WHY WE CHOSE THIS TOPIC
Some students returning to in-person learning may be anxious about getting back into a routine and about what to expect in an altered classroom environment. They may feel disconnected from teachers and peers, and their families may still be coping with household challenges related to the pandemic. Students will need extra support to ensure positive emotional well-being and successful school outcomes.

WHAT THE RESEARCH SAYS
For children already struggling with a mental health or family issue, the pandemic is especially challenging. Children with special education needs, low-income, and children in rural areas are disproportionately affected by COVID-19, and require additional support upon return to in-person learning.

WHISCONSIN IS ONE OF THE TOP 5 STATES FOR HAVING THE MOST INSURANCE CLAIMS SUBMITTED FOR INTENTIONAL SELF-HARM INJURIES DURING THE PANDEMIC.

Wisconsin is one of the top 5 states for having the most insurance claims submitted for intentional self-harm injuries during the pandemic.

Insurance companies report a 100% increase in the percentage of self-harm, substance use, and mental health claims for teens in 2020 as compared to 2019.

Hispanic adults report the highest level of depression and suicidal thoughts among racial and ethnic groups in 2020 due to not having enough food or stable housing, putting their children at risk of stress and worry.

WHAT’S HAPPENING IN WISCONSIN?

The Voices of Wisconsin Students’ Project was developed by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services in partnership with the University of Wisconsin’s Wisconsin Institute for Public Policy and Service (WIPPS) Research Partners and the Medical College of Wisconsin (MCW) to gather more insight about how middle and high school students are coping with school, learning, sources of stress, and life in general during COVID-19.

The valuable input from students, gathered from 23 different focus groups, can help inform discussions among families, schools, and policymakers about how to support students’ ongoing learning either virtually, in-person, or in hybrid/blended models.

Do you think your child needs mental health services and don’t know where to start? View our guide of how to access children’s mental health services.

Accessing Children’s Mental Health Services

1. Talk to your child’s teacher or school counselor
2. Contact your child’s healthcare provider
3. Call 211
4. Visit Wisconsin’s Mental Health Resource Center

Wisconsin Office of Children’s Mental Health

children.wi.gov
Levels of depression, anxiety, suicidal ideation, and the demand for mental health services in college students age 18-24 was trending up even before the pandemic. Now, students report increased depressive symptoms, which are negatively affecting their academic performance. Adding to their psychological distress, college students have missed many important milestones such as graduation, participation in athletics, and other opportunities for social interaction which also likely impacts their well-being.