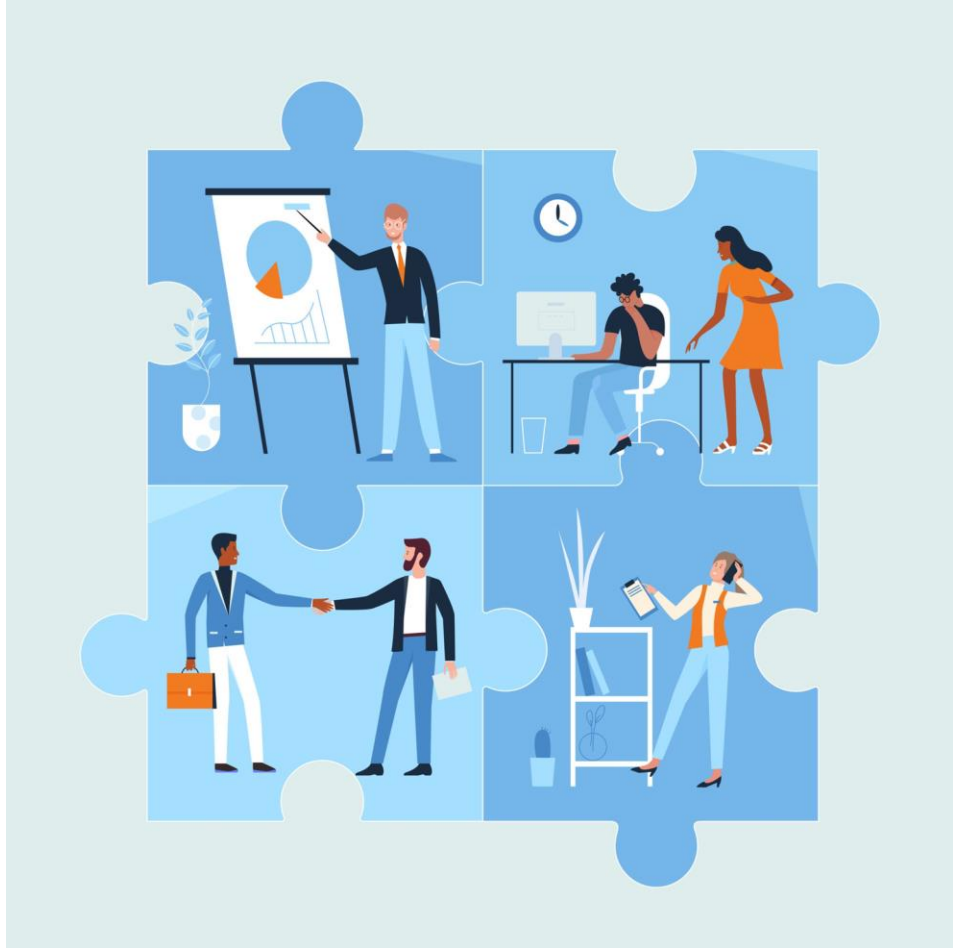
## Lift Up Youth Voices



- Formal youth feedback information sessions, similar to Kentucky Department of Education's (KDE's) Commissioner's Student Advisory Council (SAC), would be helpful since things have changed since 2020-2021 when it was released. Sharing results statewide with organizations like ours is also a part of that process.
- Youth who have experienced mental health issues (lived experience) should be involved in every discussion.

# MHA of Kentucky Suggested Steps

---



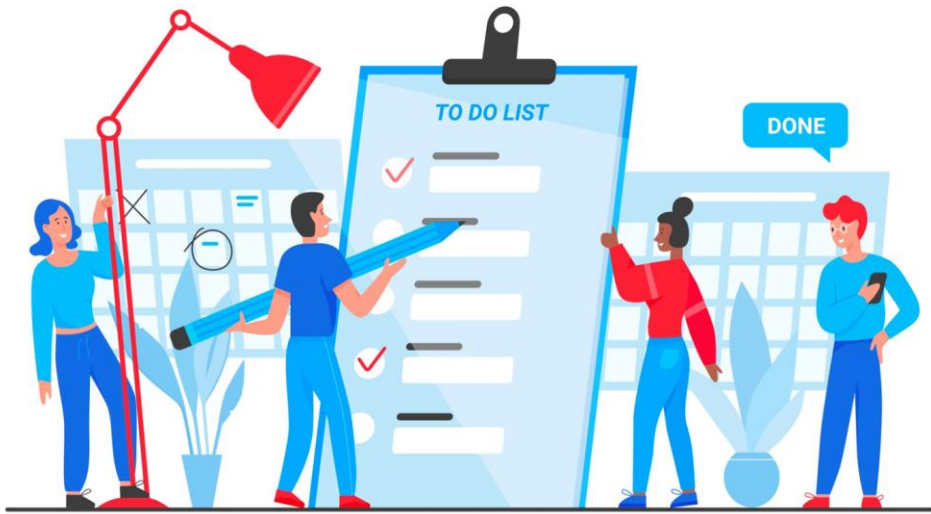
## Convene & Collaborate

- Establish a Youth Mental Health Council or Task Force to fully examine the issue, bringing multiple stakeholders to the table.
- Collaborate with subject matter experts in our commonwealth to improve, coordinate, identify gaps and reduce redundancies in services.

# MHA of Kentucky Suggested Steps

---

## Plan & Prepare



- Create a **formal, evidence-based procedure** for school districts to follow in the aftermath of a death of a youth by suicide. This plan of action would include a **place to call and people to respond**.
- Create and disseminate a mental health safety plan for middle school or high school students, similar to a version of "Stop, Drop and and Roll" for fire safety. Mental and physical safety go hand-in-hand.



# MHA of Kentucky Suggested Steps

---

## Educate the Public

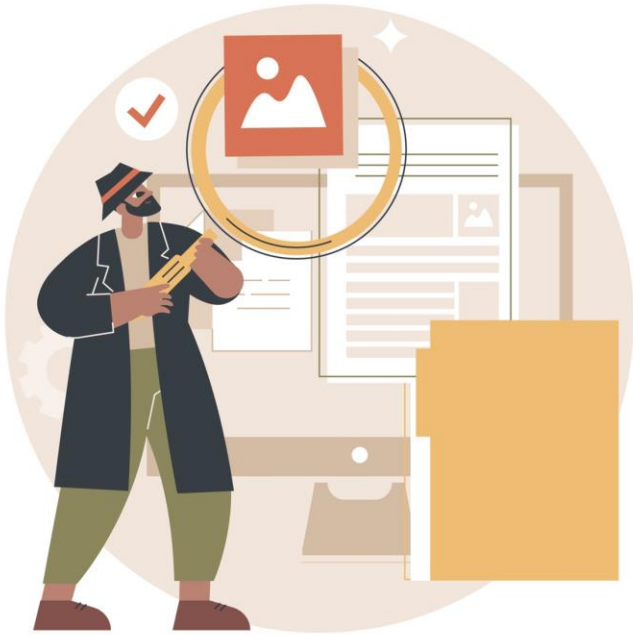


- Communicate clearly about **988**. Continue to fund the Community Mental Health Centers that answer the 988 numbers.
- Offer increased evidence-based community trainings to the public, such as CODE RED, Mental Health First Aid and CALM Conversations. Expand funding opportunities for these trainings statewide.
- PSAs on TV, radio and digital media about 988, warning signs, and mental

# MHA of Kentucky Suggested Steps

---

## Statutory Follow-Up



- Improve monitoring of compliance with existing statutes to ensure **quality** of trainings offered to students and staff.

***THANK YOU for taking suicide seriously and enacting legislation to strengthen suicide prevention training for school staff and students!***

# Final Reminders

---

- Evidence-based information is available and there are many experts in the state.
- Solutions to this public health issue don't have to be elaborate or difficult.
- Start small. Start early.
- Fostering communication and increasing education are crucial, and we're here to help!



# Crisis Lines and Assistance



**CRISIS TEXT LINE |**

**Text HELLO to 741741**

**Free, 24/7, Confidential**

**GET HELP 24/7:**



**TrevorText**

Text START to 678678



**TrevorChat**

TrevorChat.org



**TrevorLifeline**

866.488.7386

**THE TREVOR PROJECT**  
Saving Young LGBTQ Lives

**Disaster  
Distress  
Helpline**

PHONE: 1-800-985-5990

TEXT: "TalkWithUs" to 66746

WEB: [disasterdistress.samhsa.gov](https://disasterdistress.samhsa.gov)

# Contact Us

---

## **MHAKY**

Executive Director: Hannah Brosnan

[hannahb@mhaky.org](mailto:hannahb@mhaky.org) / 859-684-7778

General MHAKY: [mhaky@mhaky.org](mailto:mhaky@mhaky.org)

## **MHANKYSWOH**

Executive Director: Elizabeth Atwell

[eatwell@mhankyswoh.org](mailto:eatwell@mhankyswoh.org) / 859-431-1077

General MHANKYSWOH: [info@mhanksywoh.org](mailto:info@mhanksywoh.org)