

youth mental health

Youth deserve to have supportive and safe spaces in which to raise their voices on issues and policies affecting their mental health.



- Half of all individuals living with a mental health condition experience their first symptoms by the age of 14. This number jumps to 75% by the age of 24.
- One in five youth live with a mental health condition, but only “half (50.6%) of children aged 8-15 received mental health services in the previous year.”¹ The average delay between onset of symptoms and intervention is 8-10 years.
- Undiagnosed, untreated or inadequately treated mental health conditions affect a student’s ability to learn, grow and develop.
- Over one-third (37%) of students with a mental health condition age 14–21 and older who are served by special education dropout—the highest drop-out rate of any disability group.³
- More than 90% of children who die by suicide have a mental health condition.⁴
- NAMI advocates for school-based mental health services and supports. We support the Mental Health in Schools Act (H.R. 1211/S. 1588). This bill provides federal funding to train school staff on mental health related issues, establish comprehensive school-based mental health services and create links between schools and the community mental health system.

(1) Insel, T.R. (2008). Assessing the Economic Costs of Serious Mental Illness. *The American Journal of Psychiatry*. 165(6), 663-665

(2) Use of Mental Health Services and Treatment among Children. (n.d.). Retrieved October 10, 2016, from <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/statistics/prevalence/use-of-mental-health-services-and-treatment-among-children.shtml>

(3) Mental Health in Schools. Retrieved October 10, 2016, from <http://www.nami.org/Learn-More/Public-Policy/Mental-Health-in-Schools>

(4) U.S.A. Suicide: 2013 Official Final Data. (2015, January 22). Retrieved October 10, 2016, from <http://www.suicidology.org/Portals/14/docs/Resources/FactSheets/2013datapgsv2alt.pdf>