



Talking Points Mental Health Services for Students Act 2022-2023

General Talking Points

- Mental health is equally as important as physical health but is often stigmatized or viewed as less important. Our society must recognize that mental health is an essential component of overall well-being, and our government should work to ensure that all people have access to mental health care.

- Mental illness affects millions of Americans, including millions of young people.
 - 1 in 5 U.S. adults experience mental illness each year.¹
 - 1 in 6 U.S. youth aged 6-17 experience a serious mental health disorder each year.²
 - 71 percent of LGBTQ youth reported feeling sad or helpless for at least two weeks in the past year.³
 - LGBTQ youth are four times more likely to experience suicidal thoughts, self-harm, or attempt suicide compared to their non-LGBTQ peers.⁴
 - Depression is more likely to be persistent in Black people and Hispanics compared to whites.⁵

- Despite the widespread prevalence of mental illness, many people are still unable to access care.
 - Approximately 80 percent of children and adolescents with any type of mental health diagnosis have unmet mental health needs.⁶
 - Although Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) individuals experience mental illness at roughly the same rates as white people, they are overall less likely to receive mental health services than white people.⁷
 - 54 percent of LGBTQ+ youth who reported needing mental health care within the past year did not receive it, and LGBTQ+ youth of color report greater unmet mental health needs.⁸
 - Some common barriers to accessing mental health services include social stigma, lack of information about mental health services, cost of treatment, distance to treatment, and long wait times. For Communities of Color, additional barriers include lower rates of insurance coverage, mistrust of the health care system due to decades of abuse and neglect, and lack of diversity among mental health practitioners.⁹ For LGBTQ+ youth, unique barriers include concerns about being outed, fears that a provider will not understand their sexual orientation or gender identity, and lack of LGBTQ+ providers.¹⁰

- Schools are in a prime position to provide mental health services for young people.
 - Although many young people are still unable to obtain care, 70 to 80 percent of students who do receive mental health services access these services at school.¹¹
 - Students seeking mental health resources are over 20 times more likely to visit school health centers than community centers.¹²

- Despite the importance of school-based mental health initiatives, many schools lack the resources or training to identify and treat mental health problems among their students.
 - 90 percent of public school students attend schools which fail to meet professional staffing requirements for counselors, social workers, nurses, and psychologists.¹³

Jewish Text and Values

- Judaism teaches that mental health is equally as important as physical health. In the traditional *Mi Shebeirach* (prayer for healing), we pray for a *r'fuah shleima* (a complete recovery), which includes *r'fuat hanefesh ur'fuat haguf* (a healing of the body and spirit).
- Judaism teaches that the government has an obligation to ensure that all people can access health care, including mental health care. In fact, Maimonides, a revered Jewish scholar and physician, placed health care first on his list of the ten most important communal services a city must offer its residents if the city is to be found worthy for a great scholar to live there (Mishneh Torah, Hilchot De'ot IV:23).

Personal Story

You may wish to share a personal story about your own experience with mental illness, barriers you have faced when seeking mental health care, or the lack of mental health services at your school. You may also share a story about someone else. If you choose to do so, be sure to get their explicit permission whenever possible. If you are unable to contact them, try to keep their identity anonymous (for example, you might say “one of my classmates” without sharing their name).

Legislative Ask

The **Mental Health Services for Students Act (H.R.721/S.1841)** would improve mental health care services in public schools by providing \$200 million in grant funding per year for five years to expand the Project Advancing Wellness and Resilience Education (Project AWARE) program. Under this legislation, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), an agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, will award individual grants of up to \$2 million to help schools partner with community mental health professionals to provide on-site care, train school personnel to recognize mental and behavioral health issues, facilitate community partnerships to improve mental health education, and establish mechanisms for students to report incidents or plans of violence by other students, adolescents, or adults. This bill was most recently reintroduced by Representative Grace Napolitano (D-CA-32), Representative John Katko (R-NY-24), and Senator Tina Smith (D-MN). The bill passed the House of Representatives on May 12, 2021 as part of a vote with several other bills, but it has not received a vote in the Senate.

When crafting your legislative ask, refer to the lists below to see whether your Senators have supported (cosponsored) the bill and how your Representative voted on May 12, 2021.

In the SENATE:

- If your Senator is a sponsor or cosponsor of the bill (their name is on the cosponsor list below): I thank the Senator for cosponsoring the Mental Health Services for Students Act (S.1841) and urge them to call for immediate passage in the Senate.
- If your Senator is not a cosponsor of the bill (their name is NOT on the cosponsor list below): I urge the Senator to cosponsor the Mental Health Services for Students Act (S.1841).

Senate Cosponsors of the Mental Health Services for Students Act (S.1841)

^=Sponsor (introduced the bill)

*=Original Cosponsor (cosponsored as soon as the bill was introduced)

Sen. Blumenthal, Richard [D-CT]*

Sen. Brown, Sherrod [D-OH]

Sen. Cortez Masto, Catherine [D-NV]

Sen. Hirono, Mazie K. [D-HI]

Sen. Murphy, Christopher [D-CT]*

Sen. Padilla, Alex [D-CA]

Sen. Sanders, Bernard [I-VT]*

Sen. Smith, Tina [D-MN]^

Sen. Van Hollen, Chris [D-MD]*

Sen. Whitehouse, Sheldon [D-RI]*

Sen. Wyden, Ron [D-OR]*

In the HOUSE:

The table below lists how each Representative voted on May 12, 2021. There are many Representatives with identical or similar last names, so please refer to the state column to verify that you have selected your correct Representative (if two Representatives from the same state share a last name, their first name is also listed). Based on the voting status, use the following legislative ask in your speech:

- If your Representative voted for the bill on May 12, 2021 (their voting status is listed as YES below): I thank the Representative for voting for the Mental Health Services for Students Act (H.R.721) and urge them to call for immediate passage in the Senate
- If your Representative did not vote for the bill on May 12, 2021 (their voting status is listed as NO below): I urge the Representative to reconsider their position on school-based mental health services. It is vital that Congress expands access to mental health services in public schools.
- If your Representative was in Congress but did not cast a vote on May 12, 2021 (their voting status is listed as “not voting” below): I urge the Representative to support school-based mental health services and call for immediate passage of the Mental Health Services for Students Act in the Senate.
- If your Representative arrived in Congress after May 12, 2021 (their voting status is listed as “sworn in after the vote”): I recognize the Representative was sworn in after the Mental Health Services for Students Act (H.R.721) passed the House on May 12, 2021. I urge the Representative to support school-based mental health services and call for immediate passage of the Mental Health Services for Students Act in the Senate.

House Vote on Passage of the Mental Health Services for Students Act (H.R.721) on May 12, 2021

Adams	North Carolina	YES
Aderholt	Alabama	NO
Aguilar	California	YES
Allen	Georgia	NO
Allred	Texas	YES
Amodei	Nevada	YES
Armstrong	North Dakota	YES
Arrington	Texas	NO
Auchincloss	Massachusetts	YES

Axne	Iowa	YES
Babin	Texas	NO
Bacon	Nebraska	YES
Baird	Indiana	YES
Balderson	Ohio	YES
Banks	Indiana	NO
Barr	Kentucky	YES
Barragán	California	YES
Bass	California	YES

Beatty	Ohio	YES
Bentz	Oregon	YES
Bera	California	YES
Bergman	Michigan	YES
Beyer	Virginia	YES
Bice	Oklahoma	YES
Biggs	Arizona	NO
Bilirakis	Florida	YES
Bishop	Georgia	YES
Bishop	North Carolina	NO
Blumenauer	Oregon	YES
Blunt Rochester	Delaware	YES
Boebert	Colorado	NO
Bonamici	Oregon	YES
Bost	Illinois	YES
Bourdeaux	Georgia	YES
Bowman	New York	YES
Boyle, Brendan F.	Pennsylvania	YES
Brady	Texas	YES
Brooks	Alabama	NO
Brown	Maryland	YES
Brown	Ohio	Sworn in after the vote
Brownley	California	YES
Buchanan	Florida	YES
Buck	Colorado	NO
Bucshon	Indiana	YES
Budd	North Carolina	NO
Burchett	Tennessee	NO
Burgess	Texas	YES
Bush	Missouri	YES
Bustos	Illinois	YES
Butterfield	North Carolina	YES
Calvert	California	YES
Cammack	Florida	NO
Carbajal	California	YES
Cárdenas	California	YES

Carey	Ohio	Sworn in after the vote
Carl	Alabama	YES
Carson	Indiana	YES
Carter	Georgia	YES
Carter	Louisiana	YES
Carter	Texas	NO
Cartwright	Pennsylvania	YES
Case	Hawaii	YES
Casten	Illinois	YES
Castor	Florida	YES
Castro	Texas	YES
Cawthorn	North Carolina	YES
Chabot	Ohio	YES
Cheney	Wyoming	YES
Cherfilus- McCormick	Florida	Sworn in after the vote
Chu	California	YES
Cicilline	Rhode Island	YES
Clark	Massachusetts	YES
Clarke	New York	YES
Cleaver	Missouri	YES
Cline	Virginia	NO
Cloud	Texas	NO
Clyburn	South Carolina	YES
Clyde	Georgia	NO
Cohen	Tennessee	YES
Cole	Oklahoma	YES
Comer	Kentucky	YES
Connolly	Virginia	YES
Conway	California	Sworn in after the vote
Cooper	Tennessee	YES
Correa	California	YES
Costa	California	YES
Courtney	Connecticut	YES
Craig	Minnesota	YES
Crawford	Arkansas	NO

Crenshaw	Texas	YES
Crist	Florida	YES
Crow	Colorado	YES
Cuellar	Texas	YES
Curtis	Utah	YES
Davids	Kansas	YES
Davidson	Ohio	NO
Davis, Danny K.	Illinois	YES
Davis, Rodney	Illinois	YES
Dean	Pennsylvania	YES
DeFazio	Oregon	YES
DeGette	Colorado	YES
DeLauro	Connecticut	YES
DelBene	Washington	YES
Delgado	New York	YES
Demings	Florida	YES
DeSaulnier	California	YES
DesJarlais	Tennessee	NO
Deutch	Florida	YES
Diaz-Balart	Florida	YES
Dingell	Michigan	YES
Doggett	Texas	YES
Donalds	Florida	NO
Doyle, Michael F.	Pennsylvania	YES
Duncan	South Carolina	NO
Dunn	Florida	Not Voting
Ellzey	Texas	Sworn in after the vote
Emmer	Minnesota	NO
Escobar	Texas	YES
Eshoo	California	YES
Espaillet	New York	YES
Estes	Kansas	NO
Evans	Pennsylvania	YES
Fallon	Texas	NO
Feenstra	Iowa	YES
Ferguson	Georgia	YES

Finstad	Minnesota	Sworn in after the vote
Fischbach	Minnesota	YES
Fitzgerald	Wisconsin	YES
Fitzpatrick	Pennsylvania	YES
Fleischmann	Tennessee	YES
Fletcher	Texas	YES
Flood	Nebraska	Sworn in after the vote
Flores	Texas	Sworn in after the vote
Fortenberry	Nebraska	YES
Foster	Illinois	YES
Foxx	North Carolina	NO
Frankel, Lois	Florida	YES
Franklin, C. Scott	Florida	YES
Fulcher	Idaho	NO
Gaetz	Florida	NO
Gallagher	Wisconsin	YES
Gallego	Arizona	YES
Garamendi	California	YES
Garbarino	New York	YES
Garcia	California	YES
Garcia	Texas	YES
García	Illinois	YES
Gibbs	Ohio	YES
Gimenez	Florida	YES
Gohmert	Texas	NO
Golden	Maine	Not Voting
Gomez	California	YES
Gonzales, Tony	Texas	YES
Gonzalez	Ohio	YES
Gonzalez, Vicente	Texas	YES
Good	Virginia	NO
Gooden	Texas	NO
Gosar	Arizona	NO
Gottheimer	New Jersey	YES

Granger	Texas	YES
Graves	Louisiana	YES
Graves	Missouri	YES
Green	Tennessee	NO
Green, Al	Texas	YES
Greene	Georgia	NO
Griffith	Virginia	YES
Grijalva	Arizona	YES
Grothman	Wisconsin	NO
Guest	Mississippi	NO
Guthrie	Kentucky	YES
Hagedorn	Minnesota	YES
Harder	California	YES
Harris	Maryland	NO
Harshbarger	Tennessee	NO
Hartzler	Missouri	YES
Hayes	Connecticut	YES
Hern	Oklahoma	NO
Herrell	New Mexico	NO
Herrera Beutler	Washington	YES
Hice	Georgia	NO
Higgins	New York	YES
Higgins	Louisiana	NO
Hill	Arkansas	YES
Himes	Connecticut	YES
Hinson	Iowa	YES
Hollingsworth	Indiana	YES
Horsford	Nevada	YES
Houlahan	Pennsylvania	YES
Hoyer	Maryland	YES
Hudson	North Carolina	YES
Huffman	California	YES
Huizenga	Michigan	NO
Issa	California	YES
Jackson	Texas	NO
Jackson Lee	Texas	YES
Jacobs	California	YES
Jacobs	New York	YES
Jayapal	Washington	YES

Jeffries	New York	YES
Johnson	Georgia	YES
Johnson	Ohio	YES
Johnson	South Dakota	YES
Johnson	Texas	YES
Johnson	Louisiana	NO
Jones	New York	YES
Jordan	Ohio	NO
Joyce	Ohio	YES
Joyce	Pennsylvania	YES
Kahele	Hawaii	YES
Kaptur	Ohio	YES
Katko	New York	YES
Keating	Massachusetts	YES
Keller	Pennsylvania	YES
Kelly	Illinois	YES
Kelly	Pennsylvania	YES
Kelly	Mississippi	NO
Khanna	California	YES
Kildee	Michigan	YES
Kilmer	Washington	YES
Kim	California	YES
Kim	New Jersey	YES
Kind	Wisconsin	YES
Kinzinger	Illinois	YES
Kirkpatrick	Arizona	YES
Krishnamoorthi	Illinois	YES
Kuster	New Hampshire	YES
Kustoff	Tennessee	YES
LaHood	Illinois	YES
LaMalfa	California	NO
Lamb	Pennsylvania	YES
Lamborn	Colorado	NO
Langevin	Rhode Island	YES
Larsen	Washington	YES
Larson	Connecticut	YES
Latta	Ohio	YES
LaTurner	Kansas	YES
Lawrence	Michigan	YES

Lawson	Florida	YES
Lee	California	YES
Lee	Nevada	YES
Leger Fernandez	New Mexico	YES
Lesko	Arizona	NO
Letlow	Louisiana	YES
Levin	California	YES
Levin	Michigan	YES
Lieu	California	YES
Lofgren	California	YES
Long	Missouri	YES
Loudermilk	Georgia	NO
Lowenthal	California	YES
Lucas	Oklahoma	YES
Luetkemeyer	Missouri	YES
Luria	Virginia	YES
Lynch	Massachusetts	YES
Mace	South Carolina	YES
Malinowski	New Jersey	YES
Malliotakis	New York	YES
Maloney, Carolyn B.	New York	YES
Maloney, Sean	New York	YES
Mann	Kansas	NO
Manning	North Carolina	YES
Massie	Kentucky	NO
Mast	Florida	YES
Matsui	California	YES
McBath	Georgia	YES
McCarthy	California	YES
McCaul	Texas	YES
McClain	Michigan	YES
McClintock	California	NO
McCollum	Minnesota	YES
McEachin	Virginia	YES
McGovern	Massachusetts	YES
McHenry	North Carolina	YES
McKinley	West Virginia	YES
McNerney	California	YES

Meeks	New York	YES
Meijer	Michigan	YES
Meng	New York	YES
Meuser	Pennsylvania	YES
Mfume	Maryland	YES
Miller	West Virginia	YES
Miller	Illinois	NO
Miller-Meeks	Iowa	YES
Moolenaar	Michigan	YES
Mooney	West Virginia	YES
Moore	Utah	YES
Moore	Wisconsin	YES
Moore	Alabama	NO
Morelle	New York	YES
Moulton	Massachusetts	YES
Mrvan	Indiana	YES
Mullin	Oklahoma	YES
Murphy	North Carolina	YES
Murphy	Florida	Not Voting
Nadler	New York	YES
Napolitano	California	YES
Neal	Massachusetts	YES
Neguse	Colorado	YES
Nehls	Texas	YES
Newhouse	Washington	YES
Newman	Illinois	YES
Norcross	New Jersey	YES
Norman	South Carolina	NO
Nunes	California	YES
Oberholte	California	YES
Ocasio-Cortez	New York	YES
O'Halleran	Arizona	YES
Omar	Minnesota	YES
Owens	Utah	YES
Palazzo	Mississippi	NO
Pallone	New Jersey	YES
Palmer	Alabama	NO
Panetta	California	YES
Pappas	New Hampshire	YES

Pascrell	New Jersey	YES
Payne	New Jersey	YES
Peltola	Alaska	Sworn in after the vote
Pence	Indiana	NO
Perlmutter	Colorado	YES
Perry	Pennsylvania	NO
Peters	California	YES
Pfluger	Texas	NO
Phillips	Minnesota	YES
Pingree	Maine	YES
Pocan	Wisconsin	YES
Porter	California	YES
Posey	Florida	NO
Pressley	Massachusetts	YES
Price (NC)	North Carolina	YES
Quigley	Illinois	YES
Raskin	Maryland	YES
Reed	New York	YES
Reschenthaler	Pennsylvania	YES
Rice	New York	YES
Rice	South Carolina	NO
Rodgers	Washington	YES
Rogers	Kentucky	YES
Rogers	Alabama	NO
Rose	Tennessee	NO
Rosendale	Montana	NO
Ross	North Carolina	YES
Rouzer	North Carolina	NO
Roy	Texas	NO
Roybal-Allard	California	YES
Ruiz	California	YES
Ruppersberger	Maryland	YES
Rush	Illinois	YES
Rutherford	Florida	YES
Ryan	Ohio	YES
Ryan	New York	Sworn in after the vote
Salazar	Florida	YES

Sánchez	California	YES
Sarbanes	Maryland	YES
Scalise	Louisiana	YES
Scanlon	Pennsylvania	YES
Schakowsky	Illinois	YES
Schiff	California	YES
Schneider	Illinois	YES
Schrader	Oregon	YES
Schrier	Washington	YES
Schweikert	Arizona	YES
Scott	Virginia	YES
Scott, Austin	Georgia	YES
Scott, David	Georgia	YES
Sempolinski	New York	Sworn in after the vote
Sessions	Texas	YES
Sewell	Alabama	YES
Sherman	California	YES
Sherrill	New Jersey	Not Voting
Simpson	Idaho	YES
Sires	New Jersey	YES
Slotkin	Michigan	YES
Smith	Missouri	YES
Smith	Nebraska	YES
Smith	Washington	YES
Smith	New Jersey	Not Voting
Smucker	Pennsylvania	YES
Soto	Florida	YES
Spanberger	Virginia	YES
Spartz	Indiana	YES
Speier	California	YES
Stansbury	New Mexico	Sworn in after the vote
Stanton	Arizona	YES
Stauber	Minnesota	YES
Steel	California	YES
Stefanik	New York	YES
Steil	Wisconsin	YES
Steube	Florida	NO

Stevens	Michigan	YES
Stewart	Utah	YES
Stivers	Ohio	YES
Strickland	Washington	YES
Suozzi	New York	Not Voting
Swalwell	California	YES
Takano	California	YES
Taylor	Texas	NO
Tenney	New York	YES
Thompson	California	YES
Thompson	Mississippi	YES
Thompson	Pennsylvania	YES
Tiffany	Wisconsin	NO
Timmons	South Carolina	YES
Titus	Nevada	YES
Tlaib	Michigan	YES
Tonko	New York	YES
Torres	California	YES
Torres	New York	YES
Trahan	Massachusetts	YES
Trone	Maryland	YES
Turner	Ohio	YES
Underwood	Illinois	YES
Upton	Michigan	YES
Valadao	California	YES
Van Drew	New Jersey	YES
Van Duyne	Texas	YES
Vargas	California	YES
Veasey	Texas	YES

Vela	Texas	YES
Velázquez	New York	YES
Wagner	Missouri	YES
Walberg	Michigan	YES
Walorski	Indiana	YES
Waltz	Florida	YES
Wasserman Schultz	Florida	YES
Waters	California	YES
Watson Coleman	New Jersey	YES
Weber	Texas	NO
Webster	Florida	Not Voting
Welch	Vermont	YES
Wenstrup	Ohio	YES
Westerman	Arkansas	YES
Wexton	Virginia	YES
Wild	Pennsylvania	YES
Williams	Georgia	YES
Williams	Texas	NO
Wilson	Florida	YES
Wilson	South Carolina	YES
Wittman	Virginia	YES
Womack	Arkansas	YES
Yakym	Indiana	Sworn in after the vote
Yarmuth	Kentucky	YES
Young	Alaska	YES
Zeldin	New York	YES

Mental Health Resources

If you or someone you know is experiencing mental illness, please know that you are not alone. You can always reach out to a family member, friend, clergy member, or other trusted adult. Visit www.rac.org/MentalHealthResources for a list of major national hotlines in the United States and Canada as well as selected Jewish communal resources.

For More Information

If you have questions about these talking points or need more information, contact RAC Assistant Legislative Director Jacob Greenblatt at jgreenblatt@rac.org.

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- ¹ <https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/cbhsq-reports/NSDUHNationalFindingsReport2018/NSDUHNationalFindingsReport2018.pdf>
 - ² <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapediatrics/fullarticle/2724377?guestAccessKey=f689aa19-31f1-481d-878a-6bf83844536a>
 - ³ <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/The-Trevor-Project-National-Survey-Results-2019.pdf>
 - ⁴ <https://healthlaw.org/resource/protections-for-lgbtq-people-with-behavioral-health-needs/>
 - ⁵ “Mental Health Disparities: Diverse Populations.” American Psychiatric Association Factsheet (December 19, 2017)
 - ⁶ https://store.samhsa.gov/system/files/joint_info_bulletin_school_based_services_final_508_6.28.19.pdf
 - ⁷ <https://www.urban.org/research/publication/association-racial-and-ethnic-social-networks-mental-health-service-utilization-across-minority-groups-usa>
 - ⁸ <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/research-briefs/breaking-barriers-to-quality-mental-health-care-for-lgbtq-youth/>
 - ⁹ https://gucchd.georgetown.edu/products/Disparities_PolicyBrief.pdf
 - ¹⁰ <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/research-briefs/breaking-barriers-to-quality-mental-health-care-for-lgbtq-youth/>
 - ¹¹ https://www.aclu.org/sites/default/files/field_document/030419-acluschooldisciplinereport.pdf
 - ¹² https://www.aclu.org/sites/default/files/field_document/030419-acluschooldisciplinereport.pdf
 - ¹³ https://www.aclu.org/sites/default/files/field_document/030419-acluschooldisciplinereport.pdf