

# TEEN MENTAL WELLNESS: EMPOWERING MINDS

## Public Policy Priorities



**UNITED WAY**  
Greater Milwaukee  
& Waukesha County

United Way of Greater Milwaukee & Waukesha County and community partners are focused on supporting school-based youth mental health services and resources. We know change happens with financial investments from passionate donors. We also know the importance of public policy. Join us in supporting this work via the opportunities listed below.

### Mental Health Care Access

Many families struggle to find affordable, accessible, and timely mental health care. Increased access to mental health providers, programs, and services for students and their families can improve mental health outcomes.

#### Policy Opportunities:

- Expand school-based mental health services state funding levels to better reflect actual costs of mental health supports within K-12 environments.
- Require, rather than encourage, school districts to adopt family engagement plans.
- Expand and require partnerships between school districts and community mental health providers that ensure access to services for students with ongoing needs.
- Support the implementation of the 2024 School-Based Mental Health Professionals Grant Program.

**Our Goal:**  
Empowering  
Minds schools  
will elevate the  
mental wellness  
of 21,000 high  
school students  
by 2030.

### Healthy School Environments

Schools can foster improved academic, social, and health outcomes through programs and services which support the comprehensive mental health needs of students.

#### Policy Opportunities:

- Require K-12 health education to explicitly include education on mental health, similar to legislation passed by New York and Virginia.
- Enact legislation to address additional healthy school climate policies (i.e. requiring annual school climate surveys, anti-discrimination policies, age-appropriate suicide prevention education for students, alternatives to exclusionary discipline, etc.).
- Establish existing education standards for K-12 life skills competencies in statute.
- Require annual well-being checks for all students and staff in K-12.

Learn more about Teen Mental Wellness: Empowering Minds at [UnitedWayGMWC.org](https://UnitedWayGMWC.org).