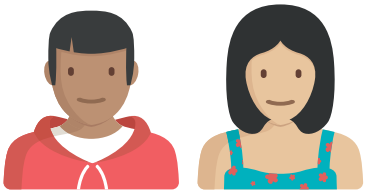
YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH: EMOTIONS MATTER

EMOTIONS ARE A BASIC PART OF THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE—WE'VE ALL GOT THEM—AND MANY OF US STRUGGLE WITH HOW TO DEAL WITH THEM EFFECTIVELY.

The English language has over 400 words for emotions[1]

Studies show that men and women experience the same amount of emotion,



but women tend to show it more[2]

Of 11-17 year olds who took MHA's Youth Screen:[3]

55%

said they often felt irritable or angry

69%

said they often worry a lot

68%

said they often felt sad or unhappy

45%

said they often do not show their feelings

KIDS AND TEENS ARE DEALING WITH REAL PROBLEMS AND THE COMPLICATED EMOTIONS THAT COME WITH THEM.

According to the National Survey of Children's Health:[4]

2.2 million

children have ever lived with a parent or guardian who has died

5 million

children feel like their family often has a hard time covering "the basics" like food, or housing

7.7 million

children have lived with someone who had a drug or alcohol problem

6.1 million

children have lived with someone who had a mental illness or who was suicidal

2.9 million

children have been treated unfairly because of their race or ethnicity

5.2 million

children have seen or heard physical abuse between adults in their home

6.2 million

children have been victims of violence or witnessed it in their neighborhood

And it doesn't stop there...

36%

of children (ages 2-17) have been emotionally bullied or teased in the past year[5]

1.2 million

children (ages 8-18) are estimated to be caregivers[6]

82.9%

of LGBTQ youth (age 11-17) who take a screen at mhascreening.org score "at-risk" for a mental health disorder[7]

WITHOUT HEALTHY COPING SKILLS, THE EMOTIONS THAT COME ALONG WITH THE ISSUES KIDS ARE FACING CAN RESULT IN BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS.

4.6% of children (ages 3-17) have been diagnosed with either Oppositional Defiance Disorder or Conduct Disorder

&

Boys are **2x** more likely than girls to have these disorders[8]

11% of those who took MHA's Youth Screen reported having conduct problems often

By the time parents came to take the Parent Screen, **23%** reported seeing conduct problems often in their children[9]

MISBEHAVIOR IN SCHOOLS IS OFTEN ADDRESSED WITH DISCIPLINARY MEASURES LIKE SUSPENSION, EXPULSION, OR EVEN ARREST.

7 million students received in-school or out-of-school suspensions in the 2011-2012 school year[10]

3 and 4 year olds are expelled from childcare centers at **13x** the rate of K-12 aged youth[11]

92 thousand students were involved in school-related arrests during one year[12]

BUT DISCIPLINE LIKE THIS OFTEN LEAVES KIDS AND TEENS FEELING ISOLATED AND LABELLED, FURTHER FUELING THE FEELINGS THAT CAUSE THE MISBEHAVIOR IN THE FIRST PLACE AND LEADING TO POOR OUTCOMES DOWN THE ROAD.

48% of 11-17 year olds who took MHA's Youth Screen said they often felt that they were "bad"[13]

Young students who are expelled or suspended are as much as **10x** more likely to drop out of high school, experience academic failure, be held back, hold negative school attitudes, and face incarceration than those who are not[14]

IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE THIS WAY. BY PROVIDING SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENTS AND TEACHING KIDS AND TEENS TO RECOGNIZE THEIR EMOTIONS AND ADDRESS THEM IN HEALTHY WAYS, WE CAN CHANGE LIVES.

School-age children whose mothers nurtured them in early childhood have larger hippocampi, a key structure in the brain important to learning, memory, and responding to stress[15]

Students who have strong social emotional skills have better physical and mental health, more employment opportunities, fewer relationship problems, and are less likely to abuse substances as adults[16]

When schools have gay-straight alliances and policies against LGBTQ harassment, gay students have fewer suicidal thoughts and attempts[17]

Restorative discipline practices show great promise, with some K-8 schools showing as high as a 67% reduction in suspensions over a multi-year period[18]

LEARN MORE ABOUT HOW YOU CAN HELP KIDS AND TEENS DEVELOP HEALTHY COPING SKILLS BY VISITING WWW.MENTALHEALTHAMERICA.NET/BACKTOSCHOOL.

MHA Mental Health America®

B4Stage4

/mentalhealthamerica
@mentalheltham
@mentalhealthamerica
/mentalheltham
/mentalhealthamerica
www.mentalhealthamerica.net

SOURCES

1. Franklin, Deborah. "Emotions Outlast the Memories That Drive Them." NPR. April 13, 2010. Accessed: June 10, 2012.
2. MacDonald, Matthew. Your Brain: The Missing Manual. Sebastopol, CA: O'Reilly Media, Inc., 2008.
3. Proprietary data. MHAScreening.org
4. National Survey of Children's Health. NSCH 2011/12. Data query from the Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative, Data Resource Center for Child and Adolescent Health website. Retrieved [7/25/17] from www.childhealthdata.org.
5. https://www.childtrends.org/indicators/bullying/
6. http://www.aacy.org/index.php/more-facts-about-caregiving-youth
7. Proprietary data. MHAScreening.org
8. Boat, T. F. (2015, October 28). Prevalence of Oppositional Defiant Disorder and Conduct Disorder. Retrieved July 26, 2017, from https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK332874.
9. Proprietary data. MHAScreening.org
10. US Department of Education Office for Civil Rights. (2011-2012). [Civil Rights Data Collection: Data Snapshot (School Discipline)]
11. Gilliam, W.S., 2005. Pre-kindergarteners left behind: Expulsion rates in state prekindergarten systems. Policy Brief series no. 3. New York, NY: Foundation for Child Development
12. US Department of Education Office for Civil Rights. (2011-2012). [Civil Rights Data Collection: Data Snapshot (School Discipline)]
13. Proprietary data. MHAScreening.org
14. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Education, Policy Statement on Expulsion and Suspension Policies in Early Childhood Settings (Dec. 10, 2014)
15. Luby JL, Barch DM, Belden A, Gaffrey MS, Tillman R, Babb C, Nishino T, Suzuki H, Botteron KN. Maternal support in early childhood predicts larger hippocampal volumes at school age. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences Early Edition, Jan. 30, 2012. www.pnas.org/cgi/doi/10.1073/pnas.1118003109.
16. Jones, D., Crowley, D.M., and Greenberg, M.T. (2017, July). Improving Social Emotional Skills in Childhood Enhances Long-Term Well-Being and Economic Outcomes. Edna Bennet Pierce Prevention Research Center, Pennsylvania State University.
17. Saewyc EM, Konishi C, Rose HA, Homma Y. School-based strategies to reduce suicidal ideation, suicide attempts, and discrimination among sexual minority and heterosexual adolescents in Western Canada. International Journal of Child, Youth and Family Studies 2014;1:89-112.
18. 2014. Improving School Climate: Evidence from Schools Implementing Restorative Practices. International Institute for Restorative Practices. Retrieved from https://www.iirp.edu/pdf/IIRP-Improving-School-Climate.pdf