

Youth Mental Health Needs & Supports: Secondary Student Perspectives, 2024-25

California Department of Education

Youth's mental health can directly affect their ability to learn and succeed in school and beyond, yet most with mental health concerns do not receive necessary care. This brief describes data from the California Healthy Kids Survey Core & Behavioral Health modules on the mental health needs of secondary students during the 2024-25 school year [1]. Although these data may not be representative of all students, they highlight the need for increased mental health supports in schools to address students' concerns.



1 out of 4 secondary students felt so sad or hopeless for 2+ weeks that they stopped doing usual activities in the past year



1 out of 4 secondary students strongly agreed or agreed that school was "really boring" and **10%** strongly agreed or agreed that it was "worthless and a waste of time," which can be an indicator of poor mental health or disengagement



1 out of 5 secondary students experienced social/emotional distress in the past month

11%

of secondary students had seriously considered suicide in the past year

75% of students reported that if someone their age felt very sad, stressed, lonely or depressed, talking to an adult could help them feel better, however...



1 out of 3 students reported they did not know where to go at school for help if they felt very sad, stressed, lonely or depressed



1 out of 5 students would be afraid to get help if they felt very sad, stressed, lonely or depressed

Although **1 out of 5** students wanted to talk to a counselor or therapist about their mental health concerns in the past year, only **half of those** who wanted help reported getting it when needed

The most commonly selected barriers to seeking mental health care if students were feeling very sad, stressed, lonely or depressed:

Counselor/therapists wouldn't understand 34%

Parent/guardian might find out 33%

People would think there's something wrong with me 27%

Other students might find out 24%

