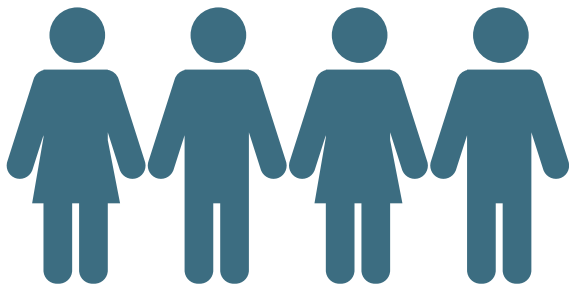


MENTAL HEALTH AND CHILDREN

AT A GLANCE

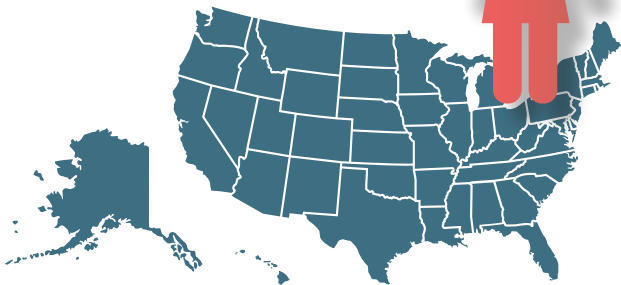
Mental disorders among children are defined as serious changes in the way children typically learn, behave, or handle their emotions.

A child's mental health is an essential part of their overall health and can impact their ability to succeed in school and in society¹.



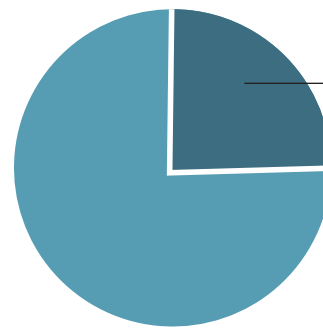
▶ **1 out of every 5**

children ages 3-17 has a mental health condition².



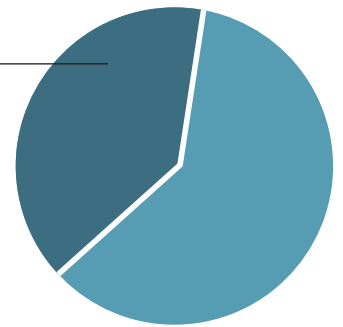
The Knox County Health Department, in partnership with Knox County Schools and Metro Drug Coalition, conducts regular surveys of health behaviors, including mental health, in local high schools.

Some highlights from the 2022 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS)⁴ include:

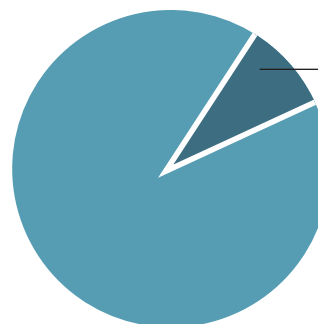


24.4% of students reported their mental health had not been good "most of the time" or "always" in the past 30 days.

39.4% of students reported that they felt so sad or hopeless that they stopped doing normal activities for two or more weeks within the past year.



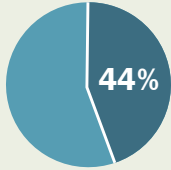
5% of child mortalities in Tennessee in 2020 were due to suicide³.



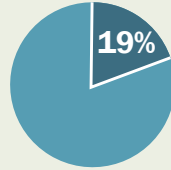
9% of students reported attempting suicide in the last 12 months; this is a significant decrease from 2019.

Factoring in ACEs

Having multiple adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), such as being the victim of abuse or witnessing violence as a child, may lead to increased risk of depression and other negative mental and physical health outcomes.



The 2022 YRBS found that nearly half (44%) of Knox County Schools (KCS) high school students reported **at least one ACE** ...



... and that approximately 1 out of 5 (19%) KCS high school students reported having **two or more ACEs**, which can lead to increases in depression and other negative mental and physical health outcomes.

Students with two or more ACEs were more likely to report a variety of mental health problems, tobacco/electronic vapor product use, illicit drug use, and violence-related behaviors compared to students who reported no ACEs.

Health behaviors or outcomes reported in students with no ACEs compared to students with two or more ACEs

	No ACEs	2+ ACEs
In a physical fight in the past 12 months	10.5%	37.1%
Ever tried smoking	9.3%	25.3%
Ever used an electronic vapor product	21.8%	44.1%
Mental health was not good in the past 30 days	19.2%	40.2%
Persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness in the past 12 months	30.6%	54.2%

▶ An estimated **\$247 billion** is spent each year on treatment and management of childhood mental disorders¹.

Resources

The Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services provides programming and funding to serve and support the children and families of Tennessee. You can find their many initiatives [here](#).

The National Institute of Mental Health offers [resources](#) for determining if a child is experiencing normal challenging behaviors or a cause for concern and how to find resources if you are concerned about your child.

Immediate help is always available from the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline by calling or texting:

Call 1-800-273-TALK or 988 to be connected to your local call center.

Text HELLO to 741741



References

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2023, March 8). What is children's mental health? Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/childrensmentalhealth/basics.html>
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- Tennessee Department of Health (2015). Tennessee Death Certificate Data 2013. Nashville, TN: TDOH Office of Health Statistics and Research.
- Epidemiology Program (2022). 2022 Knox County Youth Risk Behavior Survey. Knoxville, Tennessee: Knox County Health Department.



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HEALTH DEPARTMENT