Mental Health Campaign

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GOALS

• **Create a sense of urgency and caring to** tackle the social and emotional wellbeing of our students.

• **Reduce the stigma associated with mental health** so that conversations that include seeking help become normalized.

• **Raise awareness of the early signs** of students experiencing social-emotional pain/distress and how to effectively respond and connect to quality support.

• **Reduce the incidence of suicide** and suicidal ideation

• **Promote improvements in overall wellbeing, kindness, and respect for one another.**

• **Build support for and commitment** to expand and invest in efforts to improve access to quality and affordable behavioral health services
PROJECT PROGRESS

Ask Me What’s Up was designed as the first phase of a community initiative to address the growing mental health epidemic facing students in Charlotte-Mecklenburg.

2019
• Focus Groups with 600+ students, teachers, parents, & counselors
• 4 middle and 5 high schools

2020
• The world stopped! Trauma was experienced by many
• 2 Focus groups (40 students & 20 counselors)

2021
• Strategic Planning
• Fundraising
• Pilot Development
• Launch of Awareness Campaign
Previous

**REPORT FINDINGS**

**Students**
- Academics was the #1 Stressor
- Confidentiality was a large barrier to seeking help
- **Recommendation:** "We want to talk more!"

**Parents**
- Parents were unaware of available resources in schools or community
- **Recommendation:** Increase access to affordable therapeutic and social services

**Teachers**
- Teachers did not feel equipped to address student mental health needs
- **Recommendation:** Training to understand mental health & tools for personal self-care

**Counselors**
- Spend more time completing paperwork than counseling
- **Recommendation:** Proactive work with parents and students

**COVID Impact**

- 40 Students
- 95% believed counselors were accessible but felt uncomfortable talking with them
- **Stressors:** Remote-Learning, Lack of Social Activities, COVID exposure, Masks, College Admission Process
- **Positive Impact:** Feeling less pressure and having time to self-reflect
- **Recommendation:** Create ways to listen to the needs of students individually or in groups
Future of #MentalHealth

Relevant Facts

- 1 in 5 U.S. adults experience mental illness each year
- $1T How much depression and anxiety disorders cost the global economy in lost productivity each year
- +50M "#mentalhealth" hashtags YTD
- %↑ Search relevance of mental health related topics on Google

#mentalhealth #mentalhealthawareness #mentalhealthmatters #mentalwellness #mentalhealthsupport #mentalhealthadvocate #mentalhealthrecovery
Future of #MentalHealth

Relevant Facts

- Youth form online relationships to connect with others using social media
- Few have social contacts in the offline world causing them to experience high rates of loneliness
- 47% reported using online platforms weekly to feel less alone or less isolated

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Future of #MentalHealth

We consider three unique features of online platforms that may offer benefits for individuals living with mental illness.

These include:
(1) Facilitating social interaction;
(2) Increasing access to a peer support network;
(3) Promoting engagement and retention in services.
THANK YOU

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