

Classroom News

Having recently left a high school after a three-year stint, it's important to highlight the current challenges facing adolescents as we transition back to "normalcy" post-pandemic. We're witnessing an alarming rise in issues such as increased drug use, school refusal, lack of motivation, school-related anxiety, and chronic absenteeism among students. Unfortunately, both families and school districts have been slow to respond effectively. School districts have primarily focused on metrics like graduation rates and academics, neglecting the critical aspect of students' mental health.

WHAT'S IN THIS MONTH'S ISSUE:

- Current trends of High School students



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Back to School

During the pandemic, many students and families, particularly those in marginalized communities, faced significant hardships. In my previous school district, immigrant families with limited resources struggled, and students often had to take on adult roles, impacting their academic performance. Some students turned to coping mechanisms like vaping, leading to multiple fire alarms being triggered. Shockingly, there have been no preventive or intervention measures from the district or community to support these students' mental health.



As clinicians, it's vital to recognize that schools are grappling with a mental health crisis, often with inadequate resources. Students consistently express the need for more mental health support during the school day and greater understanding from teachers and administrators, especially for those from low socioeconomic backgrounds. These students are seeking help, but many school districts are falling short in providing necessary resources and assistance.

What Can We Do?

As clinicians, it is our responsibility to respond to the mental health crisis in schools with urgency and compassion. We can actively collaborate with school districts, teachers, and families to identify and support students facing challenges like increased drug use, school refusal, and anxiety. By offering targeted interventions, advocating for mental health awareness, and creating safe spaces for students to seek help, we can make a profound difference in the lives of young individuals struggling to cope with the post-pandemic 'normalcy.' Let's work together to prioritize their mental well-being and educational success.

Resources

School Refusal

<https://www.education.udel.edu/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/SchoolRefusal.pdf>

Diversity

<https://educationnorthwest.org/insights/strategies-support-black-students-teachers-and-communities-schools>

Supporting LGBTQ+ Students

<https://www.aclu.org/documents/library-lgbt-youth-schools-resources-and-links>