



MEMORANDUM

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

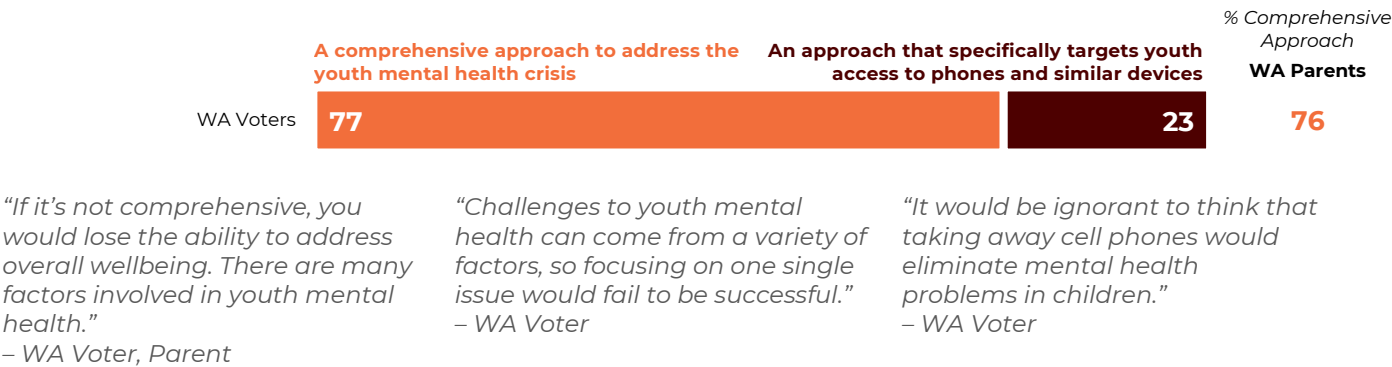
With kids heading back to school, the Coalition to Empower Our Future (CEF) conducted research among Washington voters and parents to discuss youth mental health and wellbeing throughout the state. CEF, in partnership with Mercury Analytics, conducted an online survey among 600 registered voters in Washington (344 of whom were parents) from June 24 to 29, 2025. In addition to the survey research, CEF hosted conversations with 29 Washington 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 Washington 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

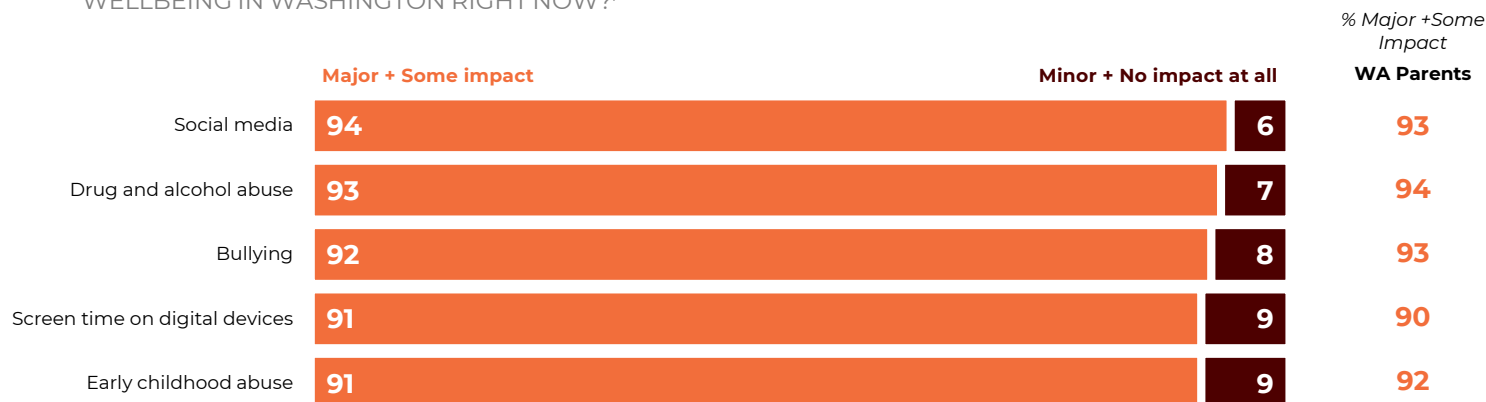
When it comes to tackling mental health issues among youth, Washington voters and parents think a comprehensive approach is necessary. Voters and parents prefer a solution that is multifaceted enough to meet the complex issue of youth mental health. Survey data shows that nearly **eight-in-10 Washington 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?



Washington 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 Washington 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, drug and alcohol abuse, bullying, screen time on digital devices, early childhood abuse, and more.

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



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



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



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



"The state of youth mental health in the state of Washington is on the decline."
– WA Voter

"I believe youth mental health is deteriorating across the country."
– WA Voter

"Kids today are struggling with a lot of issues. Mass information and lack of supervision at home and school are making their mental health worse."
– WA Voter, Parent

Most Washington 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 **seven-in-10** WA voters and parents personally **know kids who are struggling** with mental health.

- Over **six-in-10** WA voters and parents **would not know where to go** in their community to access mental health support for a young person in crisis.
- About **seven-in-10** WA voters and parents **say their community does not have enough resources** to support youth mental health.

"There aren't enough resources for kids facing mental health issues."

– WA Voter, Parent

"There always seems to be this hurdle of cost and insurance when it comes to getting support."

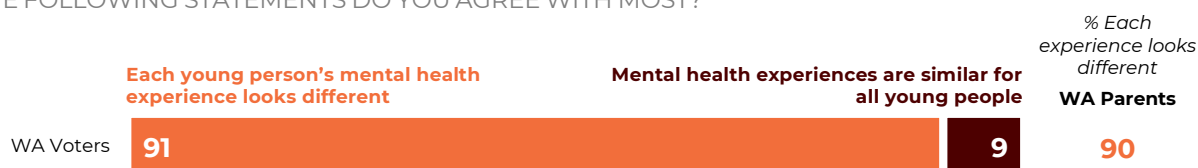
– WA Voter

"It's concerning to not know where to go, because if I don't know, how many others don't know?"

– WA Voter

Washington 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 Washington 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.



"Acknowledging how each young person's experience is unique can build trust and enable tailored support."

– WA Voter

"A person's uniqueness helps identify them. Acknowledging their trauma and their experiences could lead to healing."

– WA Voter

"Acknowledging differences means we can support youth in ways that actually fit what they're going through, not just offer a one-size-fits-all solution."

– WA Voter, Parent

Washington 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 Washington 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 training teachers and staff at K-12 schools to recognize early warning signs of emotional challenges, and by equipping parents with the tools and resources they need.

"Kids need easy access to mental health resources. Parents also need to have ways to support and understand their kids."

– WA Voter

"A teacher has a unique opportunity to observe kids and how they handle upsets and triumphs throughout the day."

– WA Voter

"If parents don't have help, then our kids fail."

– WA Voter, Parent

¹ Chart displays items that only rise to the top among Washington 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 Washington were interviewed online (344 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 29 voters in Washington between August 5 to 8, 2025. 16 of the participants were also parents.