



H.R. 3713, the Mental Health Services for Students Act

Sponsored by: Reps. Grace F. Napolitano (D-CA) & Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA)

Summary: H.R. 3713 would provide \$300 million in funding for public schools across the country to partner with local mental health professionals to establish on-site mental health services for students. The legislation expands the scope of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration's Project AWARE program, which will also set guidelines and measure the outcomes of the funded grantees.

H.R. 3713 is nearly identical to H.R. 721, the Mental Health Services for Students Act, which was passed by the U.S. House of Representatives in May 2021, and included in the June 2022 House-passed H.R. 7666, the Restoring Hope for Mental Health and Well-Being Act. Only one change has been made to increase funding from \$130 million to \$300 million. In the 117th Congress, the bill had 86 bipartisan cosponsors and the support of over 50 mental health organizations and teacher unions.

Why do we need H.R. 3713?

Mental illness affects millions of students across America, with 1 out of 5 suffering from some form. Most go untreated because they either cannot afford care, lack access, or do not know where to turn for help. Investing in preventive mental health care could give these young people a better future. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, without access to mental health care, students with mental disorders can have increased problems at home, in school, and in forming friendships, and can interfere with their healthy development into adulthood.

H.R. 3713 is a much-needed part of the solution. By providing increased federal funding for mental health services in our schools, this bill will help students with preventable mental illnesses get access to the services they need. The lack of school-based mental health services has gone on long enough, and we must give our young people access to the services they deserve.

What is the current state of children and youth mental health?

- Up to one in five children experience a mental disorder in a given year. ([CDC](#))
- Suicide is the second leading cause of death among adolescents aged 15-19 years. ([CDC](#))
- 49.4 percent of children with a mental health disorder do not receive needed treatment or counseling from a mental health professional. ([JAMA Pediatrics](#))
- 59.8 percent of youth with depression do not receive any mental health treatment and only 28 percent of those with severe depression receive consistent care. ([Mental Health America](#))
- 50 percent of all lifetime cases of mental illness begin by age 14 and 75 percent by age 24, and 20 percent of youth ages 13-18 live with a mental health condition. ([National Institute of Mental Health](#))
- 50-75 percent of youth entering the juvenile justice system meet criteria for a mental health disorder and 40-80 percent of incarcerated juveniles have at least one diagnosable mental health disorder. ([National Center for Biotechnology Information](#))
- Suicide attempts among Latina or Hispanic female teenagers are at a higher rate than non-Hispanic white female and Hispanic male peers, with more than 1 in 4 Latina high schoolers having suicidal thoughts. ([Salud America!](#))
- LGBTQ+ youth have been found to be at significantly greater risk for seriously considering and attempting suicide, and for many LGBTQ+ youth, their home environment is not a safe place. ([Trevor Project](#))

- Suicide was the leading cause of death for Asian/Pacific Islanders, ages 15 to 24, in 2019. Asian American males, in grades 9-12, were 30 percent more likely to consider attempting suicide as compared to non-Hispanic white male students, in 2019. ([U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Office of Minority Health](#))
- In 2029, suicide was the third leading cause of death for blacks or African Americans, ages 15 to 24. Black females, grades 9-12, were 60 percent more likely to attempt suicide in 2019, as compared to non-Hispanic white females of the same age. ([U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Office of Minority Health](#))
- Between March 2020 and October 2020 there was a 24 percent increase nationwide in mental health related emergency room visits among children between the ages of 5 and 11, and a 31 percent increase among those between 12 and 17, compared with the same period in 2019. ([CDC](#))
- In late 2020, over 20 percent of parents reported their school-aged children having experienced an overall worsening of mental or emotional health. ([CDC](#))
- In April 2021, the U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy issued a new Surgeon General's Advisory to highlight the urgent need for families, community organizations, technology companies, and governments to address our nation's worsening youth mental health crisis. The Advisory noted youth mental health challenges have been on the rise even prior to COVID-19, and from 2007 to 2018, the suicide rate among youth aged 10-24 increased by 57 percent. ([U.S. Department of Health & Human Services](#))
- In December 2021, estimates showed that more than 167,000 children have lost a parent or in-home caregiver to COVID-19, which raised concerns about the emotional well-being of children. ([Covid Collaborative](#))
- In October 2022, 47 percent of parents stated the pandemic has had a negative impact on their children's mental health, and half of young adults, ages 18-29, stated they have felt anxious either "always" or "often" in the past year. ([KFF/CNN Mental Health in America Survey](#))
- More than 1 in 3 high school students experienced poor mental health during the pandemic and nearly half of students felt persistently sad or hopeless. ([CDC](#))

What would H.R. 3713 specifically do?

The legislation will help students by:

- Providing access to more comprehensive on-site mental health care services for students and their communities by revising, increasing funding for, and expanding the scope of SAMHSA's Project AWARE;
- Promoting positive mental health education and support for parents, siblings, and other family members of children with mental health disorders, as well as concerned members of the community; and,
- Allow teachers to concentrate on teaching by providing comprehensive, culturally, and linguistically appropriate services to support students in need of mental health care and those at-risk for behavioral mental health disorders.

Background on H.R. 3713:

Congresswoman Grace F. Napolitano has already implemented this program, the Youth Suicide Prevention Program, within her own congressional district since 2001, currently operating in 35 local schools. The program has proven to be tremendously successful in helping students overcome mental health issues and improving quality of life for them and their families, and H.R. 3713 seeks to expand this model nationwide to provide more students with the benefits of on-site mental health care.

118th Congress cosponsors (131): Chuy Garcia, Khanna, Doggett, Kilmer, Dean, Payne, Bennie Thompson, Takano, Sablan, Castor, Casten, Watson Coleman, Phillips, Underwood, McGovern, Van Drew, Connolly, Blunt Rochester, Moskowitz, Cárdenas, Norton, Moore, Sánchez, Trone, Pocan, Ritchie Torres, Matsui, Blumenauer, Carbajal, Magaziner, Grijalva, Chu, DeSaulnier, Ryan, Gomez, Porter, Keating, Craig, Pettersen, Peters, Vasquez, Pingree, Neguse, Schiff, Barragán, Raskin, Moulton, Barbara Lee, Kaptur,

Nikema Williams, Cohen, Titus, Sylvia Garcia, Frederica Wilson, DelBene, Pressley, Norma Torres, Harder, McCollum, Scanlon, Kuster, Wild, Clarke, Balint, Sorensen, Kamlager-Dove, Cherfilus-McCormick, Allred, Slotkin, Pascrell, Caraveo, Jonathan Jackson, Gallego, Hayes, Nadler, Mullin, Norcross, Jeff Jackson, Gottheimer, Frost, Tokuda, Fletcher, Houlahan, Brownley, Salinas, Pappas, Ruppersberger, Wexton, Krishnamoorthi, Mike Thompson, Menendez, Troy Carter, Cleaver, Scholten, Garamendi, Frankel, Danny Davis, Spanberger, Budzinski, Robin Kelly, Waters, Soto, Lawler, Meng, Robert Garcia, Levin, Bacon, Crow, Molinaro, Carey, David Joyce, Correa, Stevens, Case, Schrier, Schneider, Ivey, Andy Kim, Huffman, D'Esposito, Amo, Foster, Turner, Meeks, Sherrill, Davids, Bonamici, Larsen, Ramirez, Mrvan

118th Congress supporting organizations (44): [Mental Health Liaison Group \(42 Mental Health Organizations\)](#), [National Education Association](#), American Federation of Teachers

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117th Congress supporting organizations (52): [Mental Health Liaison Group \(50 Mental Health Organizations\)](#), [National Education Association](#), [American Federation of Teachers](#)

For more information or to cosponsor H.R. 3713, please contact: Joseph Ciccone at Joseph.Ciccone@mail.house.gov or 202-225-5256 in Rep. Napolitano's office.