

DATA

PROVIDING ACCESS TO HEALING

SCHOOL-BASED MENTAL HEALTH
COMMUNITY IMPACT INITIATIVE



United Way of
Sheboygan County

IMPACT REPORT

2022 - 2023



A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

Earlier this year, Governor Tony Evers declared 2023 as “The Year of Mental Health.” Of this, Evers stated, “The state of mental health in Wisconsin is a quiet, burgeoning crisis that I believe will have catastrophic consequences for generations if we don’t treat it with the urgency it requires.” Unfortunately, Evers is correct. With depression, suicidality, and other mental health challenges on the rise among our youth, PATH Data and Youth Risk Behavioral Health survey results supports, that the stressors and isolation of the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated an already alarming situation.

Providing Access To Healing (PATH) aims to alleviate the pressure this puts on schools and families while improving mental health for the youth in our community. During the 22/23 school year, 538 students received therapy services through PATH. This brings the total number of students served to more than 2,400 since the program's inception in 2015! In a world where there is undoubtedly a shortage of behavioral health therapists, especially those who specialize in youth, we are extremely proud of this number.

While I can keep sharing quantitative numbers on how the program impacts the lives of so many, like how 98% of PATH students made progress towards their treatment goals last year and 95% felt better about life after starting PATH, hearing about the initiative from those who have benefited is much more meaningful. Of PATH, a Sheboygan Area School District (SASD) high school student, said, “Being able to talk through my thoughts and feelings... in a good healthy way helped a lot with my thinking, how I perceive things and how I look at my life. It made me see my worth and I couldn't be more grateful I'm alive.” Carla Vorpahl, a dedicated SASD social worker, said, “I have been a social worker for 27 years... in all those years there has never been a program more important, more needed, and more successful than the PATH Program.”

The outcomes and stories shared throughout this report are to be celebrated, yet there is still much work to be done. Many of the school districts we service have growing waitlists totaling hundreds of students who need school-based mental health services. It is because of the PATH behavioral health agencies and therapists, PATH Steering Committee, and our community partners and donors that we are able to continue to not only provide services to those in PATH, but also expand, to meet the need of those still waiting for help. Without their tireless efforts, expertise, compassion, and contributions we could never achieve this level of impact nor reach the number of youth we serve each year.

I will continue to work diligently alongside our partners to meet the need within our community. Our partners are some of the most dedicated, compassionate, and hard-working individuals I’ve had the privilege of working with. Therefore, I am confident we will continue to make Sheboygan County proud.

I end this with the fullest of hearts - again thanking all those who help make PATH possible. You are true mental health champions. Together, we really do make a difference.

With so much gratitude,



BRIANNA HEUSTERBERG
DIRECTOR OF PROVIDING ACCESS TO HEALING
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WHY IS SCHOOL-BASED MENTAL HEALTH IMPORTANT?

Mental health disorders are the leading cause of disability in children and adolescents. According to NAMI, one in six U.S. youth aged 6-17 experience a mental health disorder each year, and half of all mental health conditions begin by age 14. Undiagnosed, untreated, or inadequately treated mental disorders can significantly interfere with a student's ability to learn, grow, and develop. Since children spend much of their productive time in educational settings, schools offer a unique opportunity for early identification, prevention, and interventions that serve students where they already are. Research supports the notion that students are more likely to receive mental health supports if they are offered at school.

"This data echos a cry for help," said CDC Acting Principal Deputy Director Debra Houry, M.D., M.P.H. "The COVID-19 pandemic has created traumatic stressors that have the potential to further erode students' mental wellbeing. Our research shows that surrounding youth with the proper support can reverse these trends and help our youth now and in the future."

If we pair these findings with the number of school-aged children in Sheboygan County, that would mean 3,245 youth in our community are struggling with a mental health disorder in any given year. Sadly, 44% (1,428 youth) will NOT receive mental health treatment, leaving thousands in our community to be undiagnosed and thus untreated.

Enthusiastically, previous research has demonstrated that supportive relationships are a key protective factor against poor mental health in children, particularly amongst those who have experienced adversity. PATH has worked hard since the inception of the program in 2015 to serve more than 1,900 youth and works collaboratively to target, treat, and help youth experiencing mental health concerns including but not limited to trauma, depression, and anxiety. Understanding the importance of early intervention to reduce long-term consequences of mental health disorders, PATH serves youth as young as 3 years to 18 years of age.

School connectedness provided critical protection for students during COVID-19

According to a 2021 CDC study: Findings also highlight that a sense of being cared for, supported, and belonging at school — called "school connectedness" — had an important effect on students during a time of severe disruption. Youth who felt connected to adults and peers at school were significantly less likely to report persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness (35% vs. 53%); that they seriously considered attempting suicide (14% vs. 26%); or attempted suicide (6% vs. 12%). However, fewer than half (47%) of youth reported feeling close to people at school during the pandemic. PATH creates opportunities to increase school connectedness and improve the lives of youth.

Source:

<https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2022/p0331-youth-mental-health-covid19.html#:~:text=According%20to%20the%20new%20data, hopeless%20during%20the%20past%20year>

We all have a role to play in helping reduce symptoms that are adversely affecting the lives of youth. Together we can help students feel safe, supported, and increase their overall life satisfaction, allowing them to better reach their full potential.

Every partner, donor, and community member plays a role in the success of the children in this community - after all, it takes a village.

PATH: BRIEF OVERVIEW

United Way of Sheboygan County's Providing Access To Healing (PATH) is a school-based mental health community impact initiative that places licensed clinicians into the school setting to increase access to mental health care for students throughout Sheboygan County by removing financial and geographical barriers. PATH provides treatment and coping skills for students (3k-12) with common issues such as depression, anxiety, ADHD, and relationship stressors among other emotional and behavioral challenges.

PATH works to actively engage parents, community mental health providers, and school personnel in the lives of children and adolescents. There are definitive positives to offering these therapeutic mental health services in settings where children spend much of their day. In school-based settings, families, educators, and therapists are all focused on specific positive outcomes that improve the quality of life for the children and youth in their care. These services become embedded within an adaptive infrastructure of processes and relationships at the community level and support healthy pathways for youth and their families.

PATH has been operating in Sheboygan County for seven years with significant positive outcomes. During the 2022/2023 school year, PATH partners provided treatment and coping skills for students and their families struggling with mental health issues, among other emotional and behavioral challenges common to students today. The program launched during the 2015/2016 school year as a small pilot and is now servicing all (9) public school districts located in Sheboygan County as well as the Sheboygan County Head Start and Sheboygan Christian Schools.

For more information on how PATH is helping to address the mental health needs of youth in Sheboygan County, scan the code or visit the link below. PATH not only provides direct services but also connects youth and families to other community resource, narrowing the gap and increasing access to care.

SCAN ME



<https://www.uwofsc.org/news-and-events/news/may-blog-mental-health-awareness-month/>



2022 Sheboygan County Chamber Gala: Working Together Nomination

22/23 PROGRAM PARTNERS

LAKESHORE COMMUNITY HEALTH CARE

Provider and Educational & Referral Services

MENTAL HEALTH AMERICA

Community Partner | Resource, Referral, & Educational Services

ACCESS COMMUNITY THERAPIES

Provider and Educational & Referral Services

ROGER'S BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Community & Funding Partner | Education & Referral Services

UNITED WAY OF SHEBOYGAN COUNTY

Funding Partner | Program Developer & Facilitator

PARTICIPATING SHEBOYGAN COUNTY LOCATIONS

Schools: Cedar Grove Belgium, Elkhart Lake, Howards Grove, Kohler, Oostburg, Plymouth, Random Lake, Sheboygan, Sheboygan Christian, Sheboygan Falls, St. John Lutheran, Plymouth & Head Start | Funding Partner

Community: Boys & Girls Clubs of Sheboygan Co.

SHEBOYGAN COUNTY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES (SCHHS)

Community & Funding Partner | Referral Services

YOGA ON THE LAKE

Community Partner | Educational & Wellness Services

MEET OUR THERAPISTS

Lakeshore Community Health Care (LCHC)

SCAN ME



lakeshorechc.org/schoolmentalhealth

Access Community Therapies (ACT)

SCAN ME



accesscommunitytherapies.com/

MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDERS

During the 22/23 school year, 12 full-time equivalent (FTE) therapists from ACT and LCHC provided services to partnered Sheboygan County schools and Sheboygan County Head Start.

To meet the growing need, PATH looks to hire additional therapists for the 23/23 school year.

SESSIONS PROVIDED

During the 22/23 school year, PATH provided 9,818 therapy sessions, an increase of over 17% from the previous year, to students in Sheboygan County.

9,818



538

STUDENTS SERVED

538 students received therapy services through PATH in 22/23, bringing the total number of students served to over 2,400 since the program's inception in 2015!

DATA MEASUREMENT TOOLS

✓ STUDENT INTAKE & DISCHARGE/END-OF-YEAR DATA WHICH INCLUDES

- Student ID
- Gender
- Start/Discharge/End-of- Year date
- Academics
- Behavioral Referrals
- Attendance
- IEP/504



✓ PROMIS (MEASURES ANXIETY)

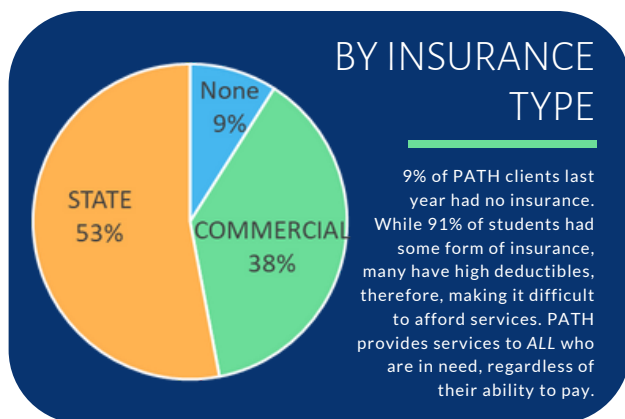
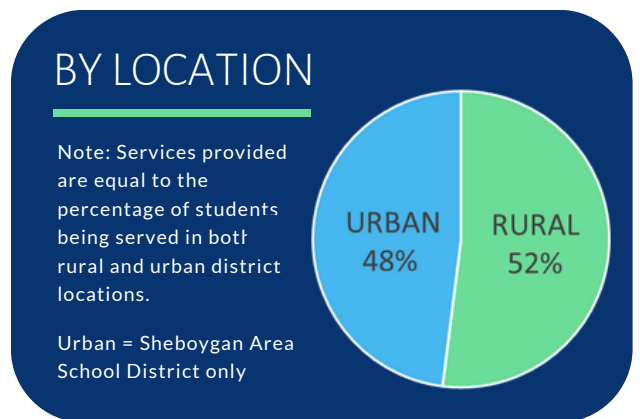
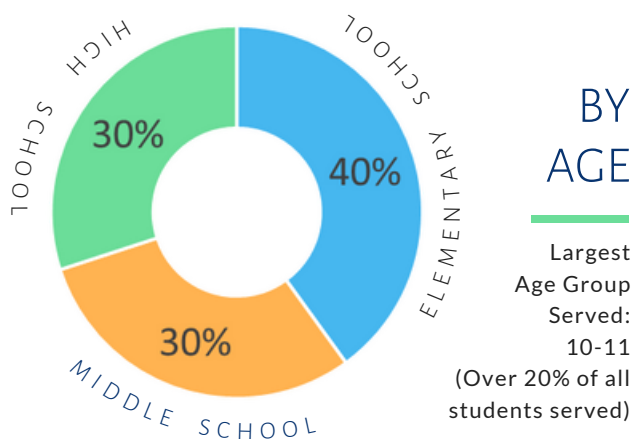
✓ PHQ-9 (MEASURES DEPRESSION)

✓ ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERINECE SURVEY (ACES)

✓ STUDENT BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SELF-REPORT SURVEY

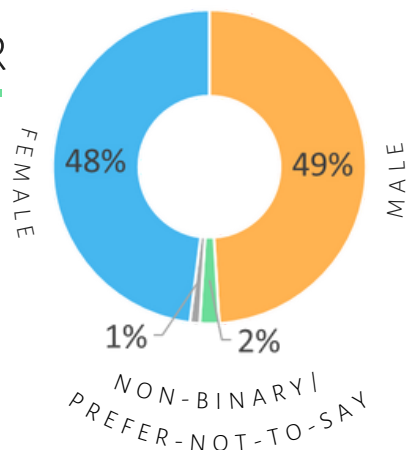
✓ CHILD & YOUTH RESILIENCE MEASURE (CRYM-R)

POPULATION SERVED



BY GENDER

PATH aims to be inclusive of all individuals. With regard to gender, we recognize that the data collected is not a true representation of the clients that identify as "non-binary" or "prefer not to say." Our initiative aims to tell a better story in the coming years.



ACADEMICS + BEHAVIOR



Over 20%

of the students enrolled in PATH showed major improvement in their academic performance.

*Note- PATH students may not have academic concerns, meaning improvement of their GPA is not one of their therapeutic goals.

During the 22/23 school year, over a third of PATH clients had fewer behavioral referrals and increased attendance (in comparison to 12 months prior to entering PATH).



SHE'S REALLY SUPER NICE AND VERY RESPECTFUL AND UNDERSTANDING. I'VE BEEN ABLE TO ACHIEVE MY GOALS.
-PATH STUDENT

IT'S GREAT JUST HAVING THAT PERSON TO TALK TO AND SOMEONE WHO TRULY LISTENS. PLUS HAVING A PERSON TO HELP ME UNDERSTAND WHAT ARE HELPFULL AND/OR UNHELPFUL WAYS TO DEAL WITH MY EMOTIONS.
-PATH STUDENT

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SATISFACTION SURVEY

Questions:	Clients Who Agree (By Percentage):
My therapist treated me with respect.	100%
My therapist was caring and understanding.	100%
I have made progress towards my treatment goals.	98%
I learned to better communicate my thoughts and feelings.	92%
I feel better about life now than before I started PATH.	95%
I think PATH is helping me do better in school.	93%
I think PATH is helping me with my family.	91%
I think PATH is helping me with my friends.	91%
I would refer someone to PATH if they needed help.	95%
If I needed help in the future, I'd go back to my PATH therapist.	99%

PREVALENCE OF ANXIETY AMONG ADOLESCENTS

According to the National Institute of Health, **nearly 1 in 3 of all adolescents** ages 13 to 18 will experience an anxiety disorder. These numbers have been rising steadily; between 2007 and 2012, anxiety disorders in children and teens went up 20%. The rate of hospital admissions for suicidal teenagers have doubled over the past decade.

What's causing the rise of severe anxiety in teenagers? How did we get here?

While there is uncertainty on the cause of the continued rise of severe anxiety, there are a number of factors that could be contributing. In addition to genetics, brain chemistry, personality, and life events, consider the following:

- **High expectations and pressure to succeed.** Between standardized testing and a culture of achievement, today's youth can feel pressure to succeed in ways previous generations did not. A survey done every year by Higher Education Research asks incoming college freshmen if they feel overwhelmed by all they have to do. In 2016, 41% of students said "yes," compared to 28% in 2000 and 18% in 1985.
- **A world that feels scary and threatening.** There is an increase in school violence, with drills and lockdowns in schools. There are shootings in public places. There have been terrorist attacks in the US and around the world taking many lives. From just watching or reading the news, it is reasonable for anyone to feel afraid in public spaces that previously would have felt safe.
- **Social media.** Today's children and teens are constantly connected to social media. It's not surprising that their self-esteem —and worldview— becomes connected to responses to social media posts. It's hard for them not to compare their life and social connections to what they see others posting on social media.

There are also some children who have unexpected and disproportionate reactions to normal developmental experiences like going to school, going to a party, going to a sleepover or going to camp; children who worry excessively about everyday life activities. This often starts in the years right before puberty. If the worry is practiced and reinforced, it has the potential to begin to interfere in children's and teen's lives.

PROMIS Anxiety Screen

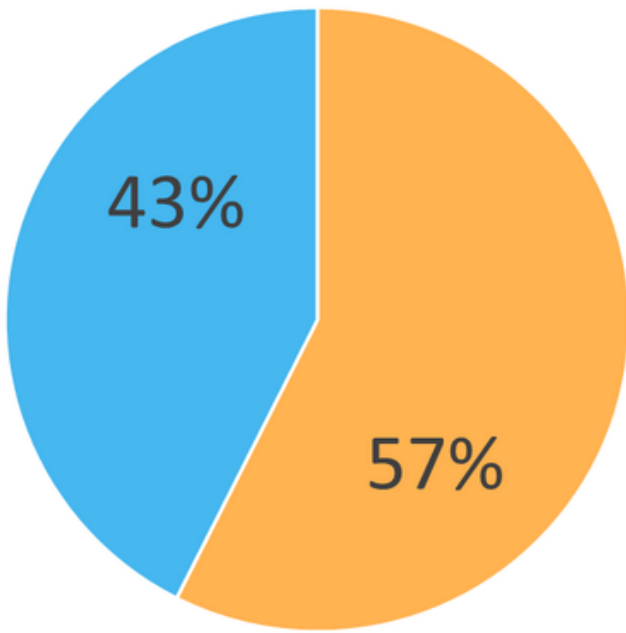
To monitor symptom reporting of anxiety, PATH utilizes the PROMIS Anxiety Screen, a tool developed to provide accurate and efficient assessment of anxiety symptoms.

Source: <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/emotional-problems/Pages/Anxiety-Disorders.aspx>

BEING HEARD.
KNOWING THERE IS
SOMEONE WHO IS
LISTENING TO ME AND
HELPING ME SOLVE
MY PROBLEMS.
-PATH STUDENT



PROMIS: ANXIETY SCREENING



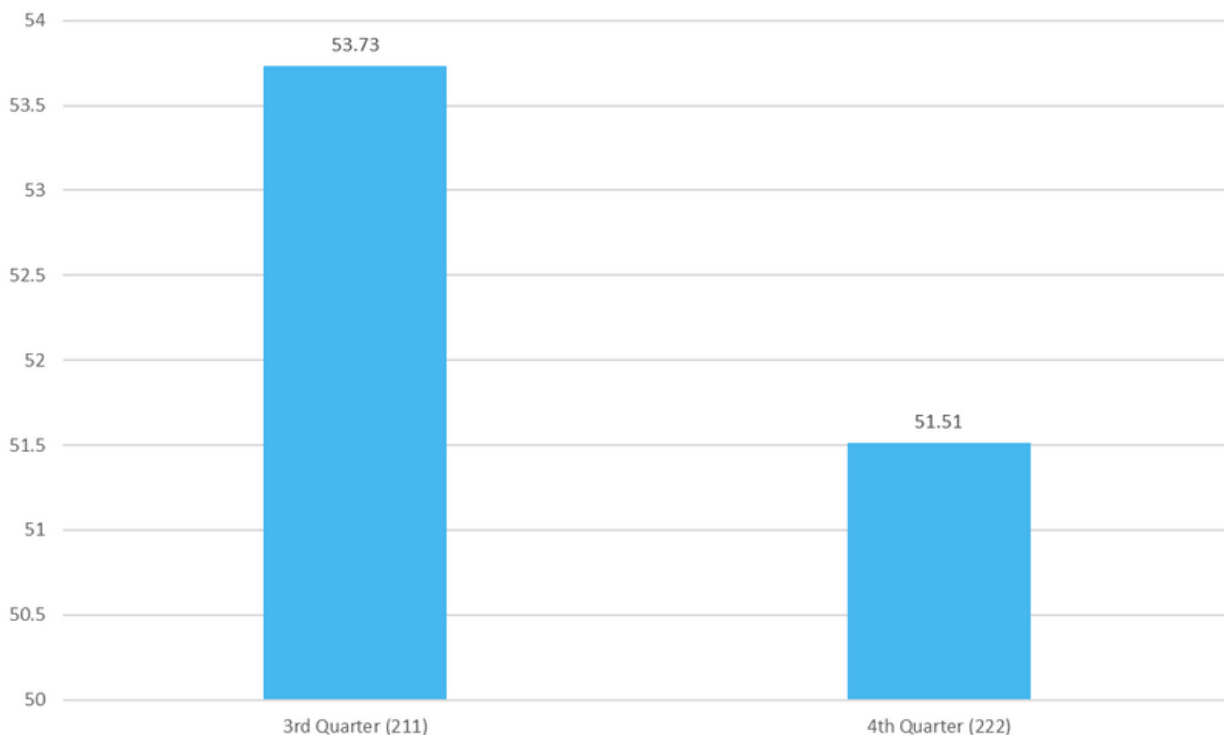
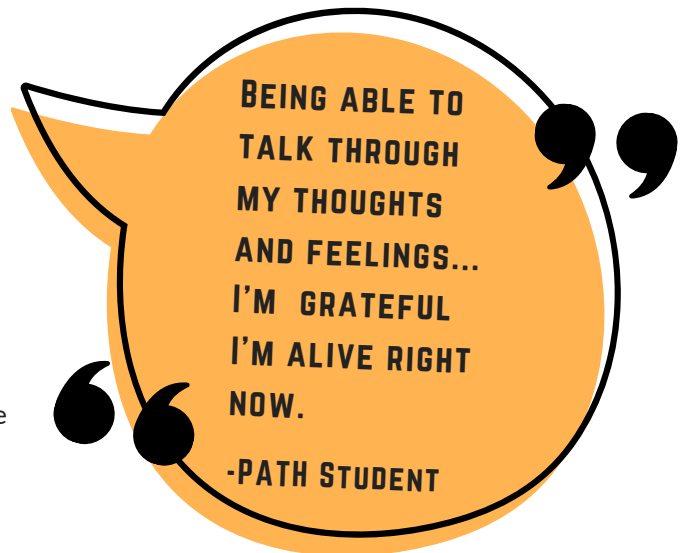
■ None or slight ■ Mild, Moderate, or Severe

In this section we will take a closer look at anxiety as it relates to PATH students.

During the 2022-2023 school year, 43% of PATH students struggled with anxiety.

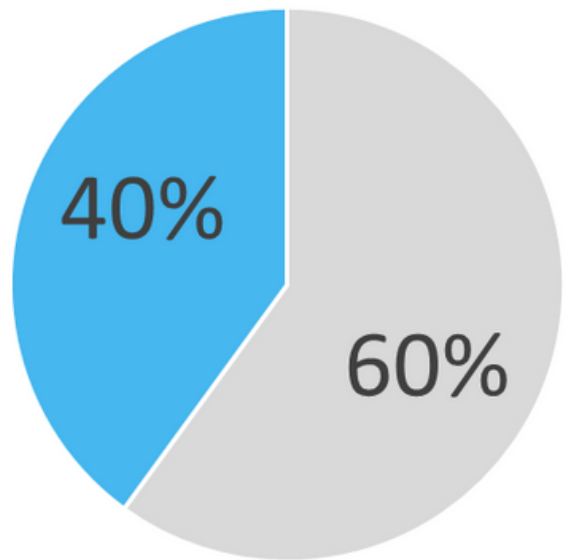
PROMIS: ANXIETY SCORES

The PATH program reached full capacity by the middle of the 2022-2023 school year. In just three months, PATH students experienced an overall reduction of anxiety symptoms by over 4%.



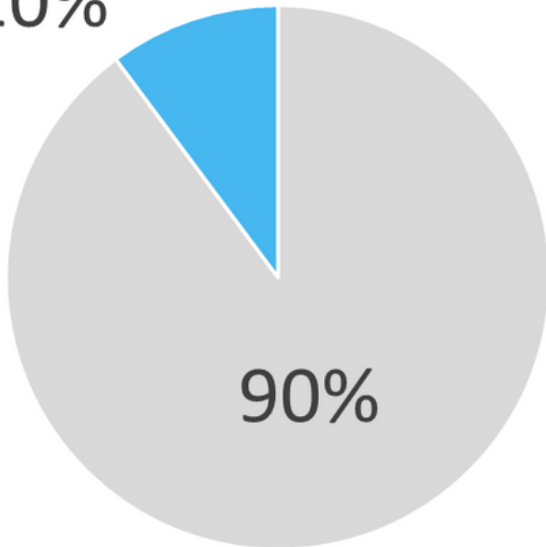
A CLOSER LOOK AT ANXIETY

Before starting PATH, 40% of this year's students aged 11-17 worried about what could happen to them. A 21% increase from last school year.



■ Never or Almost Never ■ Sometimes or More

10%



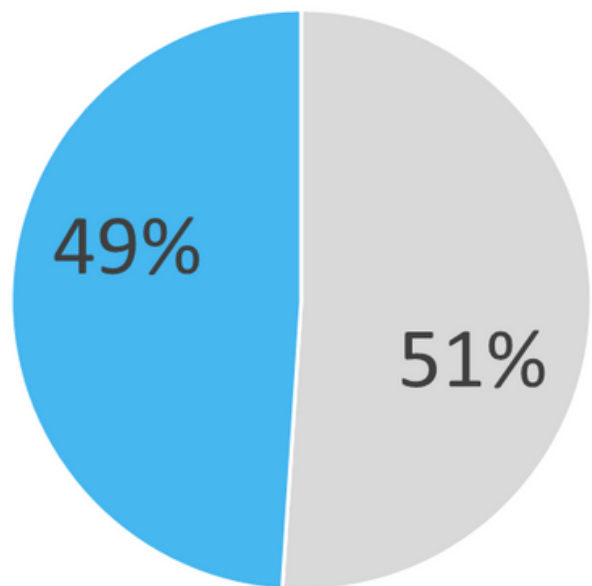
■ Never or Almost Never ■ Sometimes or More

ANXIETY RELATED TO SAFETY

10% of PATH students aged 11-17 worried they might die.

ANXIETY RELATED TO STRESS + WORRY

Nearly half of all PATH students identified that it was hard for them to relax prior to joining the program.



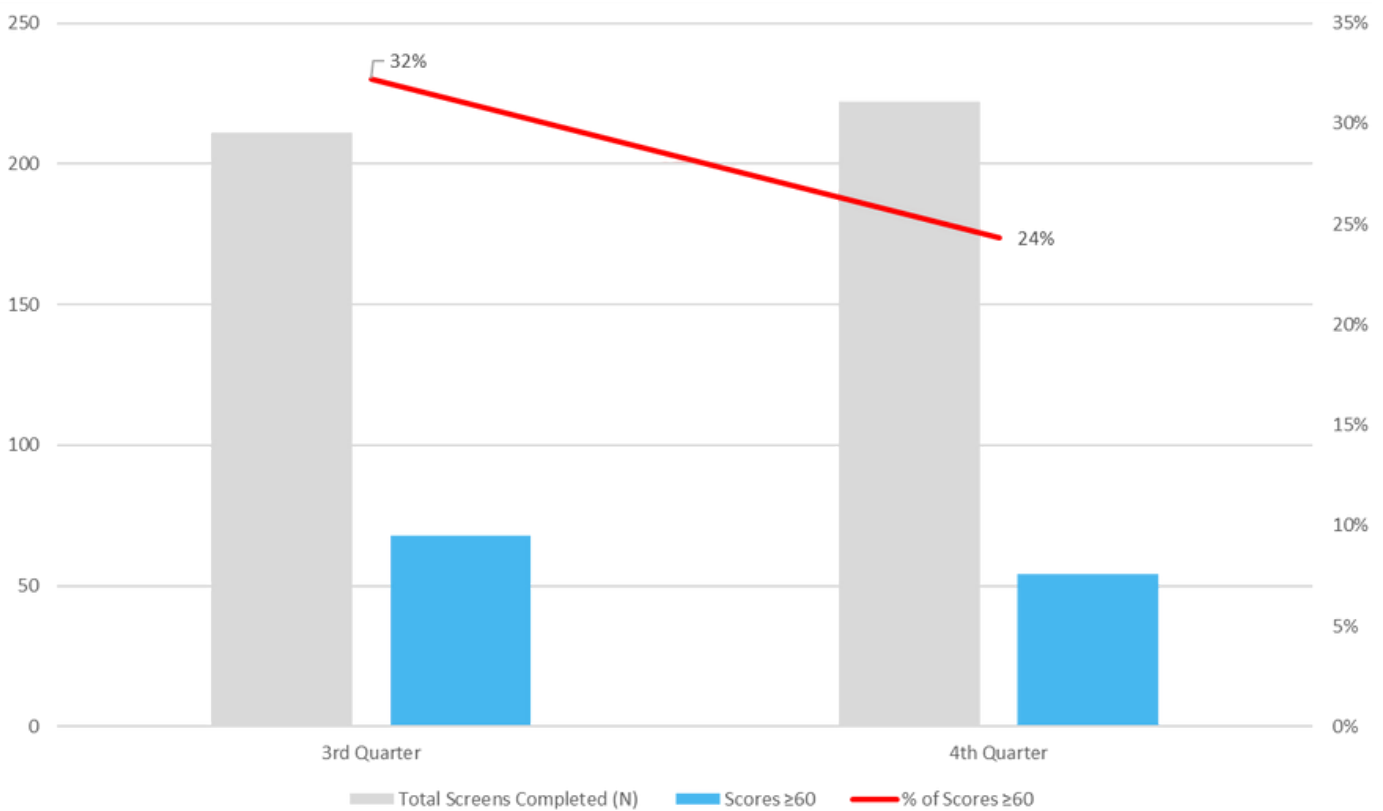
■ Never or Almost Never ■ Sometimes or More



PATH therapists not only provide trusted relationships, they also help build coping skills to learn to minimize the effects anxiety can have on students' lives. Reducing the role of fear and anxiety offers growth for students to learn new behaviors, form new relationships, and experience an increase of resiliency.

PROMIS ANXIETY: IMPROVEMENT OF SYMPTOMS VIA PATH

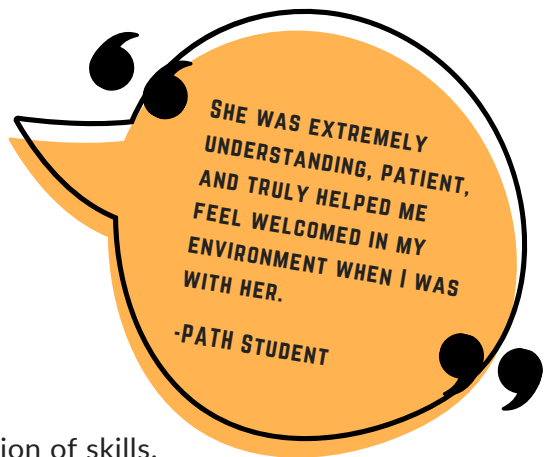
When focusing on students presenting with an anxiety issue, we are able to identify how PATH is able to help reduce symptoms of anxiety. Over the course of the school year, PATH students who reported severe anxiety decreased from 32% during the peak of the 3rd quarter (when all PATH slots were filled) to 24% at the end of the 4th quarter (a three month time frame); a decrease of 25%.



BUILDING SCHOOL STABILITY

School-based treatments are particularly appropriate for anxiety disorders as schools provide unique opportunities for identification of anxious youth, treatment, and generalization of skills.

For example, youth may display significant anxiety in academic and social settings at school that may not be apparent or easily triggered in a more comfortable home environment with family support.



PREVALENCE OF DEPRESSION AMONG ADOLESCENTS

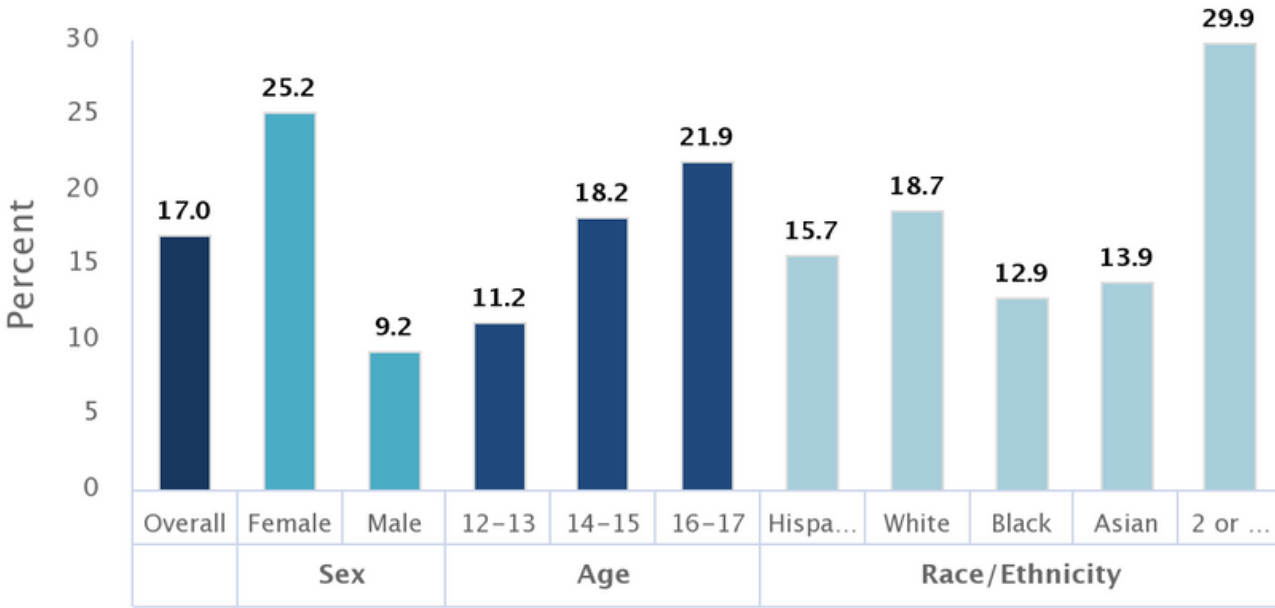
Prevalence of major depressive episodes among U.S. adolescents in 2020:

- An estimated 4.1 million adolescents aged 12 to 17 in the United States had at least one major depressive episode. This number represented 17% of the U.S. population aged 12 to 17.
- The prevalence of major depressive episodes was higher among adolescent females (25.2%) compared to males (9.2%).
- The prevalence of major depressive episodes was highest among adolescents reporting two or more races (29.9%).

Note: during a depressive episode, a person will typically experience low or depressed mood and/or loss of interest in most activities, as well as a number of other symptoms of depression, such as tiredness, changes in appetite, feelings of worthlessness and recurrent thoughts of death.

Past Year Prevalence of Major Depressive Episode Among U.S. Adolescents (2020)

Data Courtesy of Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration



Major Depressive Episode with Impairment Among Adolescents:

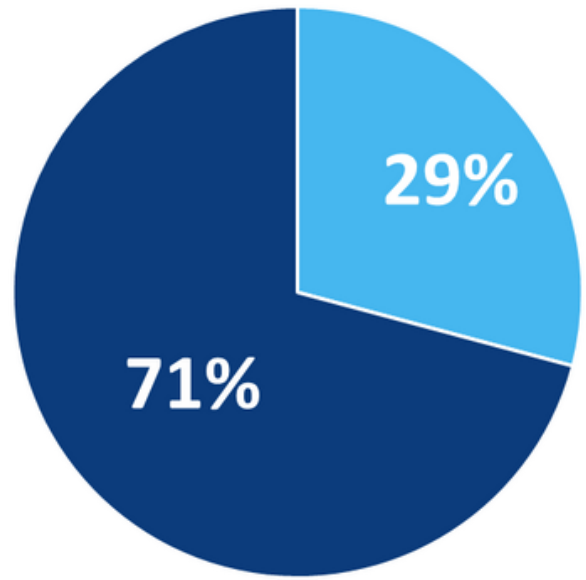
- In 2020, an estimated 2.9 million adolescents aged 12 to 17 in the United States had at least one major depressive episode with severe impairment in the past year.
- This number represented 12% of the U.S. population aged 12 to 17.

Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9)

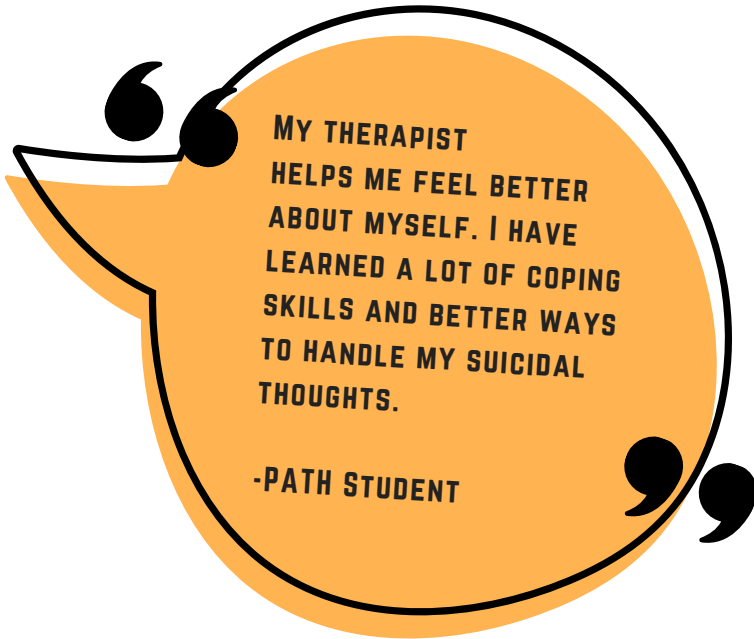
To monitor symptom reporting of depression, PATH utilizes the PHQ-9 Screen, a tool developed to provide accurate and efficient assessment of depression symptoms.

PHQ-9: DEPRESSION SCORES

During the 2022-2023 school year, 71% of PATH students experienced symptoms of depression.

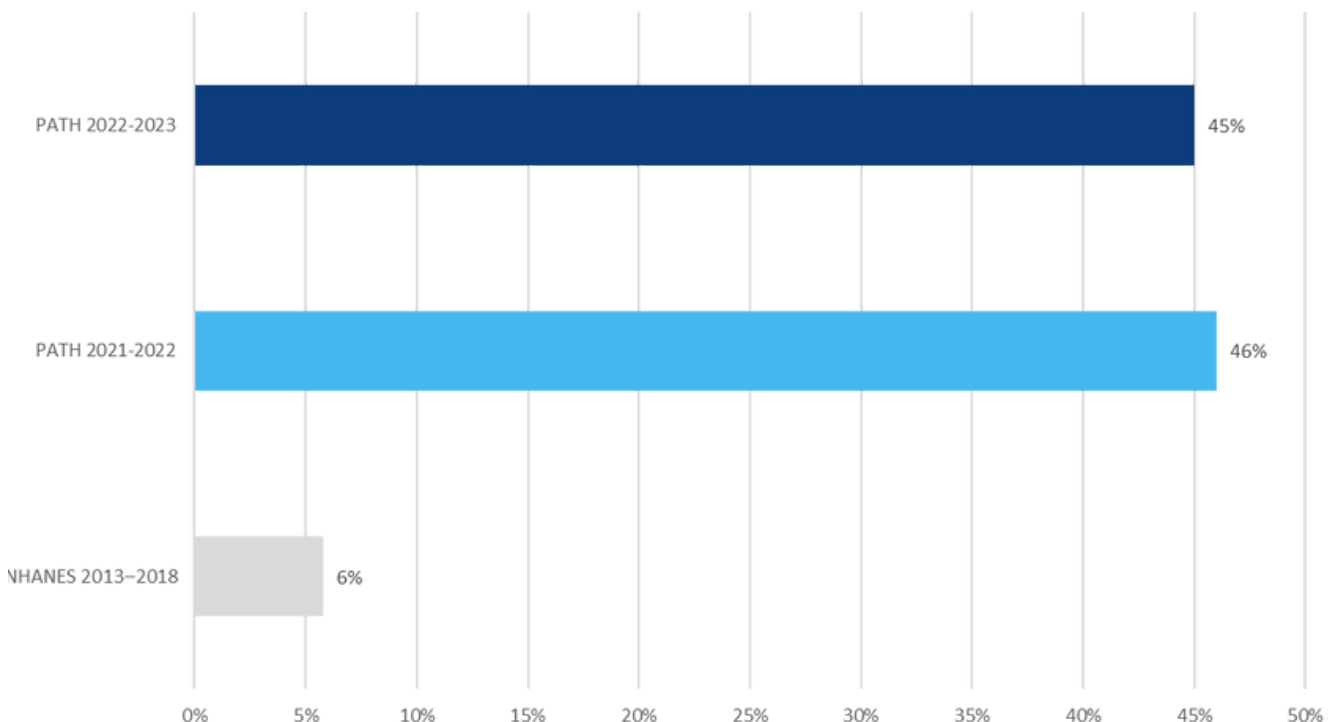


■ None-minimal ■ Mild or Greater



PHQ-9: DEPRESSION REPORTING

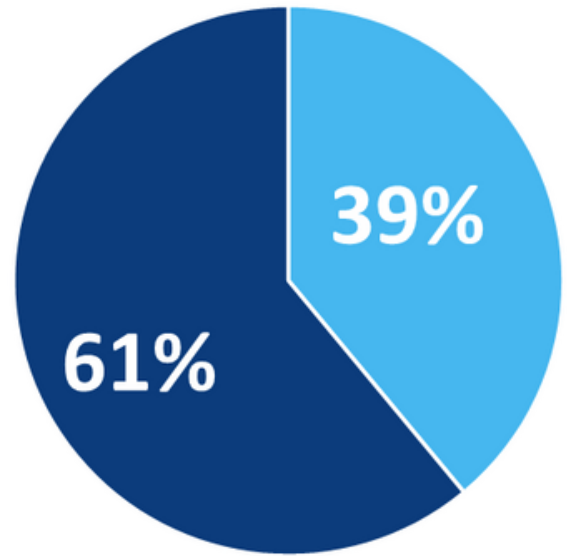
During the 22/23 school year, PATH students who reported moderate to severe symptoms of depression were more than **7x** that of adolescents aged 12-17 nationally (2013-2018 National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey).



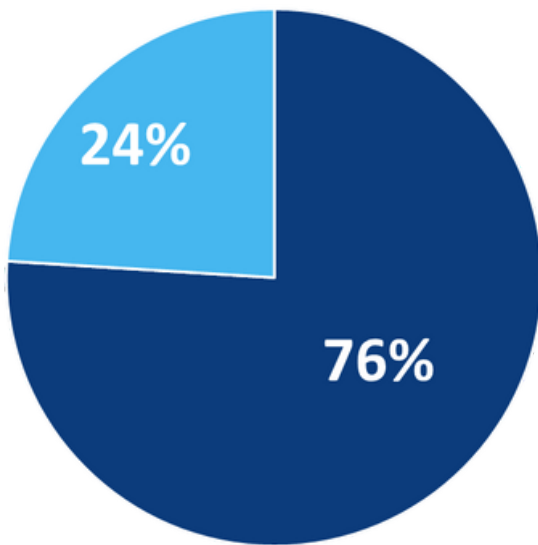
A CLOSER LOOK AT DEPRESSION:

During the 22/23 school year, 61% of youth, ages 12-17, reported several days or more of feeling down, depressed, or hopeless last year.

In comparison, in 2021, 42% of youth in the United States and 34% youth in Wisconsin, ages 12-17, reported they persistently felt sad or hopeless.



■ Not at all ■ Several Days or More



■ Not at all ■ Several Days or More

THOUGHTS OF SUICIDE:

Based on the most recent data from Youth Risk Behaviors Survey (YRBS), in 2021, nearly 22% of high school students in the United States and 18% in the State of Wisconsin considered attempting suicide.

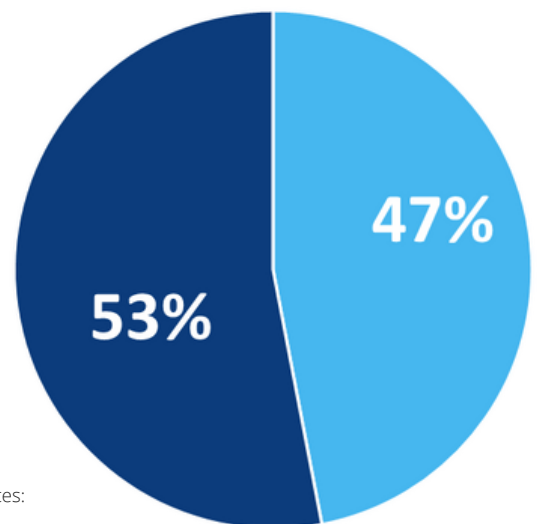
In 2021, 24% of Sheboygan County students (ages 12-17) reported having thoughts of suicide, being better off dead, and/or hurt themselves in some way.

NEGATIVE SELF THOUGHTS

53% of PATH Students reported feeling bad about themselves, that they are a failure, and/or that they have let themselves or their family down.

Sources:

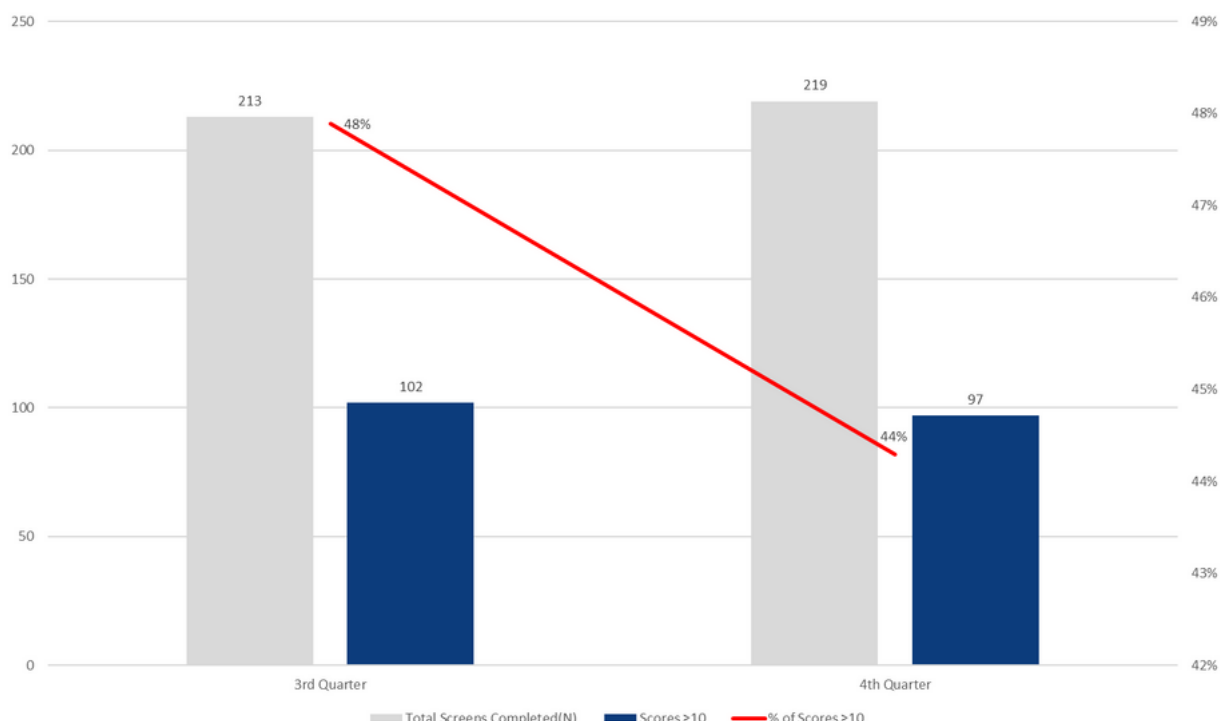
<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/statistics/major-depressionnccd.cdc.gov>
<https://psychcentral.com/news/teenage-mental-health-pandemic-cdc-report>



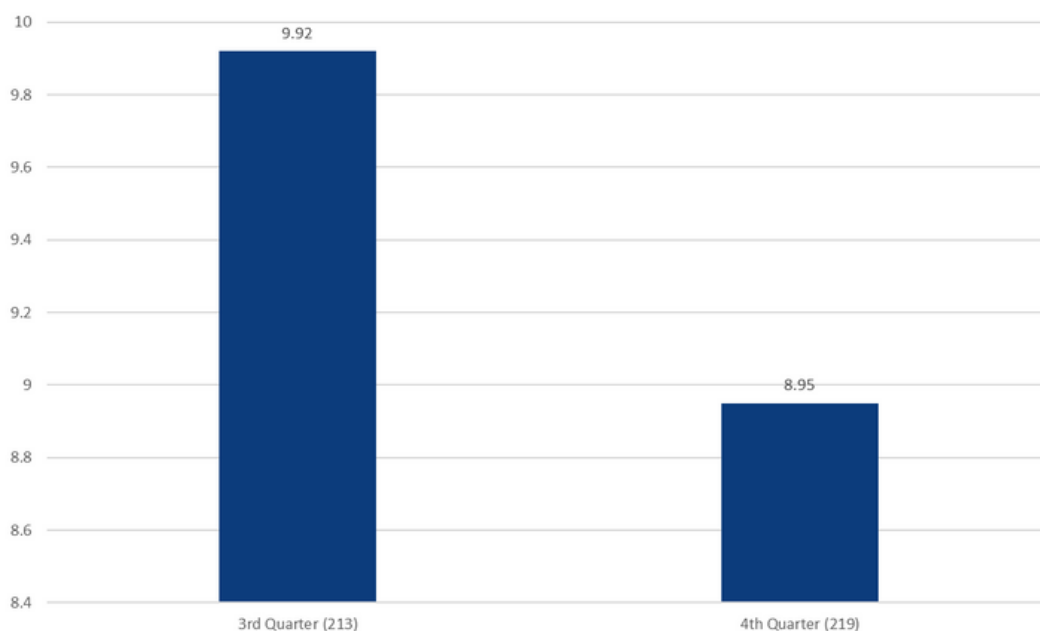
■ Not at all ■ Several Days or More

PHQ-9: PATH IMPROVEMENT OF SYMPTOMS

Sheboygan County PATH students' rate of self-reporting moderate to severe symptoms of depression decreased from 48% during the 3rd quarter (when all PATH slots were filled) to 44% in the 4th quarter (a three month time frame); **a decrease of more than 8%.**



Additionally, the average PHQ-9 depression score decreased over the 2022-2023 school year. Halfway through the school year, when all PATH slot were filled, in just three short months, PATH students showed nearly a **10% reduction** in their symptoms of depression.

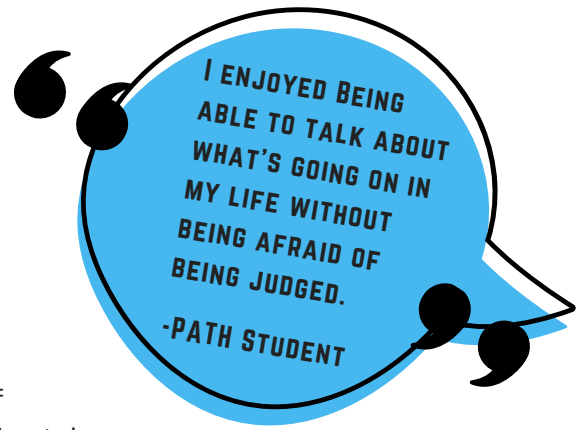


BUILDING SCHOOL STABILITY

Childhood and teen depression contributes to behavioral and educational difficulties such as school absenteeism, poor educational attainment, social problems, substance misuse, and suicidality (International Board of Credentialing and Continuing Education Standards).

School-based mental health services, like PATH, promote academic engagement, healthier coping styles, and social connectedness (NAMI).

TRAUMA: ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES



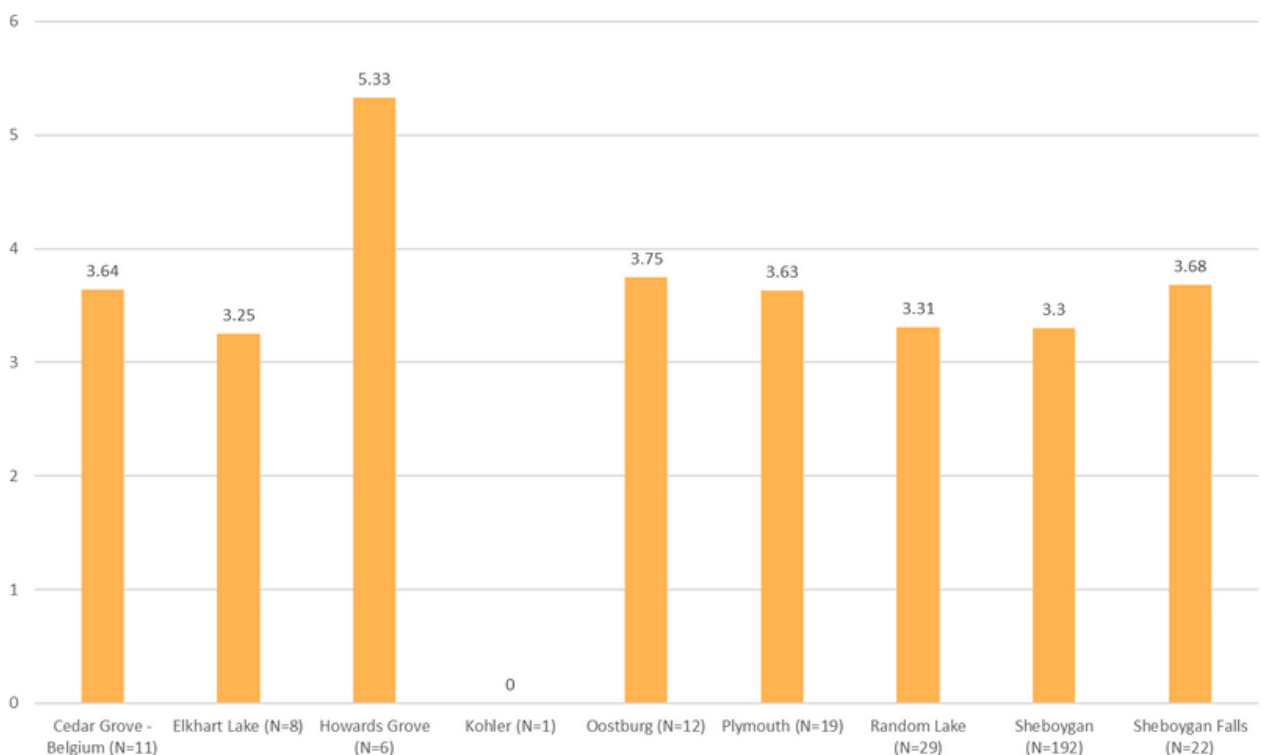
Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) include a range of experiences that can lead to trauma and toxic stress - ultimately impacting children's brain development and physical, social, mental, emotional, and behavioral health and wellbeing. Providing mental health treatment in the school system supports children who have experienced trauma and/or toxic stress through eliminating barriers in seeking care and providing on-going consistent supports that benefit the child and the community at large.

ACEs are linked to chronic health problems, mental illness, and substance use problems in adulthood. ACEs can also negatively impact education, job opportunities, and earning potential.

John Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health (JHBSPH) reports 34 million children, nearly half of all U.S. children ages 0-17, have at least one of ten ACEs, and 20 percent experienced two or more ACEs. In fact, JHBSPH also reports children, ages 6-17, with 2+ ACE scores are **twice as likely to be disengaged in school**. Currently, **71% of PATH students experienced two or more ACEs**, over 3.5 times the rate of all U.S. children according to JHBSPH.

Research out of the National Center for Biotechnology also found that children who have multiple ACEs are at greater risk for many health conditions such as violence, mental illness, and substance use. Of the students that participated in the PATH program in Sheboygan County 2022-2023, an average ACE score of **3.74** is reported.

ACEs have a tremendous impact on future violence victimization and perpetration, and lifelong health and opportunity. PATH aims to create neighborhoods, communities, and a Sheboygan County in which every child can thrive.



Average ACE scores across school districts in the PATH Program. The number of surveys received may not be statistically significant; however, it offers a snapshot of a community's experience.

ACES- WHY DO THEY MATTER?

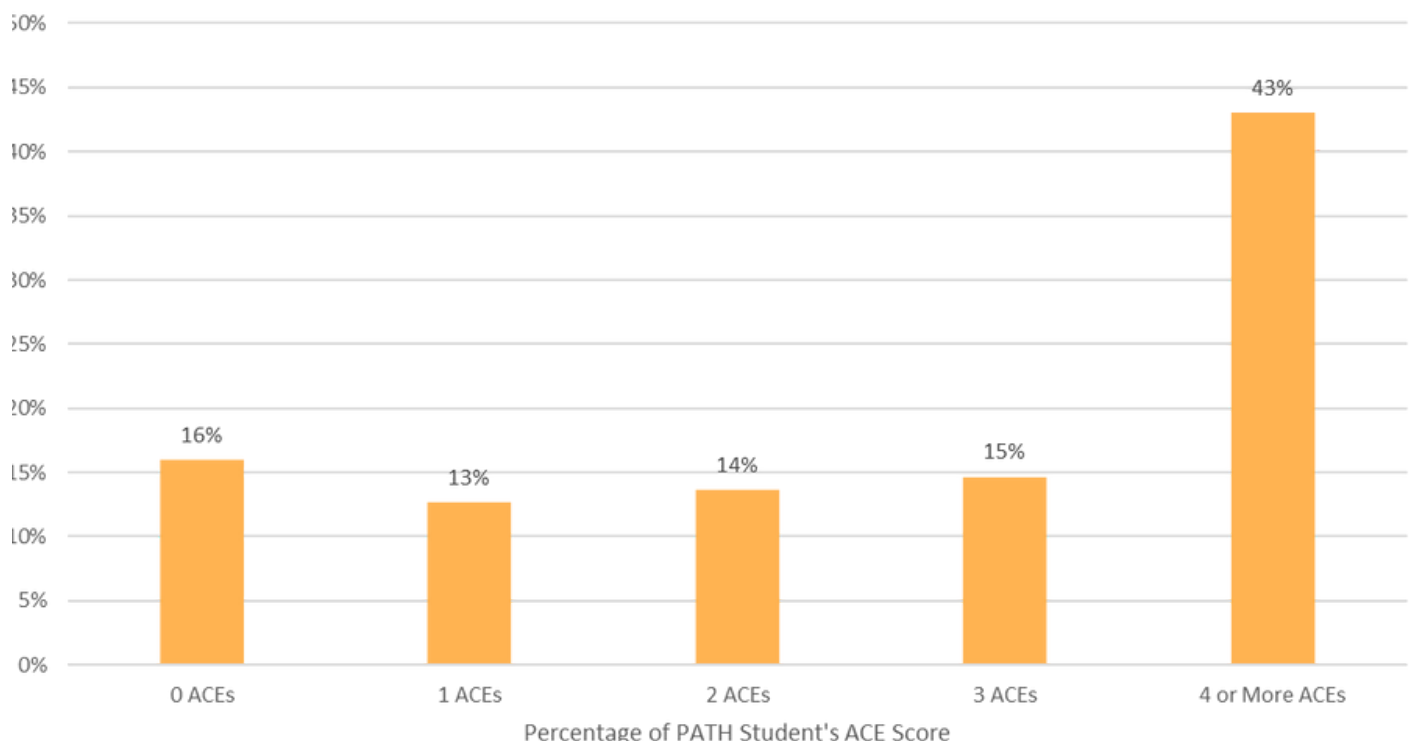
Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are stressful or traumatic events that may have a lasting impact on children's health and well-being. Early experiences have a broad and profound impact on an individual's development and subsequent emotional, cognitive, social, and biological functioning.

The relationship between ACEs and health was first described in a 1998 study, which found a higher number of adverse childhood experiences was associated with a higher number of risk factors for leading causes of death in adults. A recent study found that adults with four or more ACEs (compared to adults with none) are associated with a number of adverse health outcomes including:

- Drug abuse and interpersonal and self-directed violence (very strong associations).
- Sexual risk-taking behaviors, poor mental health, and alcohol abuse (strong associations).
- Smoking, heavy alcohol use, poor self-rated health, cancer, heart disease, and respiratory disease (moderate associations).
- Physical inactivity, overweight or obesity, and diabetes (weak or modest associations).

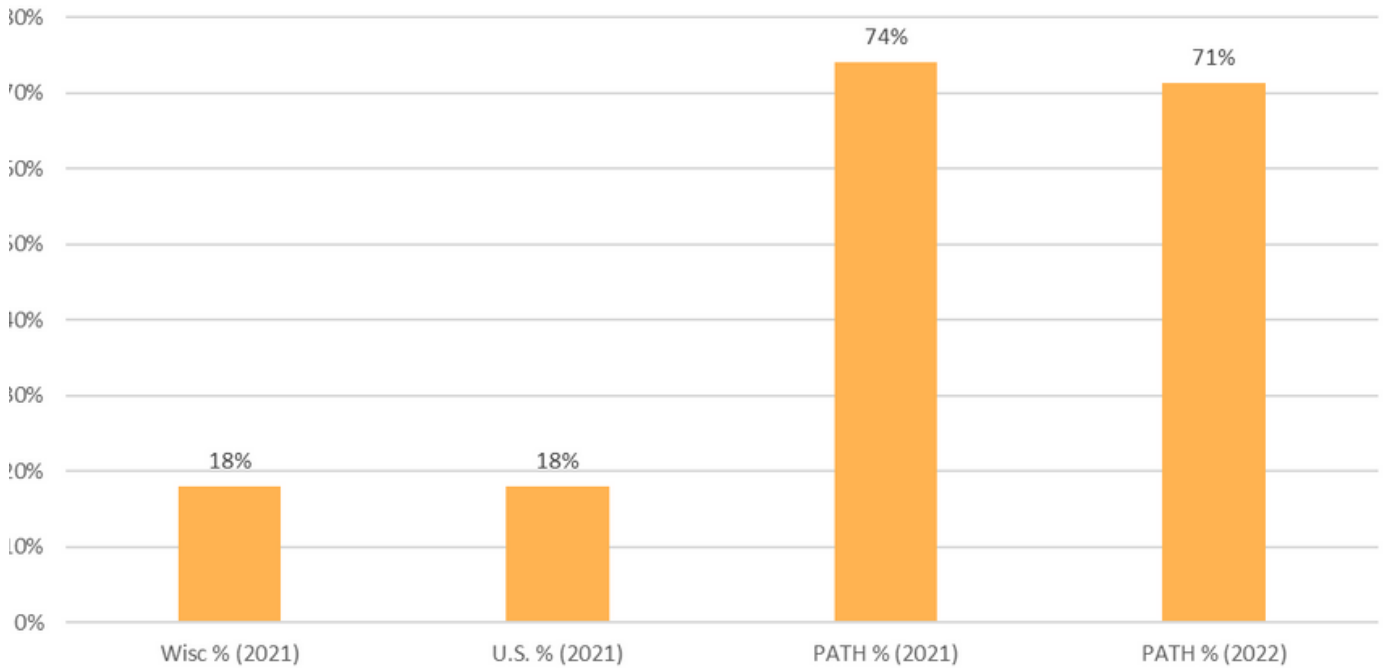
There are also socioeconomic challenges associated with ACEs including not graduating from high school, being unemployed, and lacking health insurance. These negative experiences place a great economic burden on families, communities, and society, costing an estimated **\$748 billion** in North America.

The below chart illustrates the prevalence of adversity in students in PATH is high and deserves pause for thought. **43%** of PATH students experience 4 or more ACEs.



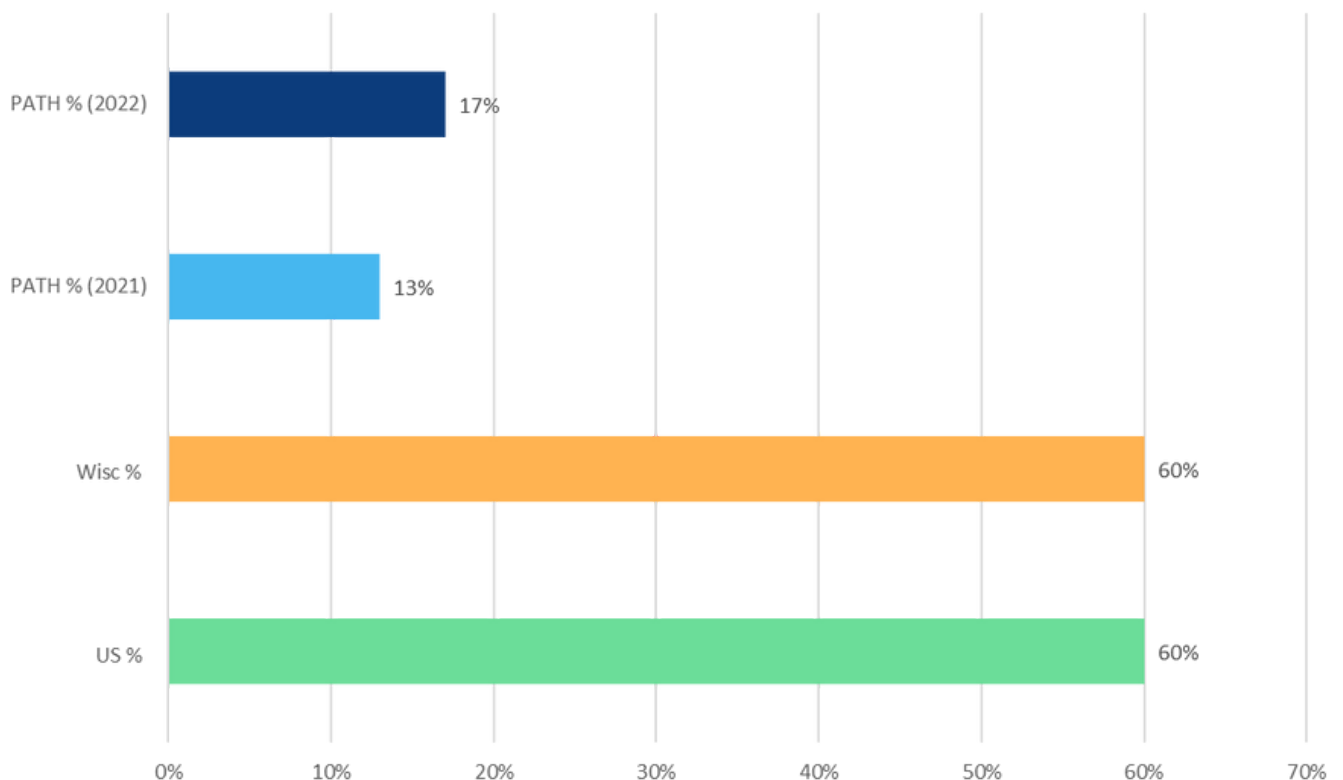
ACES- PREVELENC

PATH is able to compare 2022 data with the rates of Wisconsin (2019-2020) and the United States (2019-2020) percentage of children. Looking closely, the 2022-2023 PATH Program reflects a rate of **71% of students who reported two or more ACEs.**



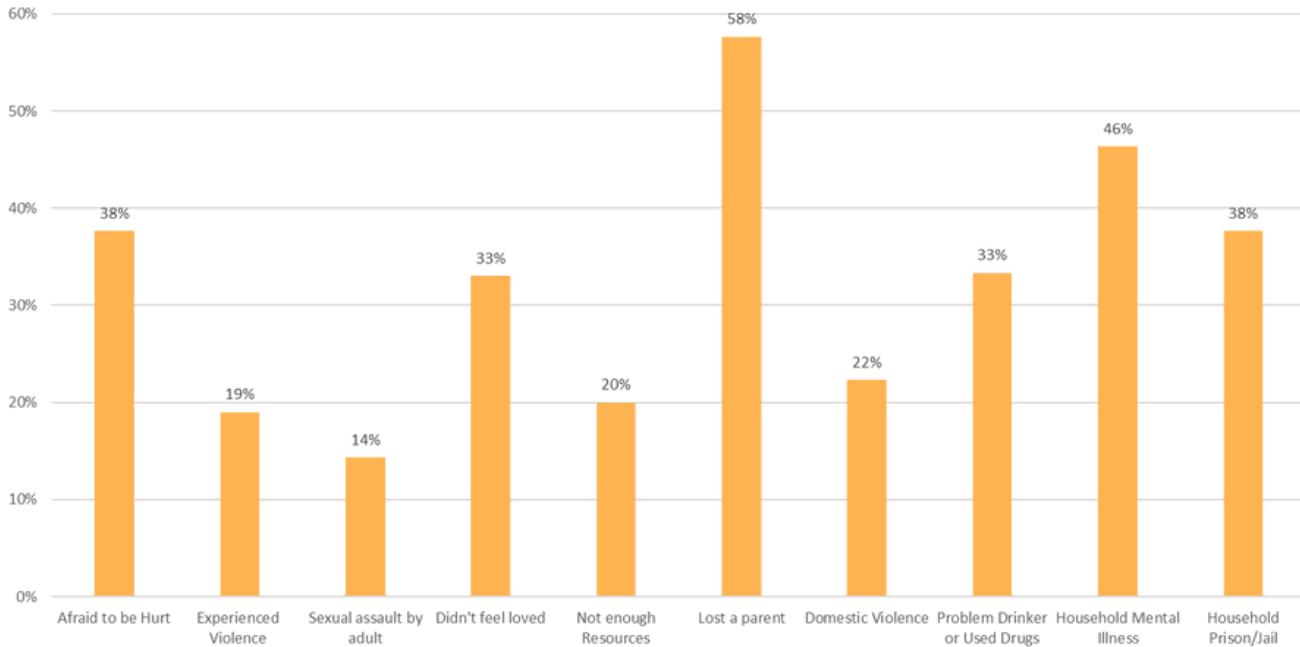
<http://statehealthcompare.shadac.org/rank/243/percent-of-children-with-adverse-childhood-experiences-aces-by-total#1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15,16,17,18,19,20,21,22,23,24,25,26,27,28,29,30,31,32,33,34,35,36,37,38,39,40,41,42,43,44,45,46,47,48,49,50>

When looking at reported ACE responses of No ACEs, the PATH Program had 17% compared to the National and Wisconsin averages of 60%.

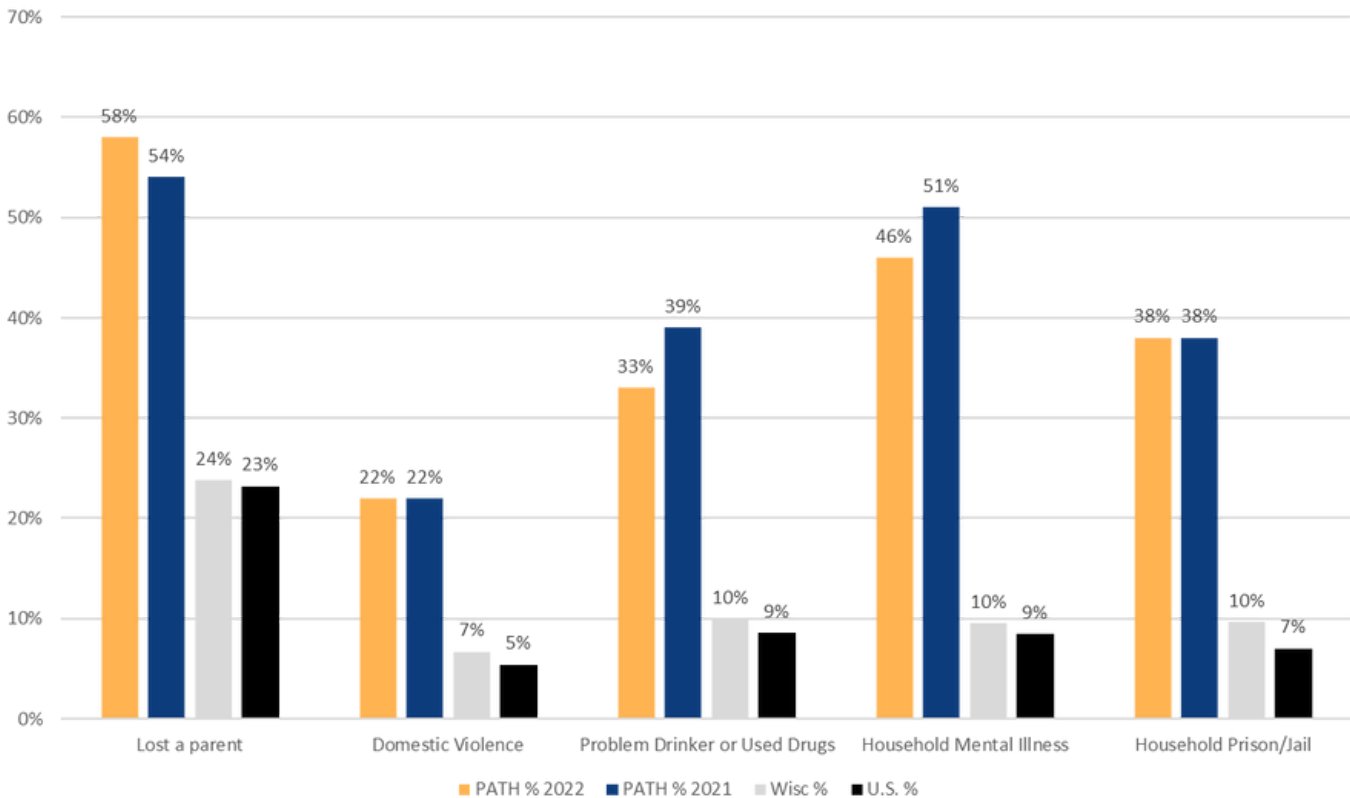


ACES- PREVALENCE

When we break down each question on the ACE Survey, we can identify prevalence of experiences for PATH students. Below is another chart reflecting the percentage of students who identified "yes" to an ACE question. As we can observe, 38% of PATH students identified feeling afraid to be hurt in their home; 58% lost a parent due to divorce, death, or abandonment; and 33% of students identified a member of their household experiencing problems with alcohol or drug use. Students in PATH experienced violence by family at four times the rate than the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) National data (5% compared to 22% of PATH students).



PATH students report an experience rate higher than Wisconsin and the United States. PATH students reporting a loss of a parent due to divorce, death, or abandonment is over two times greater than Wisconsin or the United States.



PATH students reporting a family member who experiences depression, lives with a mental illness, or a household member who attempted suicide is 4.5 times the rate of the state of Wisconsin.

WHAT WORKS ?

According to the CDC, prevention strategies to address ACEs include:

- Home visiting programs for pregnant women and families with newborns
- Parenting training programs and social support for parents
- Intimate partner violence prevention
- Teen pregnancy prevention and parent support programs for teens
- Treatment for mental illness and substance abuse
- High-quality affordable child care
- Sufficient income support for lower-income families

Policy recommendations for addressing ACEs include:

- Increasing awareness of ACEs and their impact on health within both the professional and public spheres.
- Increasing capacity of health care providers to assess the presence of ACEs and provide appropriate treatment options.
- Training health care providers in trauma-informed care.
- Supporting research for more sensitive assessment tools.
- Enhancing the capacity of communities to prevent and respond to ACEs through investments in evidence-based prevention programming, trauma interventions and increasing access to needed mental health and substance abuse services.
- Encouraging nurturing home and classroom environments.

HOW DOES PATH HELP ACES ?

According to the CDC, prevention strategies to address ACEs include:

<u>Strategy</u>	<u>Recommended Approach</u>	<u>PATH Program Approach</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen economic supports to families • Promote social norms that protect against violence and adversity • Ensure a strong start for children • Teach Skills • Connect youth to caring adults • Intervene to lessen immediate and long-term harms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening household financial security • Family-friendly work policies • Public education campaigns • Social-emotional learning • Safe dating and healthy relationship skill programs • Parenting skills and family relationship approaches • Enhanced primary care • Treatment to lessen the harms of ACEs • Treatment to prevent problem behavior and future involvement in violence • Family-centered treatment for substance use disorder 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PATH can cost \$0 to client • PATH Extension Programs aim to provide public education campaigns • Students' habilitation skills to develop awareness and skills to improve emotional regulation • Students' exploration of relationships, developing relationship boundaries, and effective communication • Families are supported through education and skill building to promote the health of their child • Provides a caring and trusted adult • PATH reduces barriers that prevent Mental Health and Substance Use Treatment

FINAL THOUGHTS + FUTURE GOALS OF THE PROGRAM

GENERAL

Through identification of barriers to mental health counseling and steps to eliminate barriers, PATH has fostered opportunities for students and families who may not have been able to access to mental health counseling. Current trends indicate more help is needed than what is available in communities across the United States. A goal for PATH is to expand access to early interventions and help improve students' and families mental health experiences and subvert long-term adversity.

TRAUMA

While further investigation is needed, there are experiences of students who report a reduction in ACEs from year to year. It is possible that their perspective of the experience may have changed, thus potentially reducing their response to trauma. Implementing a Trauma Informed Care (TIC) approach, the need to understand a person's life experiences in order to deliver effective care and has the potential to improve engagement, treatment adherence, health outcomes, and provider and staff wellness is vital as the prevalence of trauma is extremely high for the students of the PATH Program.

RESILIENCY

In addition to understanding the prevalence and rate of trauma experiences, PATH is motivated to collect and understand each students' resiliency, as well as to identify growth or reduction of students' internal and external resiliency. PATH's overarching goal is to promote resiliency in students to develop and enhance independent skills. Preliminary analysis seems to show elementary-age students report increased resiliency, indicating improved management of daily life stressors. During the 23/24 school year, PATH therapists will be monitoring student resiliency by utilizing the Child and Youth Resilience Measure (CRYM-R), a tool developed to provide accurate and efficient assessment of social-ecological resilience.

FUTURE OF THE PATH PROGRAM

The PATH Program aims to strengthen the collaboration of community partners in Sheboygan County to promote the well-being of youth. There are many opportunities to grow the program, not only aiming to increase students served at each school district, but also to enhance programming at the school. Currently, PATH is focusing on youth psychoeducation groups and yoga, family and educator supports and interventions, and other educational and crisis programming to increase access and close gaps surround mental wellness in our community.

STUDENT SUCCESS STORIES

PATH HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT

A 12th grade student who has participated in PATH since 9th grade was referred to the program due to problems with mood, anger issues, poor academic grades, and family conflict. She had a history of being suspended in 7th grade for bringing alcohol to school and 8th grade for fighting. Her initial depression and anxiety indicated moderate to severe symptoms.

Since January 2021, she has reported zero to minor symptoms of depression or anxiety, improved anger issues (no behavioral issues at school or suspensions), improved academic grades, and improved family relationships. She graduated in 2023 with honors and is taking college courses for her next goal to become a nurse!

PATH MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT

An 8th grade student referred to the PATH Program due to relationship instability and school engagement difficulties exacerbated by mental health symptoms. At her first appointment she reported a PHQ-9 score of 24, indicating severe symptoms of depression.

At a session seven months later, she reported a PHQ-9 score of 5, a reduction of **79%**! Additionally, during the same timeframe, her reported symptoms of anxiety decreased **42%**. This student shared feeling more trusted by her mom, as well as noticed big changes in her mood. Of this the student stated, "I feel more optimistic and energized!" She also experienced success with creating healthier friendships, learned to prioritize self-care, including improved sleep, and performed better in school compared to the start of PATH.

PATH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENT

A 5th grade student who has participated in the PATH Program since 2nd grade. Consistent counseling throughout numerous school, family, and societal transitions has helped him learn to regulate emotions and develop a positive worldview.

Upon referral, school staff and parent described him as angry and dysregulated emotion, and it was noted that peers were sometimes afraid to play with him because of anger/aggression. He was open to talking about feelings of frustration and practicing coping strategies and social skills.

During 4th grade, he began to be proud of positive feedback from teachers. The student's parent and teachers originally noted high levels of concern in multiple areas; his most recent reporting from parent and teachers showed vast improvements in multiple areas and limited concern!

ANNUAL EVENTS:

PATH MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS GOLF DAY

Held annually, the PATH Mental Health Awareness Golf Day raises awareness and funding so PATH can continue providing care to the youth in Sheboygan County. Held on Friday, June 16, 2023 at Sunset Hills in Sheboygan Falls, More than 150 community members participated/ supported this event raising over \$16,000.

Proceeds from the golf day not only help to continue the services and treatments being offered through PATH, but also strengthens the amount of school-based mental health services students, families, and educators receive each year.



Number of Participants:
152

Amount Raised:
\$16,060

Projected Sessions Provided With Fundraised Dollars:
840

EVENT HELD ANNUALLY
ON THE 3RD FRIDAY
IN JUNE



EVENT SPONSORS:



SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR ANONYMOUS DONOR!

HOLE SPONSORS:

ACCESS COMMUNITY THERAPIES, ANONYMOUS DONOR - SHEBOYGAN AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT, BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF SHEBOYGAN COUNTY, BLOCK + KNUTH FAMILIES, MODERN WOODMAN FRATERNAL FINANCIAL, SHEBOYGAN COUNTY HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES, SHEBOYGAN LAKERS HOCKEY, THE PRODUCTION FARM, UNITED WAY OF SHEBOYGAN COUNTY, AND YOGA ON THE LAKE

THANK YOU TO ALL THE INCREDIBLE COMPANIES AND INDIVIDUALS FOR THEIR DONATIONS:

3 SHEEPS BREWING CO.; AUTUMN RIDGE GOLF COURSE; BOOKWORM GARDENS; BRAD & BRI HEUSTERBERG; BOYS + GIRLS CLUBS OF SHEBOYGAN COUNTY; BROADWAY POPCORN CO.; COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP FOR CHILDREN; DAVE & CARLA VORPAHL; DENISE AND KEN CORNELL; DESTINATION KOHLER GOLF COURSES; DIONE KNOP; EL RANCHO VIEJO MEXICAN RESTAURANT; ERIN PEREZ, ACCESS COMMUNITY THERAPIES; FAT COW; HAIR GRAPHICS SALON; KAYLA OSTERMANN FAMILY; K LORRAINE SALON, SPA, BOUTIQUE; LAKESIDE PEPSI CO.; LARRY'S DISTRIBUTING CO.; LONGHOUSE AXE BAR; MEAT'S OPERA HAUS; MIKE & KATE BAER FAMILY; RACHEL RAMOS; SCOTT & JOAN KUEHN; SHEBOYGAN LAKERS FIGURE SKATING CLUB; SHEBOYGAN LAKERS HOCKEY; THE GOLF CLUB AT CAMELOT; SIX TURTLES BOUTIQUE; SUNSET HILLS GOLF COURSE; UNITED WAY SHEBOYGAN COUNTY; VANILLA SUGAR SPA; WILLOW CREEK BEHAVIORAL HEALTH; YOGA ON THE LAKE; + MORE!

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS!

SILVER SPONSORS:



Anonymous Donor - In Support Of All LGBTQ+ Youth

ANNUAL EVENTS:

EDUCATOR APPRECIATION SOCIAL

During Teacher Appreciation Week in May 2023, the PATH Partners threw the second annual Educator Appreciation Social as a way to say thank you to those who impact the lives of youth in Sheboygan County. Over 160 educators gathered at 3 Sheeps Brewing Co. in Sheboygan for refreshments, food, giveaways, live music and more. Surveys were collected to learn more about the needs of educators in our community and how PATH can help fill the needed gaps (see below for responses).

Number of educators who attended last year:
162

EVENT HELD ANNUALLY
DURING TEACHER
APPRECIATION WEEK
(SAVE THE DATE - 03.06.24)



EDUCATOR VOICES: HIGHLIGHTED SURVEY RESPONSES

What did you most struggle with over the last year?

- Burn out/ too much on plate
- Helping others understand trauma & impacts on behavior
- Staff safety & accurate information regarding crisis issues
- Lack of support & engagement
- Self-care & leaving work at work
- Short-staffing
- Balancing school life & home life
- VOLUME of students w/significant mental health struggles
- Student behaviors/parent support

What behavioral, mental, social, + wellness programming would be helpful for EDUCATORS next year?

- Behavior management training (Over half of respondents agreed)
- More mental health/personal days (78% of respondents agreed)
- Compassion fatigue training (Over 80% of respondents agreed)
- More social events, like this, with co-workers
- How to access mental health on a budget

What behavioral, mental, social, + wellness programming would be helpful to STUDENTS/DISTRICT?

- Intensive Outpatient-level care in school
- Basic parenting support/engaging families (78% of respondents agreed)
- Student mental health strategies
- How to meet goals/tasks expected of a student
- PATH, PATH, + more PATH (91% of respondents agreed)
- Impacts of social media and cyberbullying
- Self-awareness training

What self-care tool/technique helped you last year?

- Voicing concerns to management
- Colleague support (Over 80% of respondents agreed)
- Frank (PATH therapist)
- Intentional time off
- Liquid courage
- Being outside/in nature (over half of respondents agreed)
- Using break time for self
- Exercise
- Spending time with kids and/or pets (40% agreed)
- Yoga, mindfulness, breathing (35% of respondents agreed)

EXTENTION PROGRAMMING:

HELPING OUR YOUTH
BUILD THEIR RESILIENCE



DESCRIPTION

PROGRAM

Research shows that yoga and fitness reduces stress, improves emotional intelligence, and enhances academic performance. Research also shows that students who participate in yoga and fitness have decreased suspension rates and improved attendance. The goal of the partnership between PATH and YOTL is to expand access to youth mental health services and teach students about yoga and fitness practices in the hopes that such techniques will be resources for students to use when coping with stress and to help students enhance their overall academic performance & life satisfaction.

LEARNING
GOALS

Mind-Body Yoga For Youth aims to provide the following:

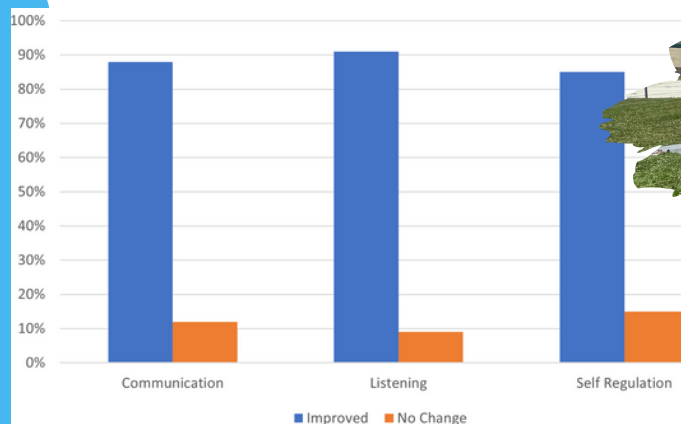
- To create a safe space & cultivate positive relationships
- Guide a 30-45 minute yoga sequence incorporating social-emotional learning skills

Learning goals:

- Breathing exercises
- Yoga postures to support wellness
- Relaxation techniques
- Mind-body connection
- Emotional awareness and regulation
- Calming strategies

OUTCOMES

Weekly summer sessions at a local Boys & Girls Club. Participating students reported improvement in communication (88%), listening (91%), and self-regulation (85%), by the end of the summer sessions!





Help is 3 Numbers Away

211

Comprehensive database of community resources & provides information & referrals for essential needs like:

- Food
- Housing & Shelter
- Healthcare Services (including mental health resources)

Call for Information & Community Resources

211

- Support Groups
- Utility Assistance
- Disaster Aftercare
- Legal Services

911

Provides First Responder Dispatch For:

- Medical Emergency
- Fire
- Reporting A Crime
- Disaster Response
- Any Life Threatening Situation

Call for Emergencies

911

Whole Person Care

Warm Handoff

Warm Handoff

Warm Handoff

Call for Crisis Support & Emotional Distress

988

988

Provides Crisis Support For:

- Thoughts of Suicide
- Mental Health Crisis
- Substance Use Crisis
- Emotional Distress

DATA

PROVIDING ACCESS TO HEALING

SCHOOL-BASED MENTAL HEALTH COMMUNITY IMPACT INITIATIVE



2.1.1

Get Connected. Get Help.™

988 SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE

HOW TO SIGN UP YOUR CHILD TO RECEIVE PATH SERVICES:



CONTACT YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL COUNSELOR TO SEE IF YOUR CHILD QUALIFIES FOR SERVICES AND/OR IF THERE IS AVAILABILITY AT YOUR SCHOOL.

SCAN ME



TO LEARN MORE AND/OR GIVE TO THE CAUSE



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF SHEBOYGAN COUNTY



LAKESHORE
community health care



2023-2024
PARTNERS

Participating Sheboygan County School Locations:



- Cedar Grove-Belgium
- Elkhart Lake-Glenbeulah
- Howards Grove
- Kohler
- Oostburg
- Plymouth
- Random Lake
- Sheboygan Area
- Sheboygan Christian
- Sheboygan Falls
- St. John Lutheran
- Head Start

SPECIAL THANKS TO ALL WHO HELP MAKE THIS COMMUNITY IMPACT INITIATIVE POSSIBLE



United Way of Sheboygan County

<https://www.uwofsc.org/our-impact/path/>

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