

Students as Solution Partners

*A Bottom-up Approach to Addressing
Kentucky's Youth Mental Health Crisis*



Child Welfare Summit, January 16th, 2019

StAMINA

Student Alliance for
Mental Health Innovation and Action

YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

*It sets the stage and critically impacts
readiness for college, work, and life*

YOUTH

- State of adolescent mental health in KY is dire
- 1 in 3 are sad to the point of stopping usual activities
- 1 in 7 has seriously considered suicide

COLLEGE

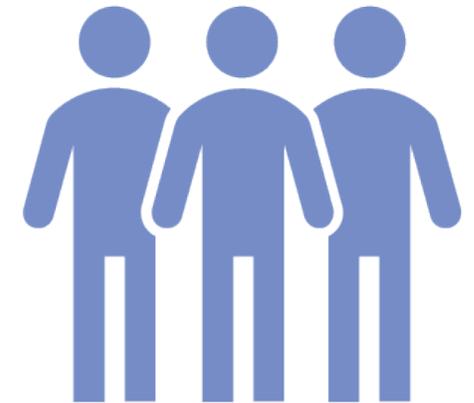
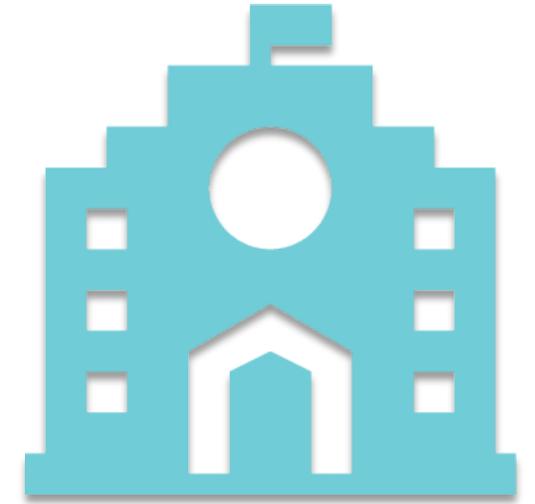
- 61% have experienced “overwhelming anxiety”
- 40% surge in demand for mental health services, while enrollment grew 5%

WORK

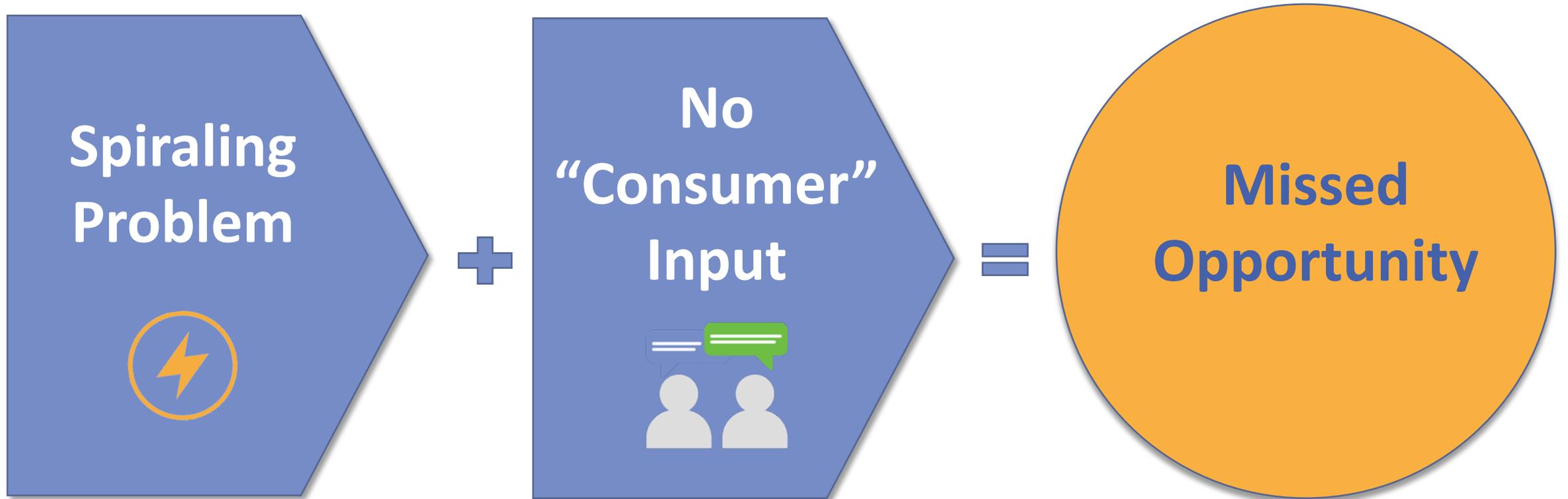
- Poor mental health results in \$17-\$44 billion of lost productivity for employers each year
- 200 million lost work days

Youth Mental Health: School Services

- **Schools** are the primary deliverer of youth mental health services
- Services in KY schools are **variable, limited**, & largely **reactive**
 - Onsite, mental health-specific counseling tends to be concentrated in limited “problem schools”
 - Structured services are usually focused on after-the-fact crisis intervention or consolation
- **Prevention** and **educational** efforts, though sincere and well-intended, are **perfunctory** and **unengaging** in practice
- Programs are detached from **student perspectives** and **insights**



Youth Mental Health: School Services



Youth Mental Health: Solution Opportunity

- **When engaged as design partners, students bring unique insights & innovations**
 - No modern company would think of designing a service from the top-down, or inside-out
 - No student would design a rote viewing of the same video every year if the goal were to educate & engage
- **If cultivated as key collaborators, youth will take ownership & help drive advances**
 - Look no further than the Parkland students for confirmation and inspiration
 - When trained appropriately, students are well-placed to recruit rich insights and feedback from their peers
- **Incorporating student voice embodies the issues, fleshes out impersonal statistics**



StAMINA



*Student Alliance for Mental Health
Innovation and Action*



Does your home or
workplace listen to
youth perspectives?

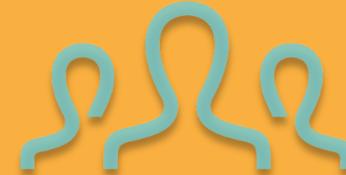
StAMINA's APPROACH

Our Mission:

- Rigorously bring youth needs, perspectives, insights, and ideas into mental health policies & program development
- Decrease the stigma surrounding mental health and increase effective mental health education, prevention, and treatment for Kentucky youth
- Engage youth, train them to lead and change the conversation



Learn



Build



Act

StAMINA'S YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH IDEATHON

A structured design-thinking approach to improve youth mental health in Kentucky

Held in September, 2018, the Ideathon was a public event bringing together community stakeholders to design signature advocacy projects based on the findings from StAMINA's research study.

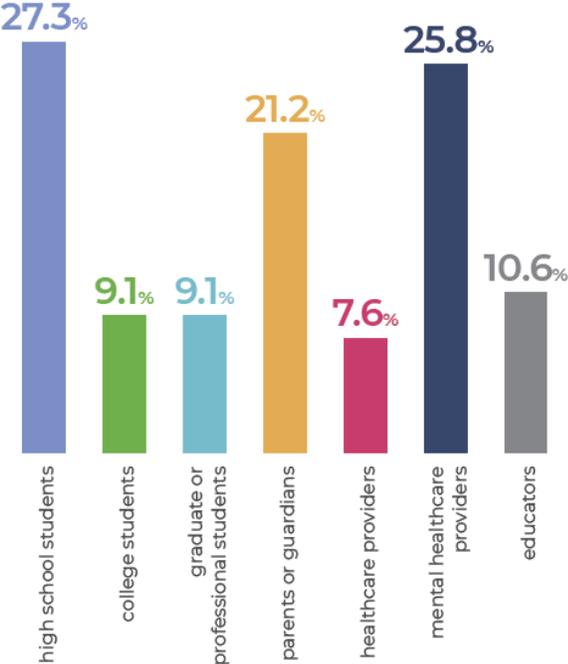
IDEATHON TEAMS WERE PRESENTED WITH THE FOLLOWING CHALLENGE:
How might we educate and empower families to prioritize youth mental health?



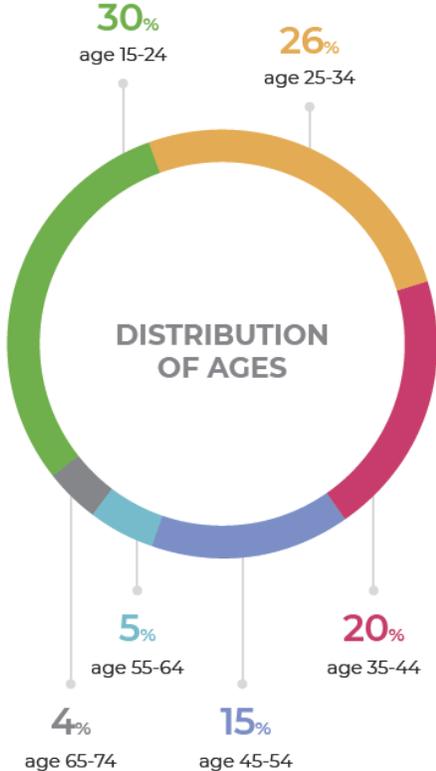
FEATURED SPEAKER:
Attica Scott,
Kentucky State Representative

State Representative Attica Scott serves Kentucky House District 41, and is a member of the following committees: Education, Local and State Government, Elections, Constitutional Amendments, Intergovernmental Affairs, and Transportation.

PARTICIPANT BACKGROUNDS*



* some participants fit into more than one category



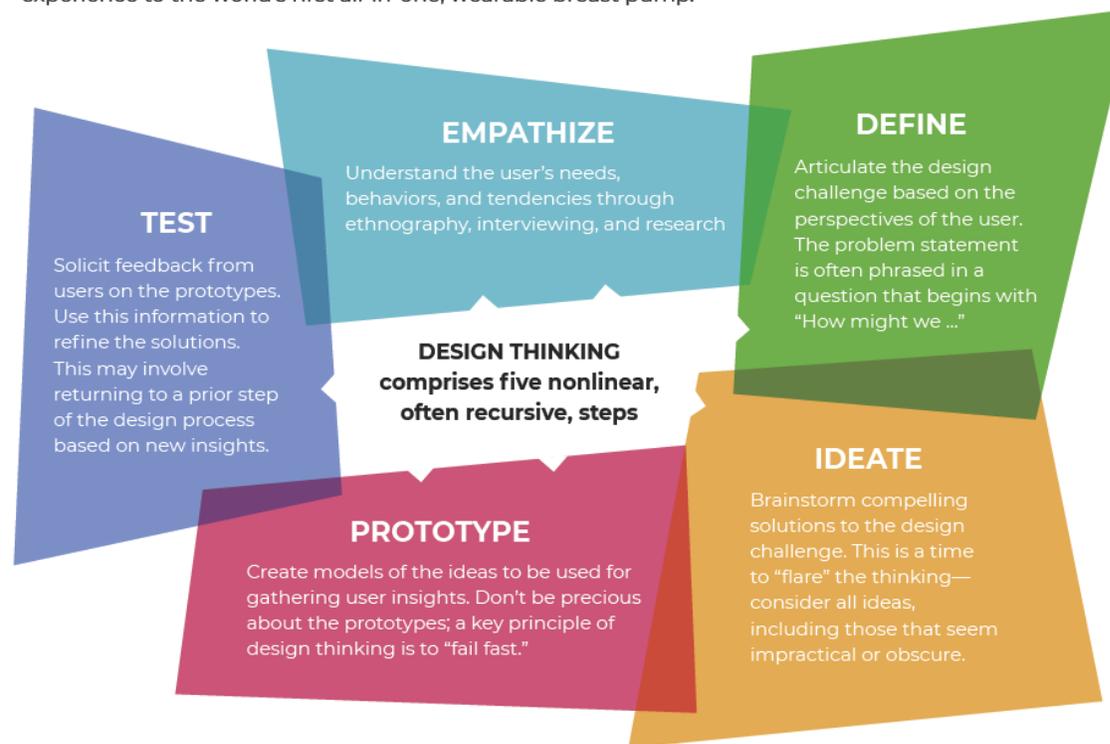
The StAMINA Ideathon used the framework of design thinking to guide participants through their solution generation process

Design thinking is a human-centered creative problem solving process leveraging empathy, prototyping, and experimentation to solve complex “wicked problems”—challenges hard to define and involving multiple levels of organizational complexity.

Companies such as IDEO use the design thinking methodology to pioneer innovative solutions: from more ergonomic children’s toothbrushes to an immersive, student-centered cafeteria experience to the world’s first all-in-one, wearable breast pump.

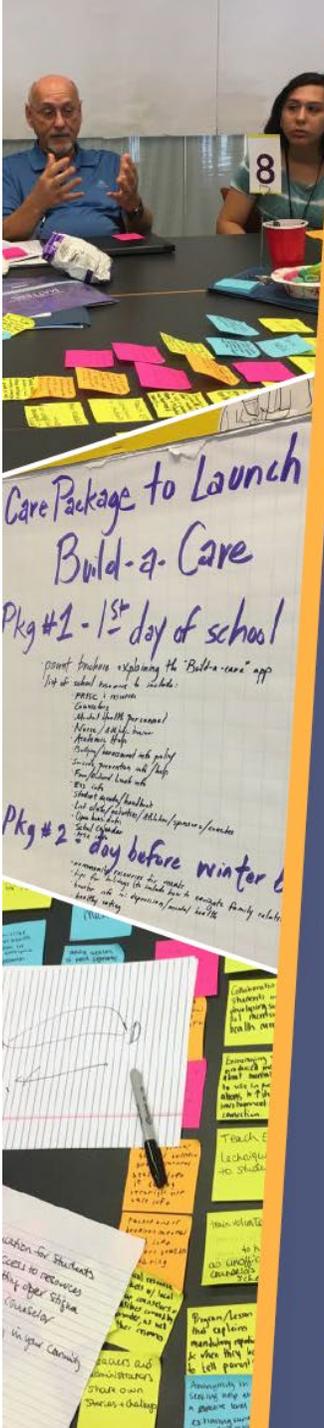


StAMINA’s user research provided the foundation for the first two steps of the design process. The Ideathon focused primarily on ideation and an initial round of prototyping. StAMINA will prototype, refine, and implement solutions generated during the Ideathon.



IDEO’s 7 Rules for Brainstorming

- 1 Defer judgement
- 2 Encourage wild ideas
- 3 Build on the ideas of others
- 4 Stay focused on the topic
- 5 One conversation at a time
- 6 Be visual
- 7 Go for quantity



Ideathon Pitches

BRAIN WAVES:

A for-youth-by-youth podcast exploring mental health resources and innovations

**Voted first place*

MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS:

A mobile application to augment in-school mental health education

**Voted second place*

OCEAN—BUILD YOUR MENTAL “MUSSELS”:

A deck of conversation cards to facilitate dialog within families about mental health

**Voted third place*

BUILD-A-CARE:

An in-school wellness program combining an educational app with a physical resource package students would receive three times a year

WELLNESS 101:

A workshop teaching educators how to work with students experiencing mental health challenges

CONTIN-YOU:

An educational mobile application providing students and parents with resources for navigating mental health struggles

EVERY MIND MATTERS:

A resource toolkit for schools to implement programs focused on mental health

Key Insights From All Ideathon Teams



Successful youth mental health solutions should **put students in the driver's seat**. Students should be equipped to start conversations with their own family members around mental health.



There is a profound need to **replace or augment the mental health curriculum provided in schools**—both to make the education more robust and to ensure learnings translate into the home.



Youth mental health solutions will be more effective if they leverage **platforms and environments with which families are already familiar**: schools, faith-based or community organizations, preventive visits in physician offices, and digital apps



Gamification—incorporating elements such as rules of play, levels of difficulty, and incentives into solutions—may make a complex subject like mental health more approachable.

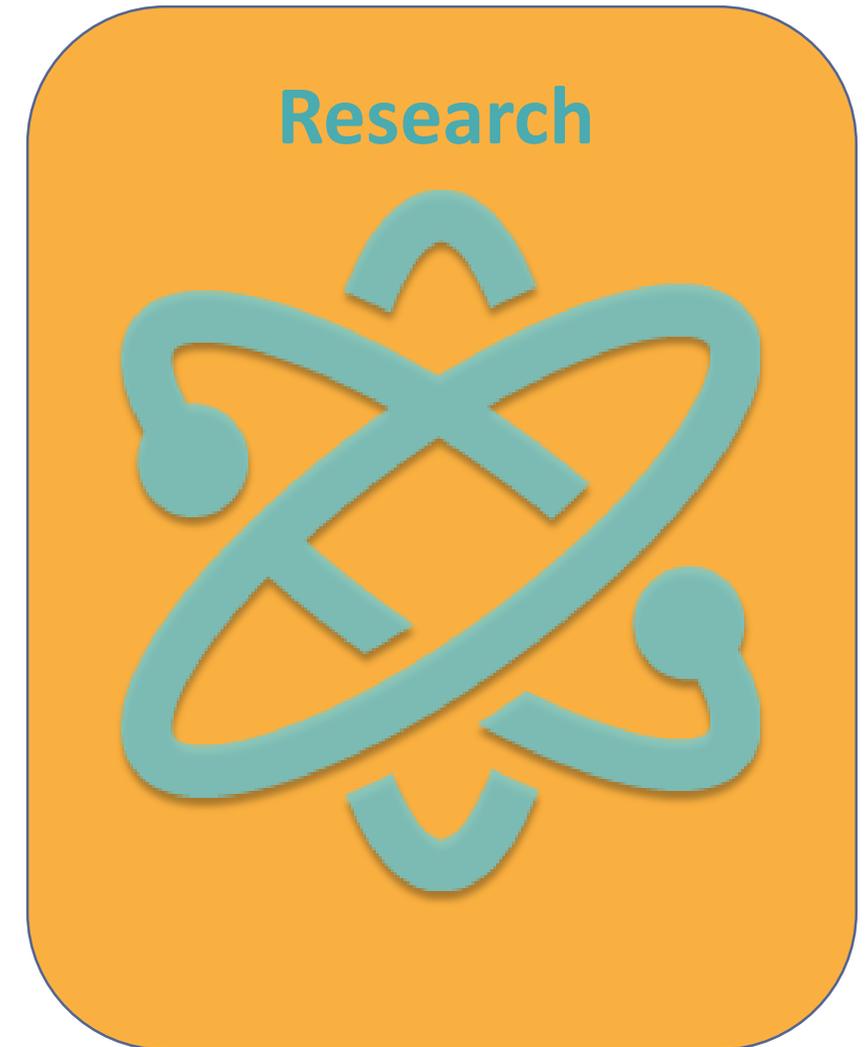
Next Steps

StAMINA and the Kentuckiana Health Collaborative will implement the winning ideas, harnessing insights from across all Ideathon teams.

LEARN

- Youth-guided research design
- Interview questions based on literature review
- IRB approval from duPont Manual & U of L
- Sample:
 - Both **urban** & **rural** representation
 - 9 **youth** focus groups (N=59 youth)
 - 5 **parent** focus groups (N = 32 parents)
 - 5 semi-structured **stakeholder** interviews

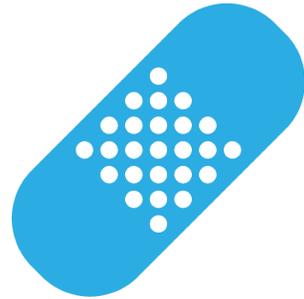
1200 + Minutes of Interviews



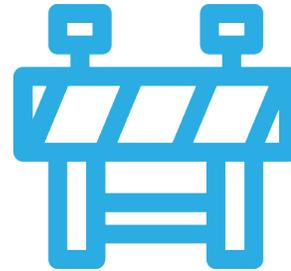
Youth Findings



**Contributing
Factors**



**Coping
Mechanisms**



**Barriers to
Resources**



**Drivers of
Stigma**

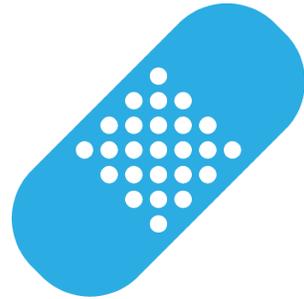


**Student
Attitudes**

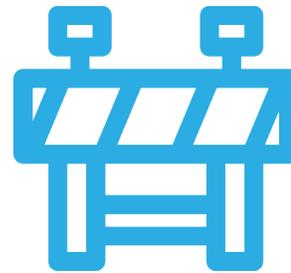
Youth Findings



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Contributing Factors

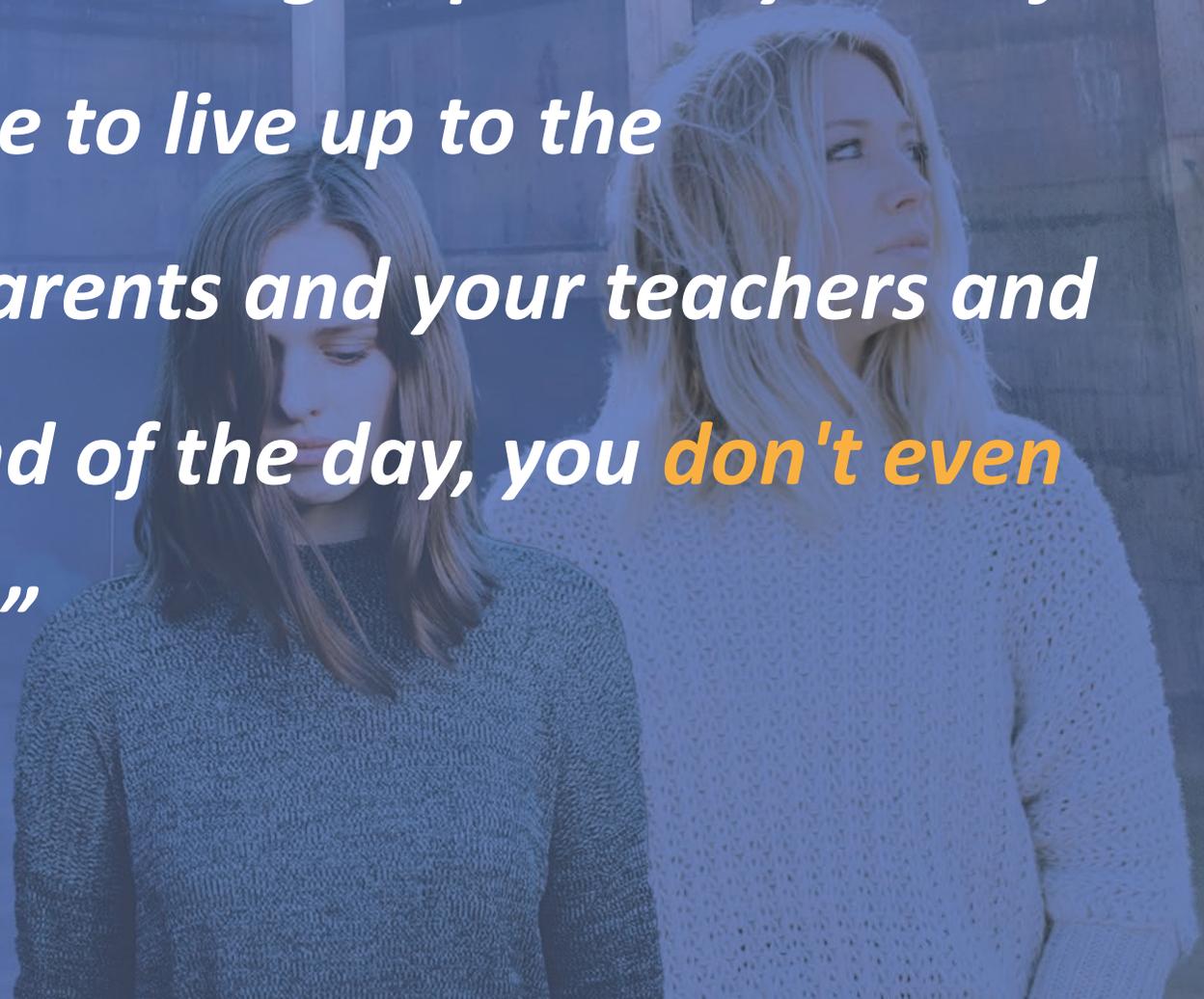


- Students are **overwhelmed** and **stressed**
- Academic & time pressures
- Expectations
- Social media & social pressures
- Identity & future
- Home life

Contributing Factors



*“Not just **homework** ... having to present yourself in a way that you have to live up to the **expectation** of your parents and your teachers and yourself and at the end of the day, you **don't even know what you want.**”*



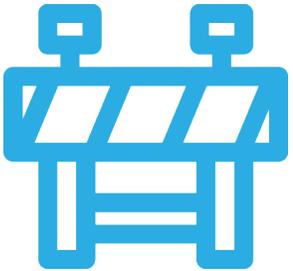
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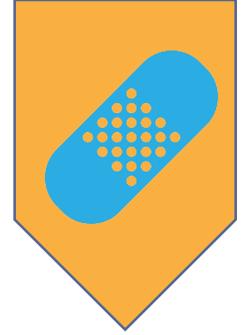


**Drivers of
Stigma**

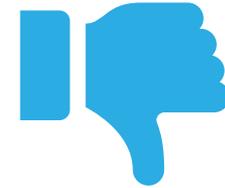


**Student
Attitudes**

Coping Mechanisms



- **Self care**
- **Consulting friends**
- **Having fun**

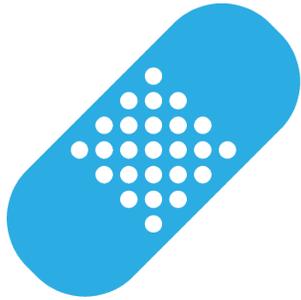


- **Avoidance**
- **Substance use**
- **Self harm**

Youth Findings



**Contributing
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**Coping
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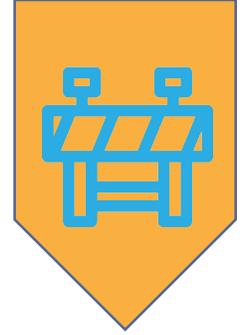


**Student
Attitudes**



What barriers to
accessing MH resources
are you familiar with?

Barriers to Resources

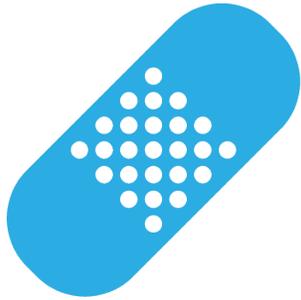


- **Personal Attitudes**
- **Support**
- **Understaffed Schools**
- **Low Resource Awareness**
- **Cost & Logistics**
- **Mental Health Literacy**
- **Confidentiality**
- **Societal Stigma**
- **Internalized Stigma**

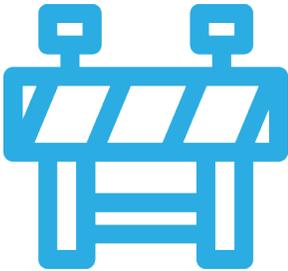
Youth Findings



Contributing Factors



Coping Mechanisms



Barriers to Resources



Drivers of Stigma



Student Attitudes

Drivers of Stigma



Societal & internalized stigma prevents help-seeking

- **Media/Social Media**
- **Family & Peers**
- **Religion**
- **Community Culture**
- **Heritage**
- **Mental health literacy**

Media & Family/Peers



*“You're not a whole person you're just **one label** and that's all you're seen as.”*

*“They [parents and peers] **don't see** mental health as depressing or **as serious as actual physical health** could be”*

Religion & Community



*“If I went to church, I just feel **down about myself** all the time because I’m a **‘bad person’**”*

*“There is this sense of **self-pride**. You don't want others to help, you can **help yourself**.”*

Heritage



*“In the black and people-of-color community, it's sort of like you **shouldn't even talk** about mental health or illnesses that you have because it's all about being **proud and strong.**”*

Lack of Mental Health Education



*“You **don't really get educated** on mental illness. You may not know anything about this other than **what you see in print and the media.**”*



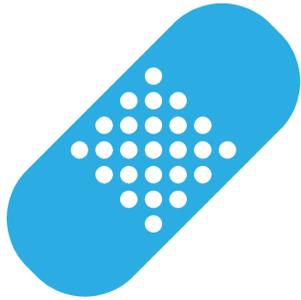


How has stigma, related to MH or other issues, affected you?

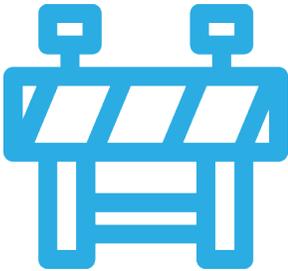
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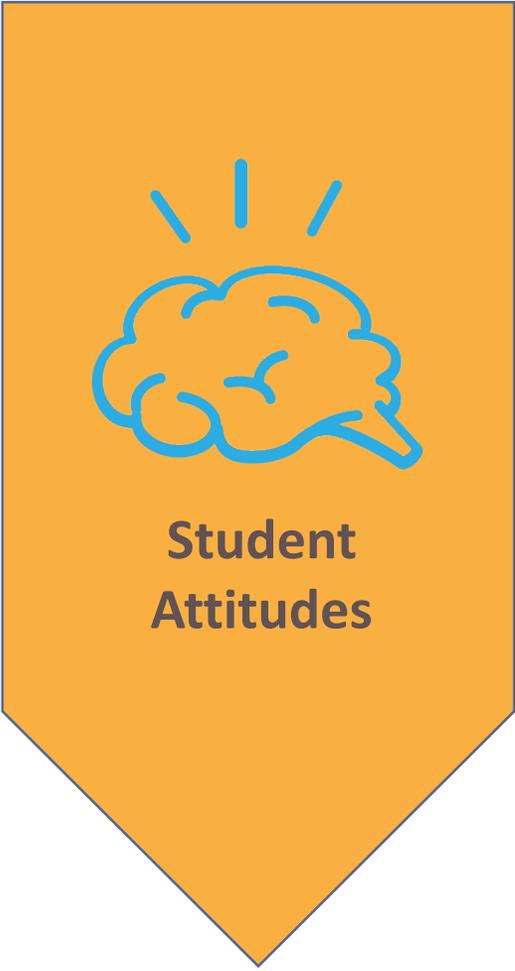
**Coping
Mechanisms**



**Barriers to
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**Drivers of
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**Student
Attitudes**

Student Attitudes



*“When I first hear mental health ... the first thing my mind goes to is just kind of **mental health issues.**”*



Student Attitudes



Desire to help

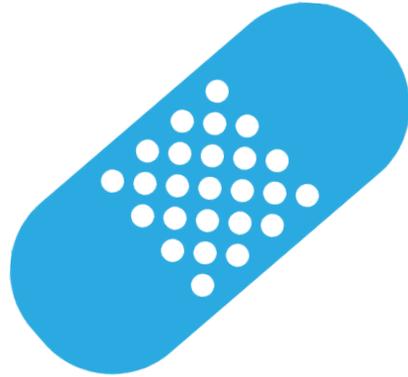
- *“You know your friends and know people around you, look out for them”*
- *“I'd just support them, I'd say. If it's really, really bad, I would direct them towards someone who can help them”*

Interest in better education/stigma reduction

- *“There needs to be a lot more education in schools and a lot more support from teachers and faculty”*
- *“We need to be open and more receptive and more empathetic to what people could be feeling”*

Appreciation for discussion platform

Parent Findings

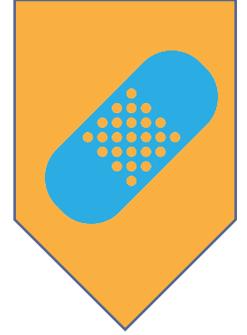


**Supporting
Children**



**Drivers of
Stigma**

Supporting Children



- **Ongoing Discussions**
- **Open Dialogue**
- **Preventing Internalization of Stigma**

Supporting Children



*“I think there's a generational gap because it was **always** something that was **kept quiet**. Now, people are starting to talk about it. So, I think our generation, kids are sort of **stuck in the middle of those two ideologies**. I think it could be difficult.”*



How can you support the wellbeing of youth in your family or workplace?

Drivers of *Parents'* Stigma



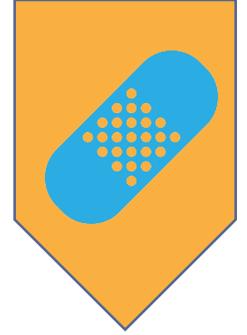
*“They think it is a **parenting issue**, you haven’t done whatever you needed to do as a parent. You are talked about, **criticized** where they say ‘**She has done something wrong with her kids** because they’ve got this problem.’”*

Drivers of Parents' Stigma



*“There's also families that say **you're not praying enough**. Well obviously you're **not being a good Christian**, if you're still having all these troubles or depression, give it to God. I've seen... a general sense of stigma around mental health in culture that reflects being **uninformed** about the role of mental health and what mental health concerns represent about a person.”*

Supporting Parents



- **Education on Mental Health**
- **Parent Meetings**
- **Mental Health Education in High Schools**
- **More Mental Health Resources in Schools**
- **Enhance Training for Educators**
- **Communication Between Schools and Parents**



What's one thing you
can do to improve youth
mental health?



THANK YOU

Let's continue to work together to equip youth, families, and communities to prioritize and invest in youth mental health.

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