

SS-SWAC-YAC



Mental Health Accessibility in Schools

Introductions

SS - SWAC - YAC

- Lillian - Seattle, WA
- Katherine - Vashon Island, WA
- Ailani - Vancouver, WA
- Sadie - Okanogan, WA
- Further questions can be sent to our advisor, Ella Deverse, at her email Ella.Deverse@k12.wa.us

The Importance of Mental Health Care for Students

- Feelings of Unsafety in Schools
 - Bullying
 - Sexual Harassment
 - Feel ashamed to get help
 - Stigma around mental health
 - Marginalized groups
 - Groups such as the LGBTQ+ community, communities of color, and survivors of sexual assault are subject to different mental illness risk factors than the general population and have different needs when accessing mental health care
- Lack of Access

67%

of WA state youth surveyed on March 8th did not feel like their mental health needs were appropriately addressed by their schools.

74%

of WA state youth surveyed on June 10th did not feel like their mental health needs were appropriately addressed by their schools.

Why Students Might Lack Access to Mental Health Care

- Unsupportive parents/cultural barriers
 - The “existence” of mental health within different cultures
 - Stigma and shame around mental health
- Accessibility issues
 - Financial issues
 - Transportation issues
 - Lack of access to insurance
 - Needing time off work
- Lack of knowledge about the importance of mental health care
 - Mental health issues can have just as much of an effect on student’s well-being as physical health issues

Our Suggestions

- Cultural sensitivity training for school counselors
 - Understanding the social and historical context
 - Understanding the dynamics of the cross-culture zone
- Behavioral Health Navigators in each ESD (funded during the 2020 legislative session!)
 - In order to improve navigation of mental health care resources, which can be complex and difficult to access

Our Suggestions

- Neighbor Care or other school-based health clinics
- Forefront Suicide Prevention Program in the Schools
 - Provides trainings to students in high schools, who present curriculum to health classes
 - Supplements health curriculum already in schools
 - Gives students more mental health literacy capabilities

Questions?

We are happy to take any questions now, and if we run out of time, please reach out to our advisor, Ella DeVerse (Ella.DeVerse@k12.wa.us), and she will field any questions to us.