






DATA

WISCONSIN CHILD WELL-BEING INDICATORS DASHBOARD

Understanding the Data Dashboard










-  Wisconsin is **going in the wrong direction** (known to be statistically significant).
-  Wisconsin **seems to be headed in the wrong direction**, but is within the margin of error (not statistically significant) or unknown (significance unknown).
-  This indicator **did not change** (difference of 0.5% or less before rounding).
-  Wisconsin **seems to be headed in the right direction** but is within the margin of error (not statistically significant) or unknown (significance unknown).
-  Wisconsin is **going in the right direction** (known to be statistically significant).

Each stoplight indicates whether the current Wisconsin data is an improvement or not when compared to the baseline data.

Data from approximately 5 years prior, when available, are used for baseline statistics. The most recent available data at the time of print are used for current statistics. Many data elements are reported biannually. **Data that are new or updated in this year's report are marked with * next to the indicator name.**

For details on any indicator, please see the [indicator description](#).

Healthy Behaviors

2023 Indicators An * marks new or updated data	US Current	WI Baseline	WI Current	
Percent participating in activities (ages 6–17)*	72%	85%	78%	
Electronically bullied (cyberbullying)	16%	18%	16%	
Bullied on school property	20%	24%	18%	
Students who use electronics 3+ hours on average school days (not for schoolwork)	NA	40%	75%	
Students who sleep 8 hours on average school night	22%	26%	28%	
Students who experienced sexual dating violence	8%	10%	10%	
Students who drink alcohol (at least one drink at least one day in prior month)	29%	30%	26%	
Teen birth rate per 1,000*	13.9	13.8	10.1	
Students who vape frequently (20 or more days in the month prior)	11%	3%	7%	

Kids who participate in extracurricular activities are less likely to report depression and anxiety and more likely to feel they belong.

Some screen time can be positive, creating opportunities to connect with friends and peers. Excessive screen time, however, is associated with mental health concerns.

Research consistently shows that kids who sleep the recommended amount have better mental health. Experts advise middle and high school classes begin after 8:30 am.

Social & Economic Factors

2023 Indicators An * marks new or updated data	US Current	WI Baseline	WI Current
Low-income youth*	35%	35%	29%
Homeless youth*	2%	2%	2%
School connectedness	NA	71%	61%
School suspensions	3%	3%	3%
Trusted adult at high school*	NA	72%	67%
Difficulty with friendships (social skills)	23%	26%	23%
High school graduation*	87%	90%	90%
Employment (ages 16–24)*	55%	66%	67%
Adults 25+ with bachelor's degree*	36%	30%	33%
Parents who attend child's activities	84%	90%	89%
Family communicates very well*	62%	59%	61%
Foster care placements per 1,000	2.8	4.3	3.1
Four-year-old kindergarten enrollment*	32%	71%	61%
Mothers with higher education degrees*	44%	46%	50%

Child poverty has declined due to policies such as the Earned Income Tax Credit, and further reduced during pandemic-expanded relief programs like the Child Tax Credit (CTC). A reversal of this trend is expected since the expiration of CTC expansion.

Kids who feel they belong at their school have better attendance, academic success, and mental health.

Having supportive and trusted adults is crucial to youth wellness. Rates of trusted adults at school have declined overall and are much lower for students of color.

Positive adolescent friendships play a key role in protecting youth mental health. Kids' interactions with their peers have long-lasting effects well into adulthood.

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).

Mental wellness is built early in life when children's brains undergo the vast majority of development by age five. Preschool, in particular, can forge positive connections and set kids on a healthy path.

Clinical Care

2023 Indicators An * marks new or updated data	US Current	WI Baseline	WI Current	
Psychiatrists (statewide count)*	NA	340	370	
School Social Workers (statewide count)*	NA	673	772	
School Counselors (statewide count)*	NA	2122	2251	
School Psychologists (statewide count)*	NA	957	1028	
Difficulty obtaining mental health services	47%	45%	50%	
Children with mental conditions who did not receive treatment (ages 3–17)	48%	47%	49%	
Doctors who did not ask about parental concerns with learning, development, or behavioral problems (ages 0–5)	70%	62%	66%	
Early developmental screen	35%	43%	44%	
Early prenatal care (first trimester)*	75%	80%	82%	

Though increasing, counts of community and school-based mental health professionals are far below recommended levels. Growing the workforce is key to addressing Wisconsin's youth mental health crisis.

Half of Wisconsin youth with a diagnosed mental health condition such as depression, anxiety, or behavioral problems receive no treatment.

The majority of prenatal mental health concerns go unreported. Maternal mental health checks can help address Wisconsin's high infant mortality rate.

Quality of Life

2023 Indicators An * marks new or updated data	US Current	WI Baseline	WI Current	
Two or more ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences)	17%	21%	18%	
Youth experiencing a major depressive episode (ages 12–17)*	20%	14%	16%	
Children who have emotional, behavioral, or developmental conditions	23%	21%	23%	
High school students feeling sad or hopeless	37%	27%	34%	
Teens seriously considering suicide	19%	16%	18%	
Suicide attempts	9%	8%	9%	
LGBT youth seriously considering suicide	45%	43%	48%	
Young adults experiencing any mental illness (ages 18–25)*	34%	26%	37%	

The number of kids with major depression is increasing, both in Wisconsin and the nation.

There has been an alarming increase in the number of teens seriously considering suicide, especially among girls, kids of color, and LGBTQ students.

Political divisiveness over LGBTQ issues can negatively impact all youth but especially LGBTQ kids, as it contributes to rising rates of anxiety, depression, and suicidality.