



Students at Waukesha South High School.



Greater Milwaukee & Waukesha County

TEEN MENTAL WELLNESS: EMPOWERING MINDS.

OUR GOAL: EMPOWERING MINDS SCHOOLS WILL ELEVATE THE MENTAL WELLNESS OF 21,000 HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS BY 2030.

In early 2022, United Way brought together mental health experts to collaborate on solutions for youth mental health within our community. Advice and guidance came from local, state, and national experts, as well as those with lived experience. Together, we launched and piloted Empowering Minds.

Pilot Phase Results:

- Our two pilot schools served 1,800 students at James Madison Academic Campus and Waukesha South High School.
- Both schools completed a comprehensive school mental health needs assessment, the first step toward becoming an Empowering Minds school.
- Each school identified their specific needs, which included:
 - A structure to provide interventions to students identified as needing mental health support.
 - Resources that help decrease stigma and promote daily well-being among students and staff.
 - An implementation process that connects students to the appropriate resources.

Future Plans:

We are adding seven schools beginning in the 2024-25 school year for a total of nine schools.

- In the coming years, schools will focus on implementing more of the milestones of a comprehensive school mental health system.
- Schools will then enter the sustainability phase for up to two years before completing their time in the initiative.

United Way plans to add schools to Empowering Minds over the next five school years on our way to elevating the mental wellness of 21,000 total students by 2030.

EMPOWERING MINDS SCHOOLS OF DISTINCTION MILESTONES:

Needs Assessment: Mapping the current state and sharing existing resources with students and parents.

Collaboration: Building bridges with students, parents, community providers and the school to regularly engage on mental health.

Referral Pathways: The school knowing when and how to triage students who need support.

Comprehensive Resources: Promoting and supporting overall mental wellness and early interventions.

Sustainability & Evaluation: How we know what's working and how to keep it going.

PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS

- Dr. Howard Fuller Collegiate Academy
- Grafton High School
- James Madison Academic Campus
- Messmer High School
- Milwaukee Academy of Science
- Pius XI High School
- Waukesha South High School
- Waukesha West High School
- Wauwatosa West High School