















# CHILD WELL-BEING INDICATORS DASHBOARD

The following indicators provide insight into the well-being of Wisconsin’s youth from multiple domains.

- Each stoplight indicates whether the current Wisconsin data is an improvement or not, when compared to the baseline data, and color is based on statistical significance, when available in source data.
- The most recent available data at the time of print are used for “current” statistics. Data from approximately five years prior are used for “baseline” statistics.
- For data details, please see the indicator description document at <https://children.wi.gov/Pages/ResearchData/Indicators.aspx>.

-  Wisconsin is going in the wrong direction.
-  Wisconsin seems to be headed in the wrong direction.
-  This indicator did not meaningfully change.
-  Wisconsin seems to be headed in the right direction.
-  Wisconsin is going in the right direction.

## QUALITY OF LIFE

INDICATOR	US CURRENT	WI BASELINE	WI CURRENT	
Two or more ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences)	18%	17%	17%	
Children who have emotional, behavioral, or developmental conditions (ages 3-17)	26%	25%	27%	
Youth experiencing a major depressive episode (ages 12-17)	19%	16%	18%	
LGBTQ youth seriously considering suicide	39%	42%	39%	
High school students with anxiety	NA	49%	52%	
High school students feeling sad or hopeless	40%	29%	35%	
Teens seriously considering suicide	20%	16%	19%	
Suicide attempts	10%	7%	9%	
Young adults experiencing any mental illness (ages 18-25)	35%	29%	41%	

The number of kids with major depressive episodes continues to increase, both in Wisconsin and the nation.

Data from 2024 show a decline in LGBTQ suicidality in Wisconsin. More recent national trend data, however, show nearly half of LGBTQ youth considered suicide.

There has been a substantial increase in the rate of young adults who have a mental illness.

## SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC FACTORS

INDICATOR	US CURRENT	WI BASELINE	WI CURRENT	
Low-income youth	35%	33%	31%	↑
Severe housing problems	17%	14%	12%	↑
Mothers with higher education degrees	44%	47%	49%	↑
Four-year-old kindergarten enrollment	37%	72%	63%	↓
Foster care placements per 1,000	2.4	4.0	2.8	↑
Difficulty with friendships (social skills)	25%	25%	26%	↓
Parents who often attend child's activities	78%	91%	82%	↓
Family communicates very well	62%	60%	61%	↑
School belonging	NA	61%	54%	↓
Trusted adult at high school	NA	72%	70%	↓
Seclusion and restraint incidents	NA	18,523	13,661	↑
School suspensions	3%	4%	1%	↑
High school graduation	87%	90%	91%	↑
Employment (ages 16-24)	53%	62%	69%	↑
Adults 25+ with bachelor's degree	37%	31%	35%	↑

Preschool has a particularly positive impact on children's well-being. This is the time of rapid brain development, making the early years critical for mental health.

There's been a 30% decline in out of home care in Wisconsin. Foster care placements continue to decline thanks to kinship care and family preservation efforts.

There has been a large drop in the rate of Wisconsin parents who often attend their child's extracurricular activities, which foster belonging and provide important protection to youth mental health.

Kids who feel they can talk to their family about feelings is a positive childhood experience, which can mitigate negative effects of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs).

Schools must report the number of times they seclude or physically restrain a child. These practices run counter to student belonging. The vast majority (75%-80%) of students who are subject to these practices are students with a disability.

Higher educational attainment, on average, is linked with lower levels of mental distress.



## CLINICAL CARE

INDICATOR	US CURRENT	WI BASELINE	WI CURRENT
Early prenatal care (first trimester)	74%	80%	81%
Difficulty receiving treatment for child with mental conditions (ages 3-17)	56%	45%	60%
Doctors who did not ask about parental concerns with learning, development, or behavioral problems (ages 0-5)	67%	63%	65%
Early developmental screen given to parent to complete	36%	43%	43%
Psychiatrists (statewide count)	NA	360	490
School Nurses	66%	76%	79%
School Social Workers (statewide count)	NA	673	812
School Counselors (statewide count)	NA	2,122	2,229
School Psychologists (statewide count)	NA	957	1,094

The majority of Wisconsin children with a mental health condition such as depression, anxiety, or behavioral problems had difficulty getting necessary treatment.

Most parents report their pediatrician did not ask if there were concerns of their 0-5 year old's learning, development, or behavior. Because 90% of brain growth is during these years, mental and behavioral health care and screening should be embedded early into routine pediatric care.

Wisconsin requires every school to have a school nurse. Though the counts are slowly increasing, 25% of districts have no school nurse at all, and most school nurses are at each school part-time.

Federal funding cuts threaten recent progress in increasing the number of school-based mental health professionals. Wisconsin's rates are below recommended levels and services are not reimbursed at sustainable levels.

## HEALTH BEHAVIORS

INDICATOR	US CURRENT	WI BASELINE	WI CURRENT
Participation in activities (ages 6-17)	74%	81%	79%
Electronically bullied (cyberbullying)	16%	17%	18%
Bullied on school property	19%	22%	22%
Students who use electronics 3+ hours on average school days (not for schoolwork)	NA	75%	79%
Students who sleep 8 hours on average school night	23%	27%	26%
Teen birth rate per 1,000 (ages 15-19)	13.1	12.5	9.9
Students who currently use any vape product (on at least one day in last 30 days)	5%	12%	16%
Students who drink alcohol (at least one drink, at least one day in prior month)	22%	30%	26%
Students who experienced sexual dating violence	10%	13%	13%

Extracurricular activities are linked with less depression and anxiety. These activities provide kids with a fundamental sense of belonging, which is necessary for learning and child well-being.

74% of Wisconsin teens are not getting sufficient sleep, a crucial component of mental health.

A third of high school students have tried vaping. The percent who have recently vaped has increased.

While there was little change between 2019 and 2023, sexual dating violence has increased over the the last 10 years. Wisconsin girls are 2.5 times more likely to experience sexual dating violence than boys.