

Improving Mental Health & Wellness in Schools Act

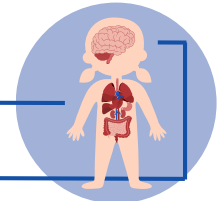
S.754 | **Sponsors:** Sens. Klobuchar (D-MN) & Lummis (R-WY)
HR.3331 | and Reps. Manning (D-NC) & Valadao (R-CA)



The Bill: Inclusion of mental health and eating disorders in the Local School Wellness Policies established by the Child Nutrition & WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004

Wellness policies are required for schools enrolled in the National School Lunch & Breakfast program
applicable to 95% of U.S. schools ¹

Policies focus on **physical health** but miss a key piece of youth wellbeing: **mental health**



*Physical and mental health are inseparable: food insecurity is linked to a **250% higher risk** of anxiety & depression ²*

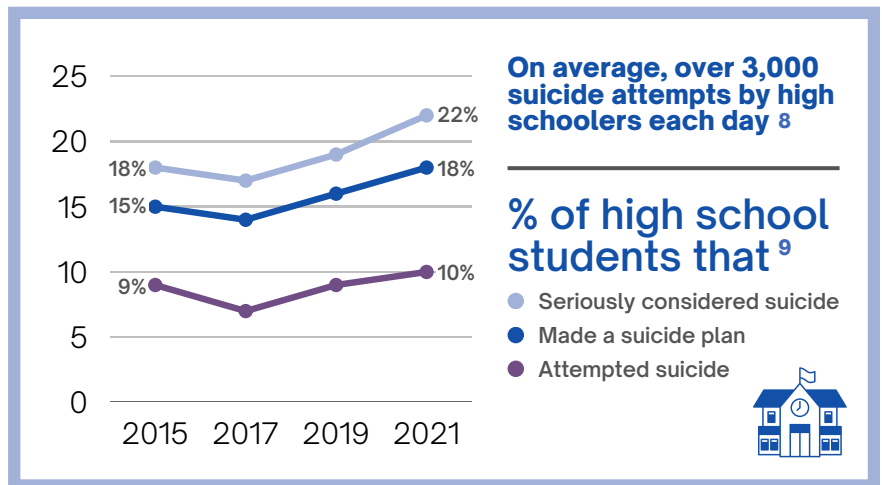
The Need: Over 10 years, youth have reported a 50% increase in negative mental health outcomes ³

12-13 is the average age of onset for an eating disorder ⁴

\$247B spent each year on pediatric mental health treatment ⁵

41% of teens who died by overdose had suffered a mental health condition ⁶

Research highlights that care, support, and belonging at school significantly reduces student mental health conditions ⁷



The Solution: Integrate mental health with physical health into existing policies for cost-effective prevention & early intervention to ensure student wellness



Include school-based mental health professionals and dietitians as optional partners within multidisciplinary teams to create wellness policies



Require USDA to receive technical assistance from SAMHSA

Interested in cosponsoring?
Senate: Email Thomas.Liepold@klobuchar.senate.gov or Linnea.Melbye@lummis.senate.gov
House: Email Fabiana.CorsiMendez@mail.house.gov (Manning) or Parker.Edwards@mail.house.gov (Valadao)

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Sources

1 Food Resource and Action Center. (2023). [National School Lunch Program](#).

2 Fang, D., Thomsen, M.R. & Nayga, R.M. (2021). The association between food insecurity and mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic. BMC Public Health 21, 607.
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3 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2023). [Youth Risk Behavior Survey Data Summary & Trends: 2011-2021](#).

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<https://doi.org/10.1001/arch.genpsychiatry.2011.22>.

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6 Tanz LJ, Dinwiddie AT, Mattson CL, O'Donnell J, Davis NL. Drug Overdose Deaths Among Persons Aged 10–19 Years — United States, July 2019–December 2021. MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep 2022;71:1576–1582. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm7150a2>.

7 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2022). [New CDC data illuminate youth mental health threats during the COVID-19 pandemic](#).

8 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2023). [Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System 2021](#).

9 Ibid.

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