



Madison Youth & Family Services
SUPPORT • COMMUNITY • EMPOWERMENT

Madison Survey Data

Working Together Towards Next Steps

MYFS is:

- Defined under State Statute as the “YSB” for Madison
- Member of the Connecticut Youth Services Association
- Town Department, approx 12 FTEs, plus interns and contractual staff
- Comprised of three subdivisions
 - Clinical Services (Outpatient and School-based)
 - Positive Youth Development
 - Community Support (MADE and Social Services)



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Recap of the youth survey:

- The survey was conducted on October 27th for students in grades 9-12 in close collaboration with DHHS and Central Office
- The survey was taken online in two parts the Search Institute Attitudes and Behaviors survey and our short Madison specific addendum survey
- The survey reflects the voluntary responses of the students and best reflects a quantitative “snap shot.” It is critical to understand its place in a broader context, in relation to other information we receive formally and informally from all sources

The data and a look beyond:

- Survey results have been processed and shared with numerous community stakeholders, including the MPS administrative council, DHHS PTO, DHHS faculty, MYFS Board, and community-wide via public zoom last February. Data is shared with students via various mediums throughout the year.
- The survey data and the shared experiences of our youth are not solely based upon their in-school experiences, but reflective of their lives across all domains.
- The questions and needs that rise from our youth are important for us all to consider. These are not merely challenges for the schools to address. We can not afford to think in silos.

Areas of Strength:

- Data reflects youth developmental assets are UP, exposure to substance use generally DOWN, especially among high school underclassmen
- High level of youth involvement, strong student leaders
- Societal trends to acknowledge mental health needs
- Madison community values strong school system, access to extracurricular programs, increasing the variety of community programs beyond sports, strong support for healthy kids/families
- Strong interfaith community and charitable organizations such as Madison Foundation and N2N
- Presence of active stakeholders, civic groups and organizations such as the Arts Barn, Scranton Library, Rotary Club, Jaycees, Chamber of Commerce

Areas of Concern:

- Youth Behavioral and Mental Health:
 - Risk for attempts of suicide
 - Continued high rates of anxiety and depression
 - Disordered eating
 - Stretched resources for help
- Substance Abuse
 - Increasing promotion of cannabis products with greater access and decreased perception of harm
 - Risk of opioid overdose due to prevalence of fentanyl
- Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment
- Youth Safety and Self-Esteem (particularly for our females)

How Do We Address Our Areas of Concern:

Developmental Assets:

- Developmental assets are the positive values, relationships, skills and experiences that help children and teens thrive.
- Building assets is a community approach that strengthens youth in the following areas:
 - Support
 - Empowerment
 - Boundaries and Expectations
 - Constructive Use of Time
 - Commitment to Learning
 - Positive Values
 - Social Competencies
 - Positive Identity

How Do We Address Our Areas of Concern:

Youth behavioral and mental health and substance abuse

▪ Prevention and Intervention

– For Youth:

- Information, education, empowerment
 - (Peer Advocates/Helpers, classroom QPR, health curriculum, assemblies, student-led events and initiatives)
- Opportunities for group dialogue
 - (Student Advisory, “Community Conversations”, Girl’s United, GASP, Pride)
- Access to support/counseling resources
 - (Variety or school-based counseling resources, MYFS)

– For Adults

- Support, educate and train adults who work or interact often with youth re mental health and suicide prevention
 - (MADE Coalition, QPR, PTOs)
- Promote healthy norms and coping among adults
 - (Asset Building)
- Access to programs and services for themselves and their children
 - (MYFS)

How Do We Address Our Areas of Concern:

Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment and Youth Safety and Self-Esteem (particularly for our females)

- **Prevention and Intervention: Shifting the culture**
 - Information, education, empowerment for all
 - Identifying and confronting the factors that reinforce unhealthy beliefs and attitudes towards sexuality, gender and relationships
 - **For Youth:**
 - Empower youth leadership
 - (Girl's United, Roots, student leaders)
 - Access to support/counseling resources
 - (MYFS, WFLC)
 - **For Adults**
 - Empower adults as role models
 - (Asset building)
 - Confront and push back on unhealthy messaging to youth
 - (Community Awareness events, parent groups such as PTOs, interfaith community, sports community)

Some Highlights This Year:

- Suicide Prevention-QPR Training (Community and ALL DHHS students)
- Girls United - Youth-led advocacy, training team captains, Anti-violence pledge
- New and growing programs: "Grub Club" and Polson Pride
- Collaborating on high school assemblies ("Jane Doe No More", "I am Dirt", "Power of Choice")
- Classroom trainings in elementary schools
 - "In Your Shoes", Mindfulness
- New outpatient clinical groups for social skills

A Look Ahead for Programming:

- Educational events for parents and community members
 - Potential topics:
 - Substance use (vaping, fentanyl, marijuana, trends)
 - Youth mental health
 - The impact of social media
 - Gender specific trends and interventions
- Continuing to find leadership roles, and advocacy opportunities for youth
- Public education on priority areas
- Continued collaboration with MPS and MPD

On the Horizon:

- Community-based “Youth Leadership Council”
 - Youth input to future Academy Community Center
- Collaborative development and support of DHHS Advisory, contribute as needed to curriculum development
- New Mentoring Program at Polson
- Community Conversations/Asset Building
 - Suicide Prevention
 - Violence Prevention
- Collaboration with Madison PD to integrate Social Work

Big Picture Trends:

- National
 - A social culture that tends to reinforce unhealthy behaviors that now include legalized gambling and use of marijuana products.
 - Continued political and economic divide
 - The impact of distancing over the past 2 years on social development
 - Continued unhealthy gender norms fueled by social media usage.
- Local
 - Shortage of housing, especially affordable housing
 - Continued financial strain on families recovering from the pandemic amid rising cost of living

Thank you!

Thank you for your partnership in not only data collection, but creating meaningful programs that tackle some of the biggest issues our youth are facing.



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