

YOUTH LEADERS

MENTAL HEALTH

*Rancho Cucamonga City Council
Final Presentation May 28, 2025*

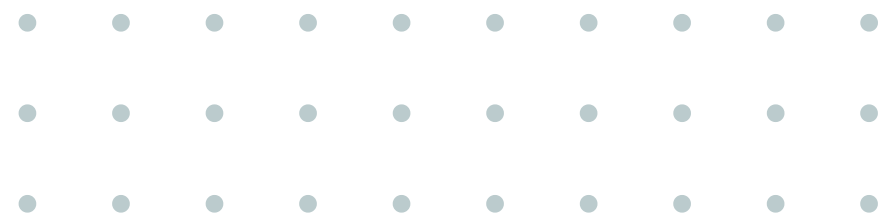
Group Members: Jane Zhang, Navya Kaka, and Yongxi Hu



IDENTIFYING THE ISSUE

MENTAL HEALTH IN MIDDLE SCHOOLS

- Lack of mental health resources
- Inaccessible resources
- Sparse education on mental health topics



RESEARCH AND DATA COLLECTION

STUDENT EXPERIENCES DEPRESSION RELATED FEELINGS (SELF-REPORTED)

Grade Level	Yes	No
Grade 7	27.7%	72.3%
Grade 9	33.9%	66.1%

- Children start conceptualizing and experiencing mental well-being struggles routinely since age 10 (Casas & González-Carrasco, 2018).

STUDENT DEPRESSION OR MENTAL HEALTH IS A PROBLEM (STAFF REPORTED)

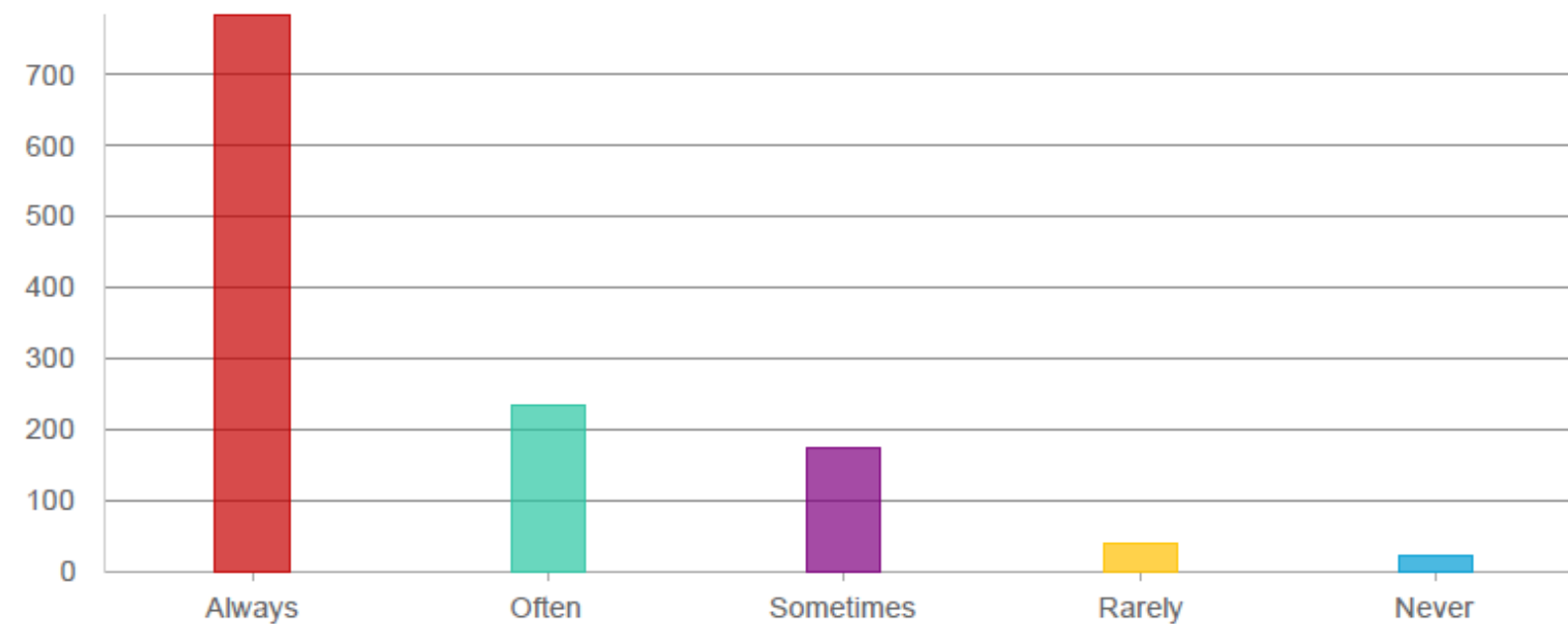
San Bernardino County	Percent			
Type of School	Insignificant Problem	Mild Problem	Moderate Problem	Severe Problem
Elementary School	S	S	S	S
Middle School	23.3%	39.5%	34.9%	2.3%

- Early puberty (as young as seven) is a period that predicts mental health abnormalities and heightened risk for disorders and complications (Kretzer et al. 2024).



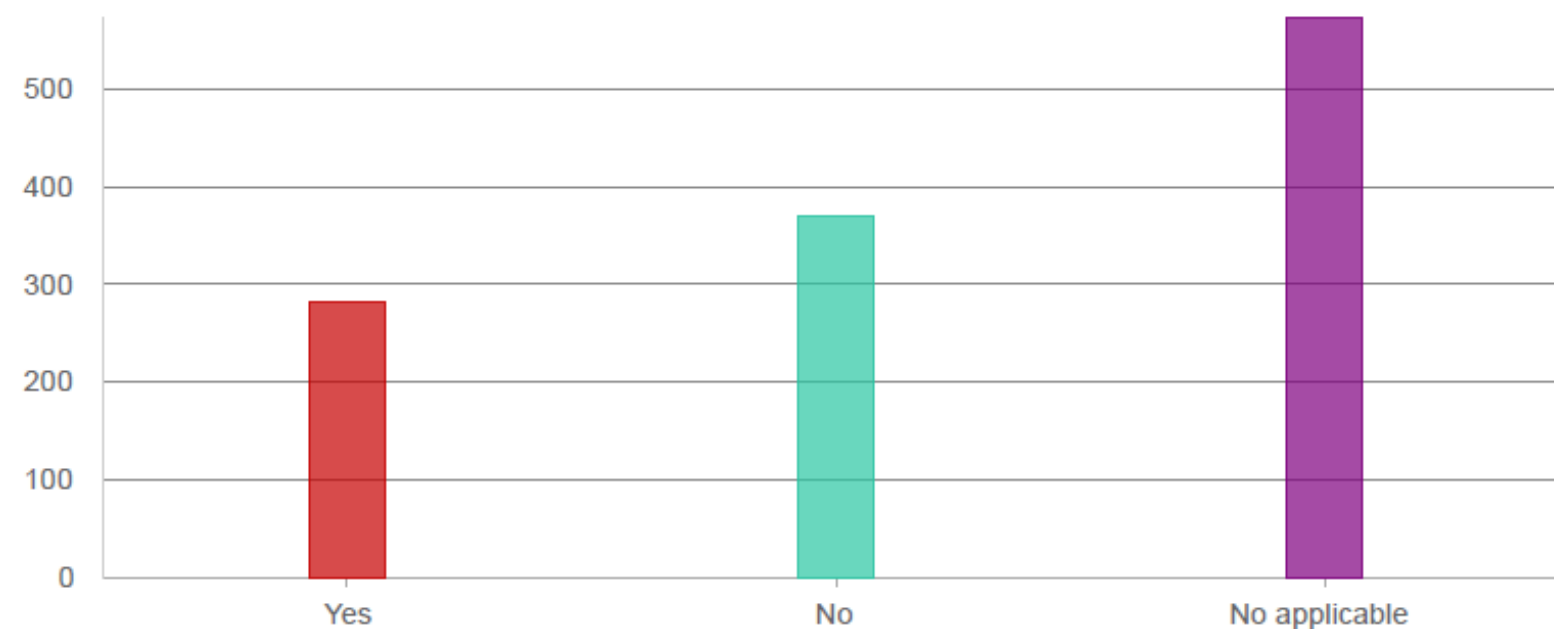
RESEARCH AND DATA COLLECTION

My life matters to me.



- Over one third of participants in the cities teen quality of life data did not select that their life always mattered to them

If you are suffering from mental health issues (depression, anxiety, stress etc.) have you ever sought for help?

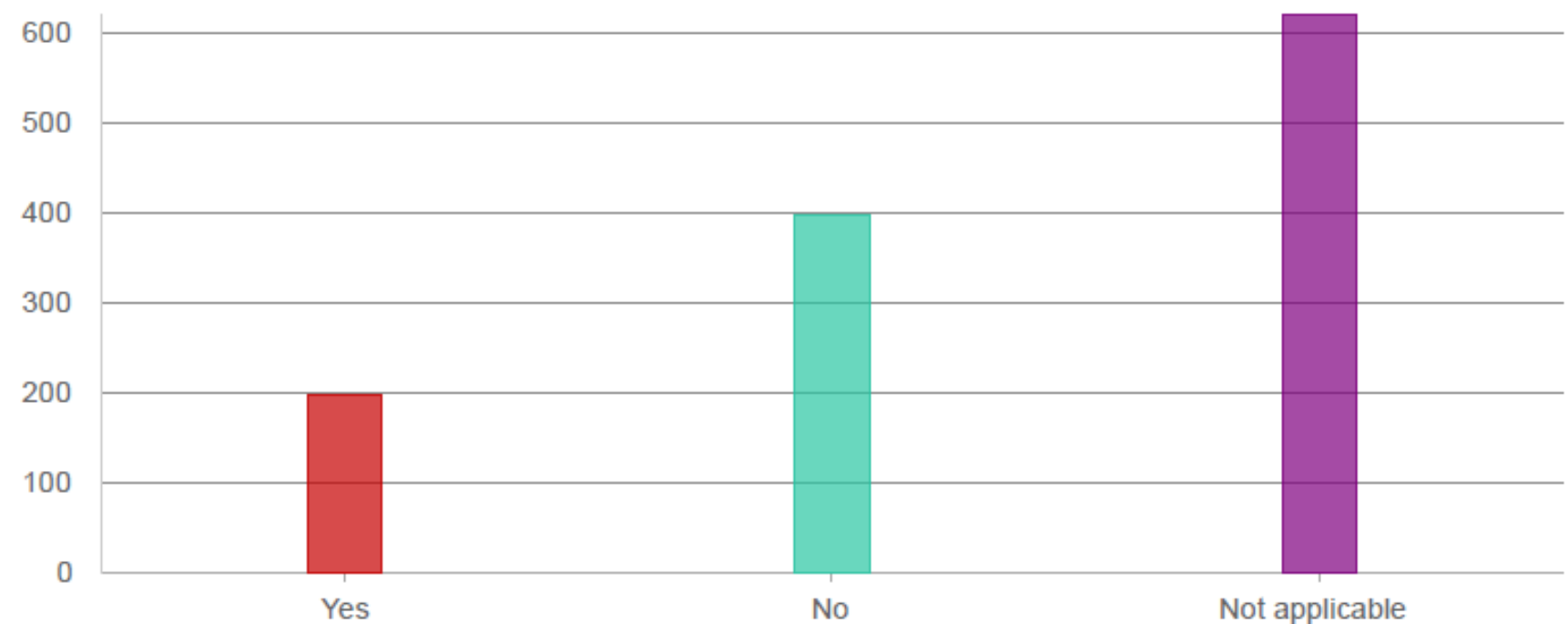


- In the same survey, majority of applicable responses answered that they have not even though about seeking help.



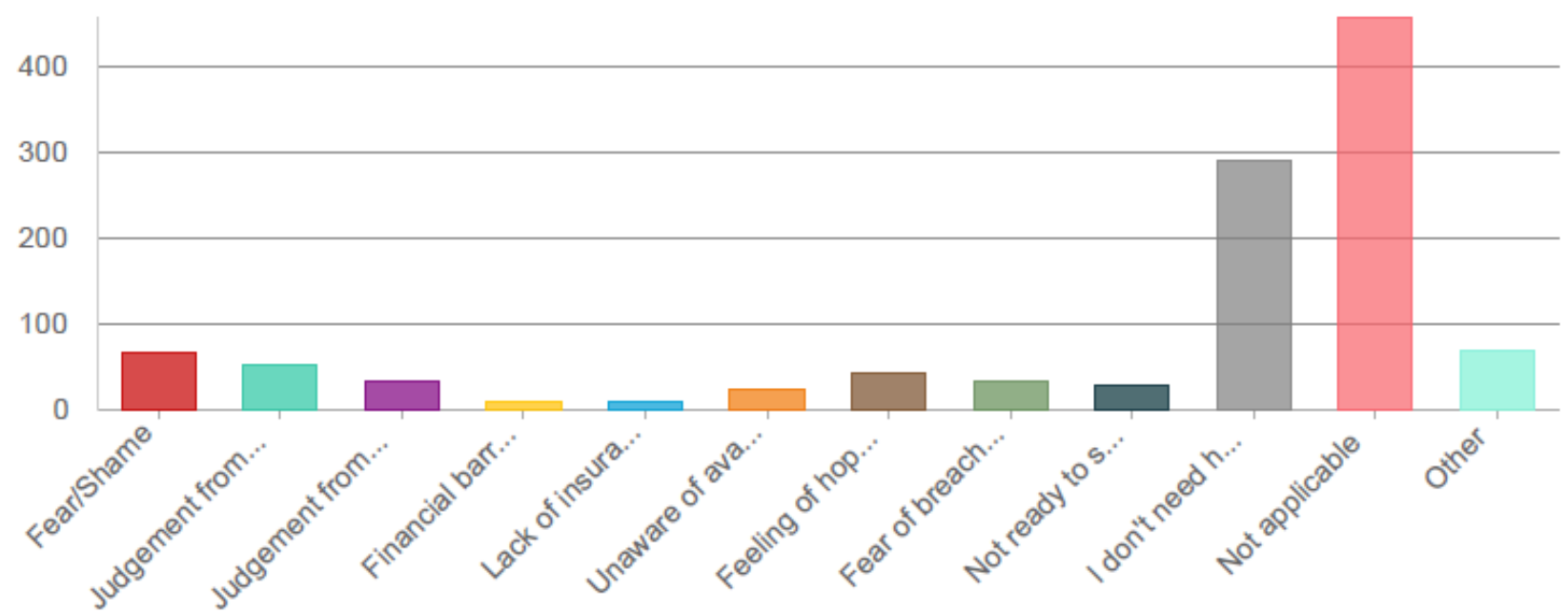
RESEARCH AND DATA COLLECTION

If you've ever been bullied, did you seek help?



- a large number of students being bullied, approximately 1 in 3 applicable responses, answered that they did not report the issue

If you answered "No" to question 37, why did you not seek help? (select all that apply)



- When asked why, majority of these responses stem from a feeling of fear, judgement, or hopelessness.



OUR EXPERIENCE

- SELF-HARM

- WE KNOW STUDENTS WHO STRUGGLE WITH SELF-HARM
- SEE SCARS ON PEERS

- EATING DISORDERS

- WE KNOW STUDENTS WHO STRUGGLE WITH EATING DISORDERS

- SUICIDE ATTEMPT/SUICIDE IDEATION

- WE KNOW STUDENTS WHO'VE ATTEMPTED SUICIDE
- HEAR STUDENTS TALKING ABOUT SUICIDE FREQUENTLY



OUR EXPERIENCE

INEFFECTIVE RESOURCES

- MANY STUDENTS AREN'T TAUGHT HOW TO USE THE HOTLINES
- UNAWARE OF WHAT RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE
- FEW OR NO PRESENTATIONS/ WORKSHOPS ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH AND HEALTHY COPING MECHANISMS.

VARYING COUNSELING APPROACHES

- NEED FOR MORE CONSISTENCY IN COUNSELING SUPPORT AND STANDARDS
- MANY STUDENTS ARE UNSURE HOW TO CONNECT WITH THEIR GUIDANCE COUNSELOR

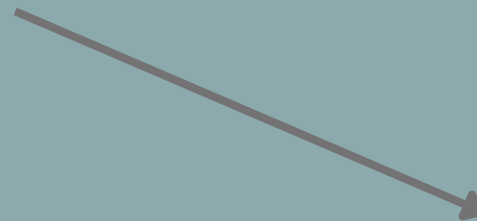


EFFECT AND IMPACT

Improved mental health in
middle schools



Improved mental health in
high schools



A decline in suicides

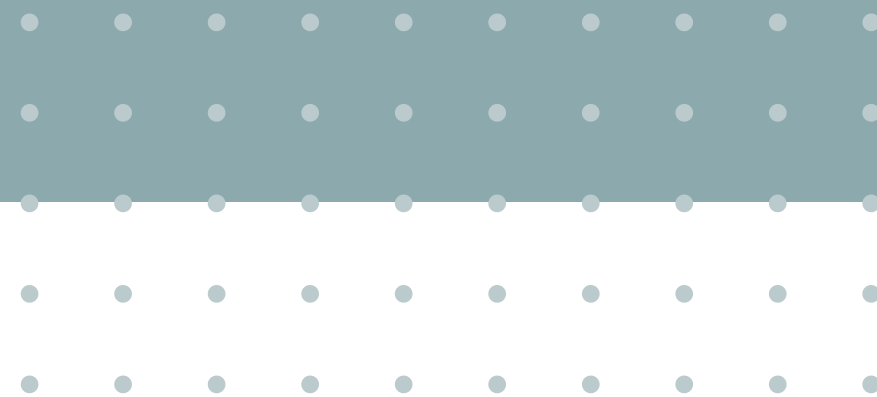
RESEARCH FINDINGS

- School-based mental health services have a positive reduction effect on school absence and suspensions
- School-based intervention reduces the risk and severity of mental disorders
- Early intervention can reduce suicide rates. Especially for illnesses like depression, making care more accessible has been shown to reduce suicide.

Kangyi et al. 2018
Bearman et al. 2020
National Library of Medicine, 2002

WHAT IS ALREADY BEING DONE

- WELLNESS CENTERS IN HIGH SCHOOLS
 - CHAFFEY JOINT UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT PARTNERSHIP
WITH NONPROFIT REACH OUT
- GUIDANCE COUNSELORS
 - IN SCHOOLS TO PROVIDE STUDENTS WITH RESOURCES
THAT AIM TO GIVE THEM DIRECTION



WHAT IS ALREADY BEING DONE

- TEEN SUMMIT 2025
 - EMPOWERS HIGH SCHOOL TEENS TO BUILD CONFIDENCE, A POSITIVE MINDSET, AND FIND HOPE AND RESILIENCE.
- GIRLS LEADING GIRLS
 - EMPOWERING AND SUPPORTING 5TH GRADE GIRLS AS THEY TRANSITION TO MIDDLE SCHOOL BY FOSERING RESILIENCE AND PEER CONNECTION.



PROPOSED POLICY CONCEPT : GOALS

MORE DISTRICT WIDE EDUCATION AND PROGRAMS FOR MENTAL HEALTH AND HEALTHY COPING MECHANISMS:

- Presentations
- Programs
- professional led group discussions

INCREASING RESOURCES AND CAPACITY OF COUNSELORS:

- Better promotion of resources
- Better training for school staff
- Directing students on how to use resources



Every middle school student
deserves a strong support
system.

Your help is **significant** in
bringing more resources and
programs to our middle
schools!

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