

The silent battle with mental health in school

The Chronicle Staff

As the Chronicle staff, we want to be the advocates for and the voice of the students. During recent years, the unwanted popularity of students struggling with mental health has peaked. As a reporting staff, we want to use our platform to speak up about how we can address the mental health issues and how we can better educate people about them.

According to Live Science, among the teen community, one in five teenagers suffer from severe mental health disorders that can impact their daily life.

Living in a world where so many people are affected by different mental health disorders, you would think that people would be educated on it. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, tens of millions of people are affected by different types of mental health disorders each year, but only about half of them receive treatment for it. It makes it hard to reach out for help when others don't listen and understand that one's mental state is more than just being sad or nervous. When kids feel like they aren't being listened to and their feelings are invalid, they think they're alone.

There are signs that teachers and parents and friends can look out for. Don't just brush it off as nothing because it is something. Be the person that speaks up and validates that your student or child or friend is not okay. Let them know that it's okay to put their mental health before school or before sports.

Teachers can be more understanding towards those students by allowing them more time to get an assignment done. When a student comes to you and asks for extra time to get something done, don't make them feel any less than what they are. If a child has an anxiety attack over a presentation, don't be

persistent in them doing it and offer them an alternate option. A two minute presentation shouldn't be more important than your students' well being.

Parents can be more understanding towards their child by trying to see the world through their eyes. When you see your child getting worked up and flustered over small things, don't add more on top of that to make them feel even worse. Don't harp on them about insignificant things that can wait. Let them do one thing at a time or offer your help.

Schools are all about advocating for students and mental health, but the one thing that seems to be missing is that it's scary to ask for help. It's scary to put yourself out there and admit you need help. Schools want their students to be able to go to their counselors for help if they need, but if each counselor has hundreds of students, it's hard to find time to form a relationship with every single student.

With the recently passed mill levy and bond, as a district, we need to put some of that money towards getting more counselors for the students. With more resources, students may be more open to speaking up. Having to go through the whole process of having to set up an appointment to meet with your counselor defeats the purpose of reaching out. Counselors should be able to offer check-ins to their students because as high schoolers, school is stressful and someone showing that they took the time out of their day to check-in with you and ask if you need help is a good push towards improving students' mental state.

Education on mental health is everything. If people can't understand how serious this issue is, then nothing is going to get better. Instead of waiting for someone to ask for help, offer it.



Photo by Hannah Dyer
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