



Educators/Schools

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Schools are in a key position to identify mental health concerns early and to openly communicate those concerns to families. Strong mental health programs and open communication with families promise to reduce the pain and isolation all too often experienced by youth with undiagnosed and untreated mental and emotional disorders.¹

While 10 percent of children and adolescents in the United States suffer from serious emotional and mental disorders that cause significant functional impairment in their day-to-day lives, only 20 percent of children in need receive mental health services in a given year.²

Untreated, these disorders can have devastating consequences, including the loss of critical developmental years, extremely poor academic performance, increased school dropout and failure, involvement with law enforcement and the justice system, and suicide.

Treatment of many serious emotional and mental disorders is effective. Psychotherapy, behavioral interventions, medication, and other interventions have proven effective for many childhood disorders. Building relationships with schools and educators is a necessary part of any effort at combating child and adolescent behavioral health.

1. National Alliance on Mental Illness

2. Mental Health: A Report of the Surgeon General, 1999