

crazy challenging chaos roller coaster sad pain difficult unique stupid interesting complicated tsunami desolate abomination unbelievable messy eventful worst pandemic traumatic excruciating destructive long bittersweet catastrophe unexpected unpredictable controversial broken

2020's impact on teenage mental health

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Jan 20

First confirmed COVID case in US in Washington state after

Kobe Bryant and daughter Gianna die in helicopter crash

Jan 30

World Health Organization declares COVID a public health emergency

Mar 13

Pres. Trump declares COVID a national emergency

Apr 3

The CDC recommends face masks in all public areas

Police officer filmed while pressing his knee on the neck of George Floyd

May 28

State of emergency declared in Minneapolis as protests spread

California fires spread over 100 million acres of land.

Sep 29

First presidential debate, was considered as "90 minutes of chaos"

Election day, Trump announces he won but no news declare a presidential winner

Dec 14

Electoral college confirms Joe Biden's victory over president Trump

Jan 26

Mar 11

Mar 13

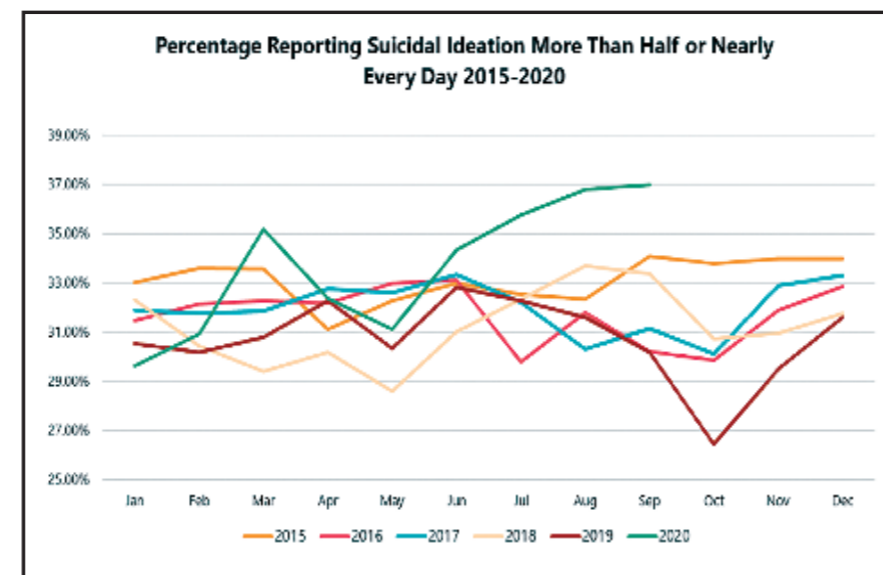
May 25

Aug 2

Nov 3

According to the CDC, Mental Health of America, and the American Academy of Pediatrics, the mental health of youth has dwindled drastically in the last year. 2020 was a rollercoaster for everyone. From the global pandemic to the political up- roars, emotions were low for the majority of teens. Data shows that 9.7% of youth in the U.S. have severe major depression, compared to 9.2% in last year's dataset. This rate was highest among youth who identify as more than one race, at 12.4%.

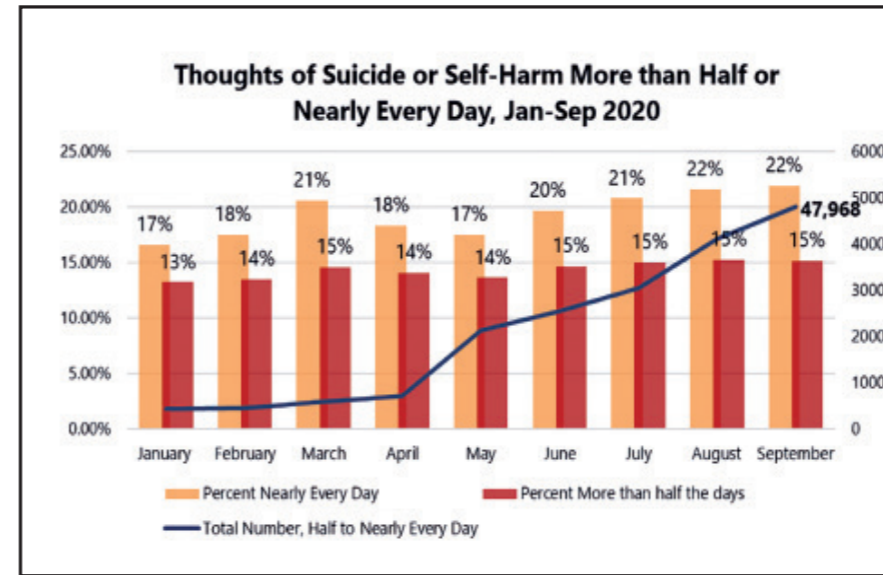
Not only that, but the data shows that youth between the ages of 11-17 have been more likely than any other age group to show severe symptoms of anxiety and depression during the COVID-19 pandemic (Mental Health of America). A survey sent to the EHS students and staff helped the Red Ink understand the mental health at EHS after COVID-19. Students were asked to rate their mental health on a 1-10 scale with one being great mental health and ten being relatively poor mental health over the last year. Exactly 50% of the respondents were between 1-5, the other 50% were between 6-10. The largest percentage of participants, 15.2%, expressed their mental health as one, meaning since the pandemic, their mental health has been favorable. The second highest, 13.3%, was an eight, suggesting somewhat poor mental health. Interestingly enough, many of the students and staff at EHS expressed that COVID did not have a major effect on their mindset and attitude. Although this may be true, every student had to deal with the hardships of the pandemic and the year of 2020 itself.



Percentage reporting suicidal ideation more than half or nearly every day according to data collected by Mental Health America.

month period of mental instability. I wish high school could have been normal; playing pep rallies in marching band and having the ability to go to school dances and/or just hang out with friends without having to wear a mask into every building we enter."

According to the data collected by the Red Ink, the majority of the students explain their mental health as relatively good. Although this may be true, 50% of the students are still struggling. Half of the student body and staff have witnessed a change to their mental health and that percentage alone is significant. 27.7% of EHS students said their grades and school work took the biggest hit from the pandemic. Jaeli Lewis (23) said, "All the teachers and everyone talks about how crazy the world is, but they're still treating this year like it's normal. We don't get any slack in classes about missing and being quarantined." Online student, Jessica Guerra (21), shares the same emotion towards school work and the impact of the last year. "I've never really struggled this much in school before. I'm online this year and I've been behind in my classes for almost the whole school year," she said. Students may feel that teachers are not necessarily helping them cope with the abrupt change in their lives, but teachers also have similar feelings toward 2020. Math teacher Kayla Johnson said, "At school, it takes a lot of energy and passion to develop and facilitate an interesting and engaging math lesson. I feel like my 'energy bar' has been on low all school year long, and I see it impacting my students' learning sometimes too. I know I can't always expect them (the students) to be the best versions of themselves like I normally do if I'm not the best version of myself either. Then it all cycles back - I see that I'm not doing my best, and it makes me sad to know that my 'why' as a teacher is not evident on a daily basis." The pandemic has been just as hard on the teachers as it has been on the students. "What keeps me going this last year is what always keeps me going- my family and the students I teach," history teacher Andrew Jorgensen said. Last year brought more than just a pandemic. It brought protests, political controversy, and much more throughout the nation and

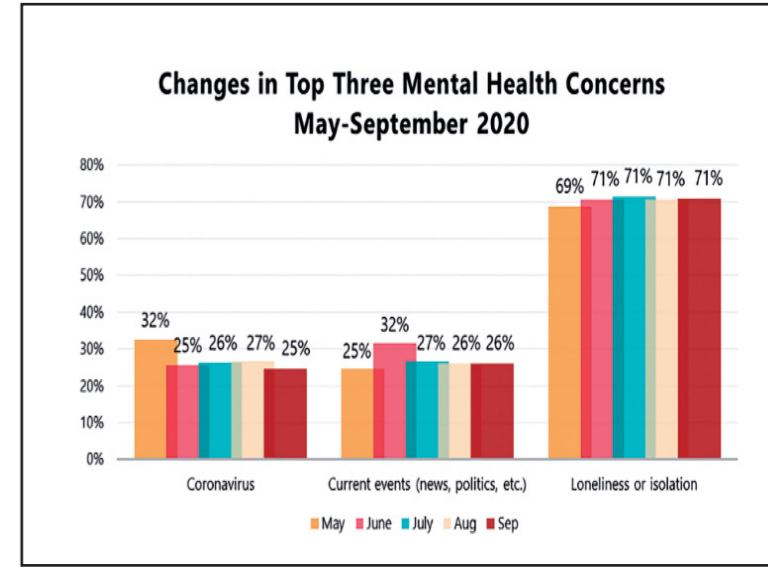


Thoughts of suicide or self harm more than half or nearly every day according to data collect by Mental Health America.

world. Kids in high school had to discover ways of coping and understanding a divided world in front of them. "Throughout this pandemic I saw many people I liked become hypocritical and it exposed they only care about their own image and power.

This has gotten me to begin applying ideas I like from all over the political spectrum and am creating my own ideology," Micheal Howard (22) said. Especially in a town so small and impersonal, it was hard to see different perspectives, and even harder to understand them. Teenagers had to watch a divided nation, in midst of a pandemic, and attempt to make sense of it all. Teachers also struggled with understanding the nation before them. Online teacher

Deirdre White said, "The Capitol riots undid me. I wept the day they stormed our most precious American institution. I have found it so hard to believe that people are actually so angry. There is so much anger and fear in our country--and there are leaders who have pandered over and over to our most basic human emotion: FEAR." The history and fear in the last 365 days has been



Changes in top three mental health concerns according to data collected by Mental Health America.

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