



THE STATE OF MENTAL HEALTH IN TEXAS

What is the state of mental health in Texas?

One in five adults in Texas experience a mental health condition each year, according to the [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#).

Two million of 5.2 million Texas children/youth (ages 6-17) had a mental health need in 2022, reports the Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute.

Like in many states, **mental illness is not yet detected and treated** — to the extent it is detected and treated at all — until 8 to 10 years after symptoms first emerge, according to the [American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry](#).

Mental illness is an illness of childhood

Half of all mental health conditions manifest by age 14. By young adulthood, 75% of lifetime cases have presented, according to [Kessler, R. C., Berglund, P., Demler, O., Jin, R., Merikangas, K. R., & Walters, E. E. \(2005\)](#).

The Meadows Institute reports **one in three Texas children** experience a mental health disorder in a given year.

Did you know?

75% of children with mental health issues who receive care today are treated in a primary care setting.

Source: <https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.focus.20170013>

61% children with depression receive no treatment.

Source: National Institute for Mental Health

60% of youth who receive mental health care begin receiving services through school.

Source: American Psychiatric Association



What is mental illness?

Mental illnesses are **discrete and treatable** health conditions involving functional impairment related to thinking, emotion, or behavior.

Examples of mental illnesses include anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, schizophrenia and other psychotic disorders.

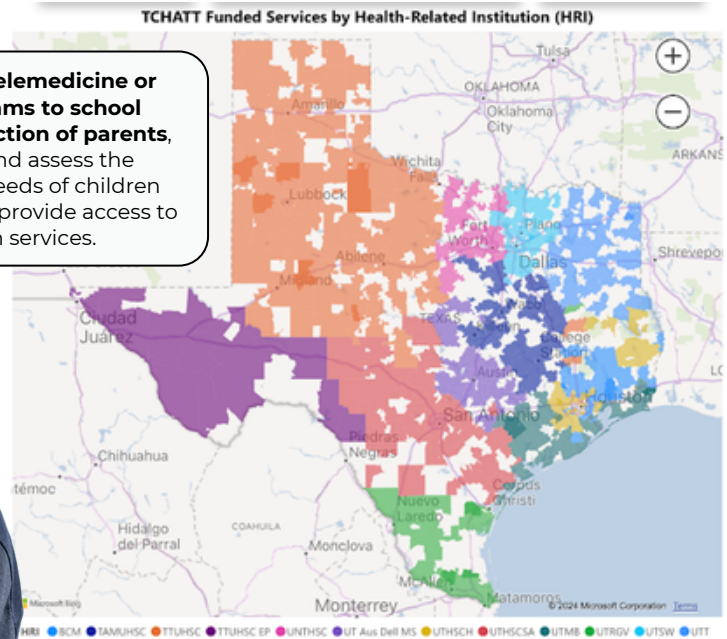


Mental health in Texas schools

In recent years, the Texas Legislature has worked to provide school districts with the mental health resources to connect families to care.

Texas Child Health Access Through Telemedicine is currently available on **6,611 school campuses, covering more than 4 million Texas students.**

TCHATT provides telemedicine or telehealth programs to school districts, at the direction of parents, to help identify and assess the behavioral health needs of children and adolescents and provide access to mental health services.



Source: www.tcmhcc.utsystem.edu/tchatt/

Mental illness and the Texas justice system

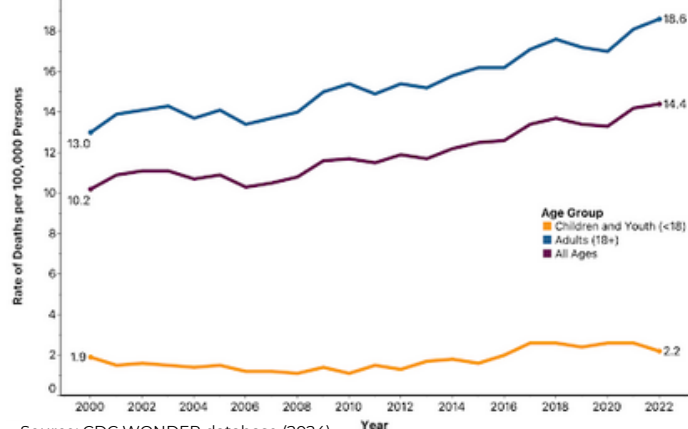
Texas jails and emergency rooms are filled with people who have lived with untreated mental illness for years, often cycling in and out of the justice system.

It is estimated that **34% of the inmate population in Texas have mental health disorders**, according to the [Meadows Institute](#).

Did you know? \$450 million in Texas county jail costs for individuals with mental illness, according to the [Meadows Institute and the Texas Conference of Urban Counties](#).

Mental illness and suicide

Deaths from Suicide in Texas by Age Group, 2000-2022



Source: CDC WONDER database (2024)

There were **4,368 lives lost to suicide in Texas in 2022**, according to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Health Statistics](#).

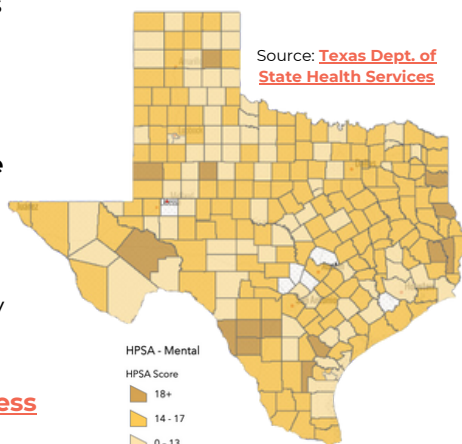
In 2021, **12.3% of Texas high school students** attempted suicide in the past year. Suicide is the **second leading cause of death** among youth ages 10-24, the [CDC reports](#).

A shortage of mental health professionals in Texas

According to the Texas Dept. of State Health Services, **246 of 254 Texas counties are Mental Health Professional Shortage Areas (MHPSAs)**.

Did you know?

There was one mental health worker for every 760 residents in 2023, according to [Mental Health America's Access to Care Data report](#).

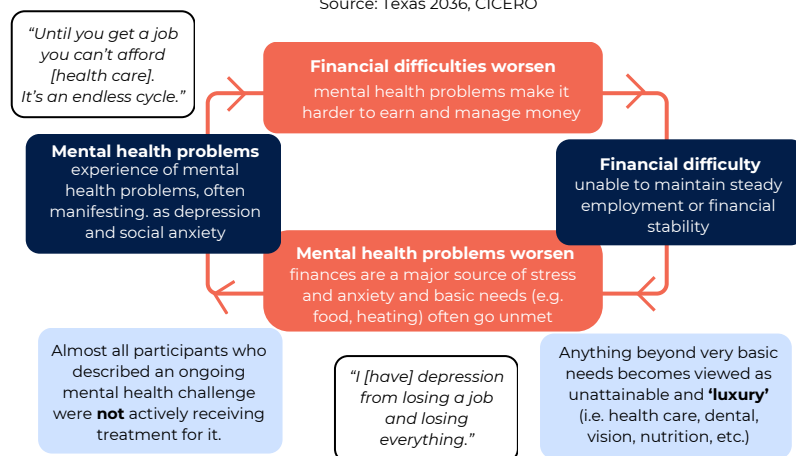


Mental health and Texas' uninsured population

According to Texas 2036's ["Who Are the Uninsured?" study](#), **34% of uninsured individuals postponed obtaining mental health care support**, and 37% postponed mental health care support for their children.

Identifying the Challenges: Mental Health

Source: Texas 2036, CICERO



The Texas Legislature on mental health

The 88th Legislature delivered a **record \$11.68 billion** for behavioral health, an increase of more than 30% from the previous session.

Leading up to the 88th Legislative Session, policymakers shared a strong resolve to do more for mental health in Texas, and state leadership made it a session priority.

Session	Medicaid Behavioral Health Budget	Total Behavioral Health Budget	Cumulative Increase	% Increase from 84th
85th (2017)	\$3.52 B	\$7.60B	\$1.01B	15%
86th (2019)	\$3.31 B	\$8.23B	\$1.64B	24%
87th (2021)	\$3.68 B	\$8.86B	\$2.27B	34%
88th (2023)	\$3.48 B	\$11.68B	\$5.09B	77%

Source: <https://mmhpi.org/topics/policy-research/texas-behavioral-health-rankings/>

Mental health resources

If you or someone you know are faced with a mental health crisis, contact one of the following helplines.

- **988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline:** Call or text 9-8-8.
- **2-1-1 Texas:** Call or text 2-1-1 or visit 2-1-1 Texas site.
- **Crisis Text Line:** Text 741741 (Available 24/7).
- **Texas Youth Helpline:** Call or text 1-855-882-6640.
- **Mental Health Texas:** Visit mentalhealthtx.org.