



Addressing Mental Health and Substance Abuse *In NC Schools*

2024 NCDPI State Superintendent Student Advisory
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Mental Health in the Classroom

A. Support Staff Well-Being

- Provide general training regarding social, emotional learning
- Offer therapeutic resources
- Valuing staff input

B. Promote Mindfulness

- Offer mindfulness activities to reduce bias
- Regularly offer said opportunities

C. Increase Student's Mental Health Literacy

- Use peer-led modeling programs
- Deliver a classroom-based mental health education curricula
- Help-seeking skills learned in the community and school

D. Promote Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Learning

- Provide classroom instruction focused on building social skills and emotional development
- Implementing crisis teams
- Open dialogue for more learning opportunities

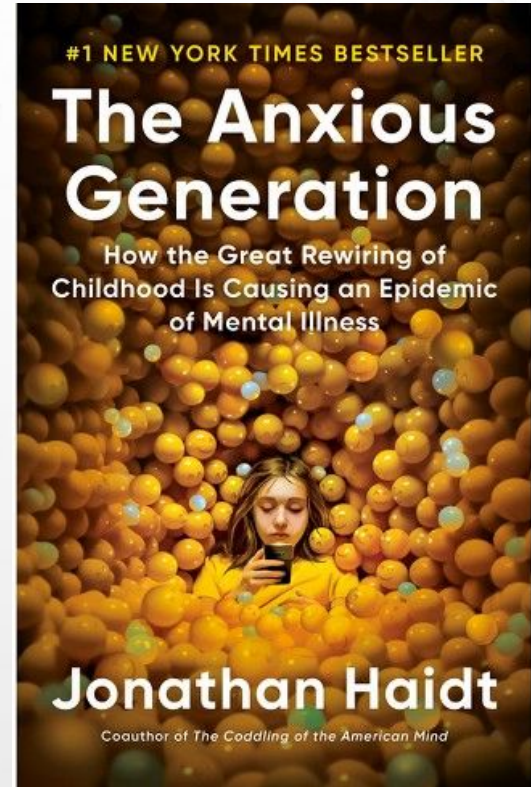
E. Acceptance

- Promote acceptance and understanding in the classroom among peers and staff
- Celebrate diversity and differences
- Group discussions

Intriguing Resource:

Four solutions proposed in *The Anxious Generation*:

1. No smartphones before High School
2. No social media before 16
3. Phone-free schools (esp. k-8)
4. More unsupervised play and childhood independence



Jonathan Haidt is a #1 New York Times Bestselling Author, obtained his PhD in social psychology and taught at the University of Virginia for sixteen years.

A large contributor to poor mental health in teens is substance abuse.

Substance Abuse:

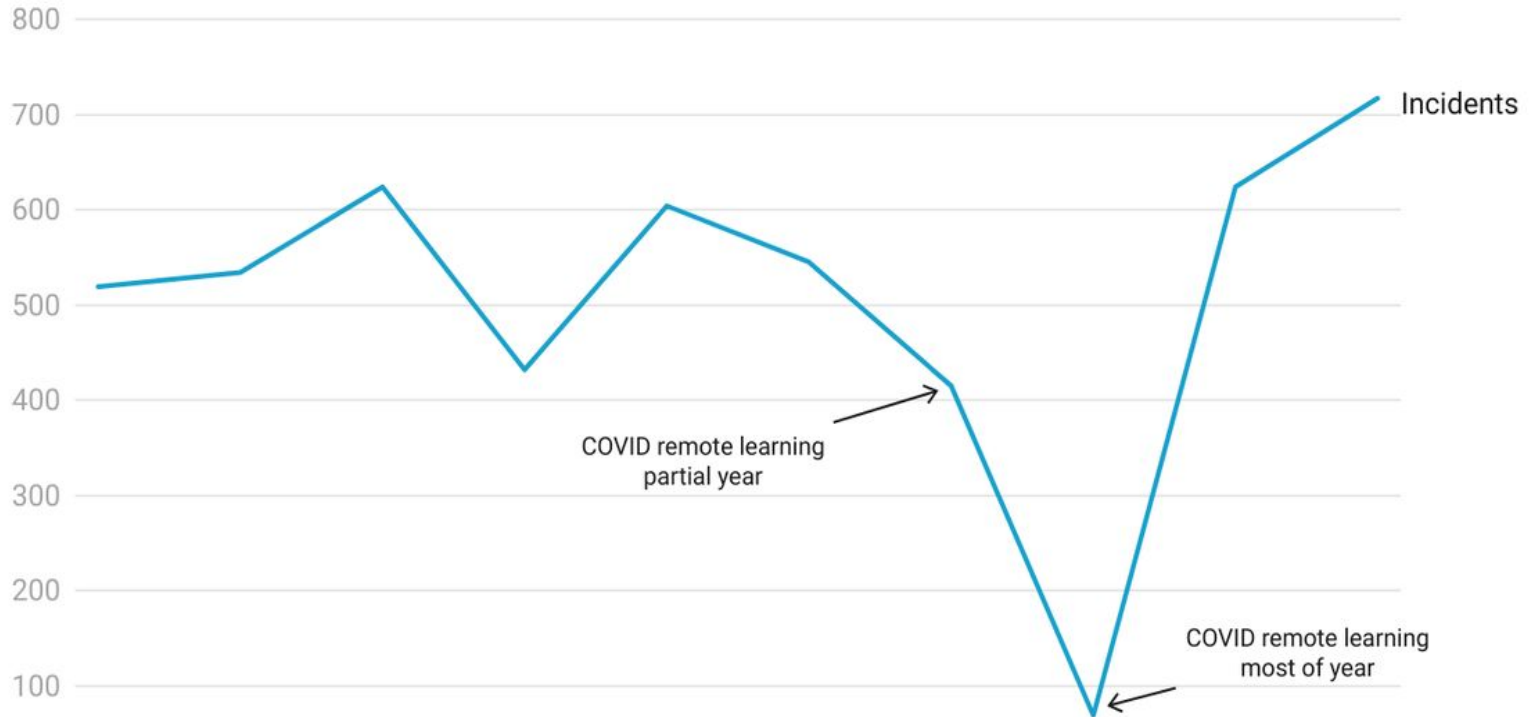
According to the National Center for Drug Abuse:

- Drug use went **up 61%** among 8th graders between 2016 and 2020.
- **2.08 million** (8.33%) of 12 to 17-year-olds nationwide report using drugs in the last month.
- **62%** of teenagers in 12th grade have abused alcohol.
- **50%** of teenagers have misused a drug at least once.

These statistics are concerning.

Total drug incidents reported across CMS

10-year data for reported incidents in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools involving illegal drugs.



Data obtained by The Charlotte Observer via CMS.

How does drug use affect mental health?

- Mental health problems such as depression, developmental lags, apathy, withdrawal, and other psychosocial dysfunctions frequently are linked to substance abuse among adolescents.
- Substance-abusing youth are at higher risk than nonusers for mental health problems, including depression, conduct problems, personality disorders, suicidal thoughts, attempted suicide, and suicide.
- The use of drugs has been shown to interfere with short-term memory, learning, and psychomotor skills. (Bureau of Justice Statistics).

Peer Pressure

- Peer Pressure/Societal “norms” are also a factor that affect mental health concerning substance abuse.
- Teens begin to experiment with illegal drugs, alcohol, and nicotine products at an early age in order to “feel cool” or “fit in”.
- Behavior practiced by adolescents that puts their health at risk will extend into adulthood.

How does this affect academics?

Studies have shown that **there is a clear link between** alcohol/drug abuse and academic failure.

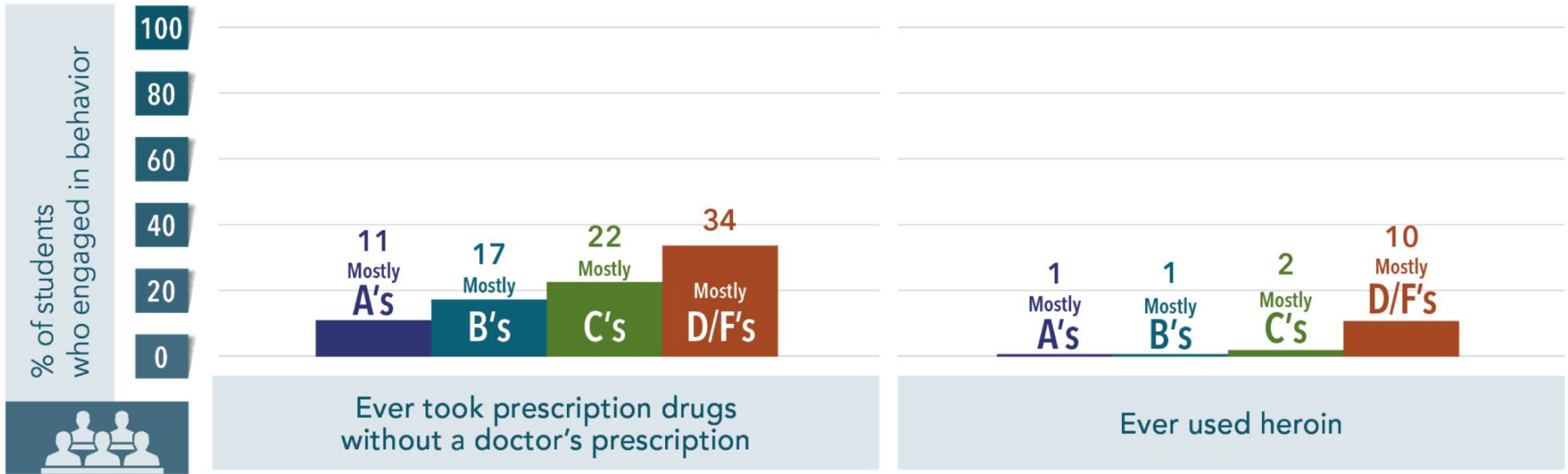
Those abusing substances are known to **miss school more** frequently and **struggle to focus** in class.

- Lower grades
- Poor attendance
- Increased likelihood of dropping out before graduation

FIGURE
1B

Drug Use Behaviors, by type of academic grades earned

- United States, Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2015



How can schools intervene?

Creating a Early Intervention/Wellness Team

Every staff member should know the warning signs of substance abuse and the protocols for intervention.

- Designate several administrators as the “Wellness Team”
- **Train them** in strategies that add a layer of prevention and intervention (option for free training with SPRC)
- Look for **warning signs** such as mood changes, academic problems, a “nothing matters” attitude, and physical/mental changes

What Can Help?

Narcan in all schools in NC

- Overdose deaths in **North Carolina increased by 22% in 2021, with 4,041 lives lost**—the highest number on record.
- Fentanyl, **involved in over 77% of these deaths**, highlights the critical need for Narcan (naloxone) to reverse opioid overdoses.
- NCDHHS has distributed over 719,000 units of naloxone to assist in overdose response efforts.
- NCDHHS's efforts include expanding mobile crisis services and the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, but ensuring Narcan's availability remains a top priority.
- Narcan is essential for saving lives, supporting recovery, and addressing the opioid crisis effectively in North Carolina.

“Naloxone in schools is a safety policy,” Walsh said. “We have AEDs in schools; we have EpiPens in schools; we have fire extinguishers in schools. Naloxone is not different.”

- Barb Walsh, founder of Fentanyl Victims Network of North Carolina

Wake County Naloxone Implementation

- The Wake County School Board recently approved a new policy surrounding use of Naloxone
- Their new policy requires at least three staff members learn how to use Narcan however its does not guarantee Naloxone at every school and it is also not required at activities held off school grounds
- We value Wake County's proactive approach to combating drug use and overdoses in public schools, however without the presence of Naloxone in every public school this policy is ineffective

American Association of Anesthesiologists (ASA)

“[The] ASA is very proud of its support for equitable community access to naloxone, a life-saving medication that can reverse the effects of an illicit fentanyl overdose and prevent deaths when delivered in a timely manner.”

- Brian Reilly
ASA Chief Executive Officer, MBA, CAE

Legislation/Policy Changes

- Naloxone training for minimum 2 administrators per public school
- Naloxone doses (2) for all public schools in NC*
- SPRC training for administrators

*replaced as used

Bill Summary

2023-2024 General Assembly

Committee:

Introduced by:

Analysis of:

Overview: *House/Senate Bill X would do the following:*

- *Implement a statewide partnership to provide training in Naloxone use to administrators in all PSUs*
- *Provide Naloxone doses in all public schools in North Carolina*
 - *Fund program and dosage through a deal to produce Naloxone within the state with EMERGENT, a large Narcan producer, and the Steve Rummier Hope Network for free training.*
 - *Alternatively, apply for the Free Narcan Nasal Spray High School Program through Emergent Devices, Inc,*
- *Implement a partnership with the Suicide Prevention Resource Center, referred furthermore as SPRC, to provide free training on suicide prevention and mental health support to administrators and educators.*
- *Recurring Cost: Total \$110,000 every three years to replace on expiration, \$55,000 to replace dosages that are used.*

CURRENT LAW:

Budgeting for New Policy

2,500 (public schools) x \$44 per package of 2 doses = \$110,000

2,500 (public schools) x \$0 per certificate of completion (2 per PS) = \$0

Gross Recurring Total: \$110k

Free Narcan Nasal Spray High School Program:

All U.S. public and private schools are eligible to receive 4 FREE doses of Narcan Nasal Spray by applying on Emergent BioSolutions' website.

If this strategy is used, the cost of implementing Narcan in public schools would be \$0.

“The healthy
development of
adolescents assures a
healthy society in the
future.”

Thank you for taking the
time to listen to us!

Citations:

<https://www.ncdhhs.gov/sn-annual-report-2022-2023/download?attachment>

<https://www.fda.gov/drugs/drug-safety-and-availability/fda-announces-shelf-life-extension-naloxone-nasal-spray#:~:text=Today%2C%20FDA%20is%20announcing%20that,%2Dyears%20to%204%2Dyears>

<https://www.wunc.org/news/2024-05-22/wake-county-school-board-approves-naloxone-policy-raises-meal-prices>

<https://www.ncdhhs.gov/news/press-releases/2023/02/21/north-carolina-reports-22-increase-overdose-deaths>

<https://drugabusestatistics.org/teen-drug-use/>

https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/health_and_academics/pdf/DASHFactSheetDrugUse.pdf

<https://sprc.org/training/>

<https://www.drugtopics.com/view/walgreens-to-start-selling-its-own-otc-naloxone-nasal-spray>

<https://www.fda.gov/drugs/drug-safety-and-availability/fda-announces-shelf-life-extension-naloxone-nasal-spray#:~:text=Today%2C%20FDA%20is%20announcing%20that,%2Dyears%20to%204%2Dyears.>

<https://investors.emergentbiosolutions.com/news-releases/news-release-details/emergent-biosolutions-narcanr-nasal-spray-launches-over-counter>

Links:

Meeting Notes - https://docs.google.com/document/d/1kaMaw3wsACFv7_OqJOwAUCI6dvSovVfZOlan9rFgzI/edit?usp=sharing

Google Form -

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdUYrbEC4U64gLiJM-8MEgyjQxG6D0-Gv8gKUhIE50AsOSYCC/viewform>

Past Presentation -

<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1Ti8hmyjULjZsfR8f59PfDDhIiDrqJ6ZvgtoNAVH6Z8M/edit?usp=sharing>

Youth Risk Behavior Survey-

https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/data/yrbs/pdf/YRBS_Data-Summary-Trends_Report2023_508.pdf

Working on Legislation -

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1h1KsYHmZyIbPcsTQFwOZIVluO_XTreWsR8SpNBz06BI/edit?usp=sharing

Script -

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1zKcN27vqQxZiv3nZi1QzgFWwfNAI5f47H8ZdqXcfGdA/edit?usp=sharing>

Copy of Slides if we feel like deleting:

<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1ZioKB3XU87CMoc2FTpOwb8YAucN4CSgFT5ppFoyPfFA/edit?usp=sharing>

Narcans Summary Doc -

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/16dkIIRvo-iR7K5F3snXFTnaSIFc9DT0RQAvuYwpiApA/edit?usp=sharing>

NCDHHS Brochure - <https://www.ncdhhs.gov/sn-annual-report-2022-2023/download?attachment>