



MEMORANDUM

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

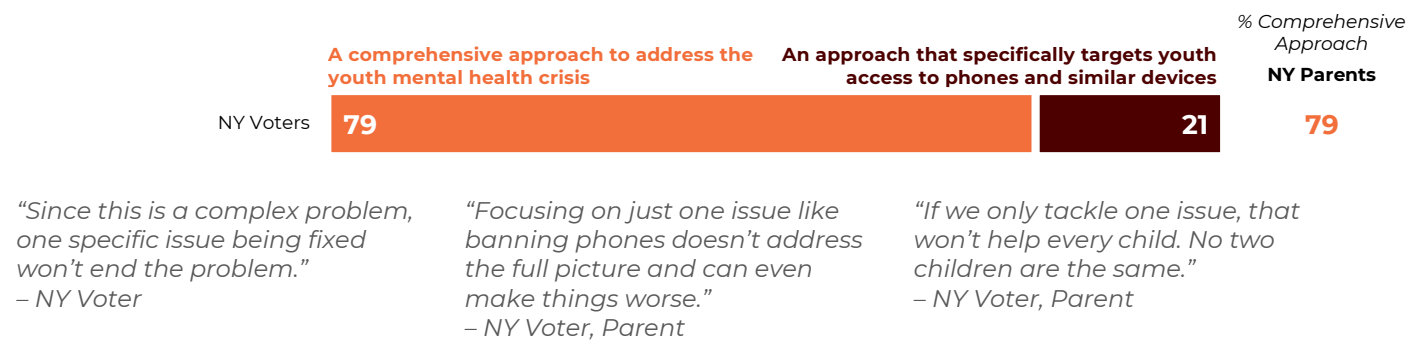
With kids heading back to school, the Coalition to Empower Our Future (CEF) conducted research among New York voters and parents to discuss youth mental health and wellbeing throughout the state. CEF, in partnership with Mercury Analytics, conducted an online survey among 600 registered voters in New York (304 of whom were parents) from June 24 to 29, 2025. In addition to the survey research, CEF hosted conversations with 30 New York 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 New York 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, New York 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 about **eight-in-10 New York 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?



New York 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 New York 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 social media, early childhood abuse, instability at home, drug and alcohol abuse, exposure to violence, bullying, and more.

Q: HOW MUCH OF AN IMPACT WOULD YOU SAY EACH FACTOR HAS ON YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING IN NEW YORK RIGHT NOW?¹



Youth mental health is seen as a deteriorating and pervasive challenge that is unlikely to improve in the foreseeable future. Survey data shows that New York 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 NEW YORK TODAY?



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



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



"It's getting worse and will continue to get worse if we don't have enough funding for mental health care."
– NY Voter

"Since COVID, there has been an uneasiness in the mental health of youth. Getting them to socialize is harder than it's ever been."
– NY Voter

"I don't recall these mental health issues being as common among kids 10 years ago."
– NY Voter, Parent

Most New York 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:

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

- More than **six-in-10** NY voters and parents **say their community does not have enough resources** to support youth mental health.

"Honestly, I don't even know what direction to point a child for them to receive mental health support."
– NY Voter, Parent

"Information needs to be significantly more accessible and easy to resort to in a time of crisis."
– NY Voter

"It's concerning to not know where to go because adults – like myself – should be aware of any help available to a child in need."
– NY Voter, Parent

New York 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 New York 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.



"Youth mental health needs to be handled individually. There's no one-size-fits-all solution since every kid is different."
– NY Voter, Parent

"Acknowledging the differences would allow the youth to be heard and not just be given cookie-cutter responses that won't help them specifically."
– NY Voter

"Acknowledging differences is helpful because the support can then be tailored to each individual."
– NY Voter, Parent

New York 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 New York 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, and by training teachers and staff at K-12 schools to recognize early warning signs of emotional challenges.

"Since school is where young people spend most of their waking hours and create relationships in, it's important that they get the support that they need there."
– NY Voter

"Having teachers trained to recognize issues can help because students can often be embarrassed to speak up."
– NY Voter

"Having youth figure out for themselves why they feel a certain way is not the way to go. They need help from parents or a professional."
– NY Voter, Parent

¹ Chart displays items that only rise to the top among New York 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 New York were interviewed online (304 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 30 voters in New York between August 5 to 8, 2025. 13 of the participants were also parents.