



MEMORANDUM

**To:** Interested Parties  
**From:** Coalition to Empower Our Future  
**Re:** Eight-in-10 Florida Voters & Parents Support a Comprehensive Approach to Youth Mental Health  
**Date:** August 2025

With kids heading back to school, the Coalition to Empower Our Future (CEF) conducted research among Florida voters and parents to discuss youth mental health and wellbeing throughout the state. CEF, in partnership with Mercury Analytics, conducted an online survey among 600 registered voters in Florida (334 of whom were parents) from June 24 to 29, 2025. In addition to the survey research, CEF hosted conversations with 28 Florida voters and parents from August 5 to 8, 2025 (via an online discussion board).

This research builds on [previous research](#) conducted by CEF and finds that Florida voters and parents are worried about the state of youth mental health and wellbeing, which they view as a complex and multifaceted problem. The vast majority are seeking a comprehensive solution that includes expanding resources, improving school environments, and empowering parents to support their children.

KEY RESEARCH FINDINGS

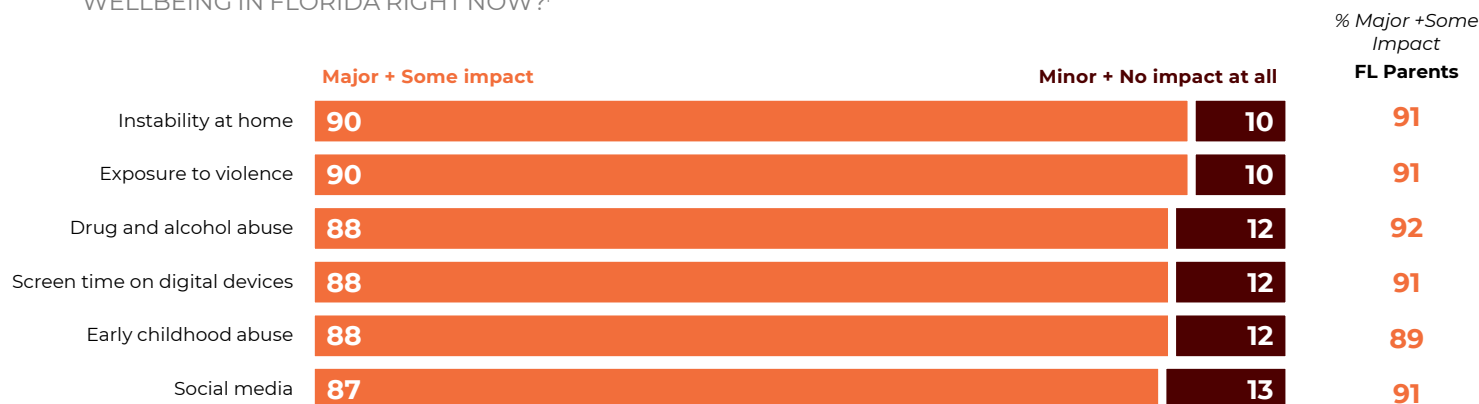
**When it comes to tackling mental health issues among youth, Florida voters and parents think a comprehensive approach is necessary.** Voters and parents prefer a solution that is multifaceted enough to meet the complex issue of youth mental health. Survey data shows that **eight-in-10 Florida voters and parents support a comprehensive approach** over a narrow approach targeting phones and similar devices.

Q: WHEN IT COMES TO IMPROVING YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING, WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING DO YOU THINK IS THE BEST APPROACH?



**Florida voters and parents think a broad range of factors is causing the decline in youth mental health.** The vast majority of voters and parents in Florida recognize that youth mental health is a complex and multifaceted issue. In both survey research and in CEF’s conversations across the state, both voters and parents cite a broad array of drivers of declining youth mental health, including instability at home, exposure to violence, drug and alcohol abuse, screen time on devices, early childhood abuse, social media, and more.

**Q: HOW MUCH OF AN IMPACT WOULD YOU SAY EACH FACTOR HAS ON YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING IN FLORIDA RIGHT NOW?**<sup>i</sup>



**Youth mental health is seen as a deteriorating and pervasive challenge that is unlikely to improve in the foreseeable future.** Survey data shows that Florida voters and parents are worried about youth mental health and wellbeing – the vast majority say the situation is bad and has only gotten worse since they were a child. Few say youth mental health and wellbeing are likely to improve in the near future.

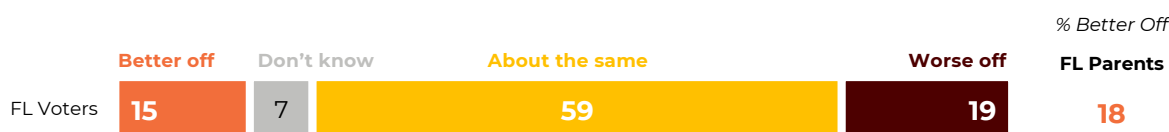
**Q: HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE STATE OF YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING IN FLORIDA TODAY?**



**Q: THINKING BACK TO WHEN YOU PERSONALLY WERE A KID, DO YOU THINK YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING IN FLORIDA HAS...**



**Q: THINKING AHEAD SIX MONTHS FROM NOW, DO YOU THINK YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING IN FLORIDA WILL BE...**



*"Things are getting harder for today's youth, and they don't seem to know how to cope with life."*

– FL Voter

*"Youth mental health seems to have gotten worse since COVID. Kids lack communication skills and don't see their friends in person."*

– FL Voter, Parent

*"Youth mental health in Florida is poor due to increasing isolation because of technology that enables antisocial behavior."*

– FL Voter

**Most Florida voters and parents personally know young people who are struggling with their mental health, and most don't know where to turn to support them.** For example:

- More than **six-in-10** FL voters and parents personally **know kids who are struggling** with mental health.
- About **six-in-10** FL voters and parents **would not know where to go** in their community to access mental health support for a young person in crisis.

- Almost **seven-in-10** FL voters and parents **say it's challenging for young people in their community to access mental health support** when they need it.

*"It's very concerning to me as a parent that I would not know where to go if I knew a teen who was experiencing mental health issues."*

– FL Voter, Parent

*"It's concerning to not know where to go because if I, as an adult, cannot figure it out, how can a child?"*

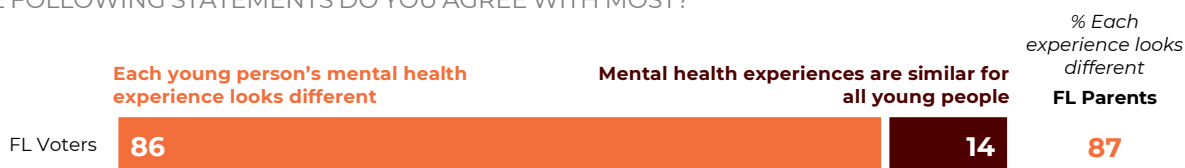
– FL Voter

*"There's a lack of focus and lack of availability of resources that needs to be addressed."*

– FL Voter

**Florida voters and parents recognize how unique each young person's situation is, and they say that acknowledging differences could help improve youth mental health and wellbeing.** The vast majority of Florida voters and parents agree that every young person's mental health experience looks different, and recognizing that and the complexity of youth mental health is part of the solution.

Q: WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS DO YOU AGREE WITH MOST?



Q: PLEASE INDICATE IF YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT:

ACKNOWLEDGING HOW EVERY YOUNG PERSON'S MENTAL HEALTH EXPERIENCE LOOKS DIFFERENT COULD HELP IMPROVE YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING.



*"When young people feel like their struggles are seen as legitimate and specific to them rather than dismissed as typical, it reduces the burden of feeling misunderstood."*

– FL Voter, Parent

*"Acknowledging the differences makes youth feel like they are being listened to and that they aren't being rolled through a cookie-cutter program."*

– FL Voter, Parent

*"Everyone is different. Even if their struggles look similar to someone else's, what has to be considered is that specific person's reaction to the situations they are facing."*

– FL Voter

**Florida voters and parents want to prioritize solutions that create more supportive environments and make resources more accessible.** For example, a very strong majority (**more than nine-in-10 Florida voters and parents**) say we could improve youth mental health across the state by making it easier for young people to access mental health care, by creating school environments where youth feel safe and supported, by ensuring K-12 schools have programs in place to help students develop the skills they need, and by equipping parents with the tools and resources they need.

*"There needs to be easier ways for teens to reach out to their parents and other adults in their life to help them receive the support they need."*

– FL Voter

*"Helping kids feel safe and free to speak about things that are affecting them is critical."*

– FL Voter, Parent

*"Youth need more access to resources. School is where they spend the bulk of their time, so it makes sense to have these resources in that setting."*

– FL Voter, Parent

<sup>1</sup> Chart displays items that only rise to the top among Florida voters.

#### Additional Methodology Notes

Mercury Analytics, on behalf of the Coalition to Empower our Future, conducted a survey between June 24 and June 29, 2025. A sample of 600 registered voters in Florida were interviewed online (334 of whom were also parents). The margin of error among this audience at the 95% confidence interval level is +/- 4.0%.

The Coalition to Empower our Future also conducted an online discussion board with 28 voters in Florida between August 5 to 8, 2025. 15 of the participants were also parents.