

Barriers to Improvement

Students shared several reasons why youth may struggle with their physical, mental, and behavioral health.

Internal Factors:

- High stress levels and insufficient personal support were noted as factors that exacerbate mental health issues.

Access and Resource Barriers:

- Many mentioned that poor access to mental health services, limited community facilities, and a general lack of funding hinder improvements.

Peer and Cultural Influences

- Peer pressure, easy access to drugs, and even economic factors (e.g., more disposable income among certain groups leading to higher substance use) were noted.

Systemic Issues

- Poor communication between school administrators and students, regulatory hurdles (such as those affecting menu changes in schools), and a tendency for students to underreport problems (due to fear or stigma) further complicate matters.