

# PORTAGE YOUTH ON: MENTAL HEALTH



By the numbers.

Data collected via online surveys in the Spring of 2022 by Communities Building Youth Futures. This survey was filled out by 151 local youth.



3 in 4 youth said that the pandemic negatively impacted their mental health



Only 1 in 3 youth said their mental health is good



Only half of youth said they know where to go if they want help for their mental health.



49%

Almost half of respondents have accessed mental health supports.

The most common types of supports include: therapy/counselling, support groups and interventions from a family doctor



91% of youth know someone who struggles with their mental health.

Only 41% of youth said that mental health services were available when they needed them.

Only 11% of youth agree that our community has enough mental health supports.

72% of youth say they have someone they trust to talk to about their mental health.

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## Experiences accessing services

4 in 10 youth said that services were available when they needed.



Only 3 in 10 youth found it easy to access services.



Only half of youth said that the services met their needs.



Here's what youth wanted to share about their thoughts on Mental Health in our community:

"Mental health is becoming much more discussed versus shamed, so I feel that we need a bigger source of resources for all those who are reaching out."

"People don't want to wait when they are mentally hurting, they need help at that moment- the time frame and access is a huge issue in our community and the surrounding areas as well."

"We need more resources so there is no wait list because if we need help we need in now and not in 4 months."

"I believe Portage has mental health services, but they seem to be hidden. Nobody really knows where to go.... I believe there are resources in Portage but we need to do a better job on advertising these places and making them work together."



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We asked: "If you could create a new mental health program, service or resource for our community, what would it be?"

Here's what youth answered:

"I'd like to see infographics about local mental health supports – easy-to-digest, how-to guides for utilizing local programs for myself or to send to friends. Everything mental health is so overcomplicated, when I am in crisis, I want digestible information quickly."

"A program that would offer a weekly meetings for people to drop in and learn about how to cope with anxiety and depression. It could be held in a community building so that everybody feels welcome open to attend."

"I would create an outlet for people such as a weekly community walk, run, pot luck, etc."

"To provide areas with limited access to mental health resources to have mobile crisis vans respond to their communities not just over the phone but in person."

"I would like a program that is outdoors and with many engaging activities to help learn ways to deal with stress in nature."

"It would be one that involves culture and land based teachings. Talking with elders/medicine people."

"More access to mental health resources implemented in school curriculums and help build awareness about mental health especially in smaller communities."

"Free unlimited counselling accessible immediately to anyone and everyone that wants it, reimbursement for private counselling if public if not available in a timely matter, more than 1 psychiatrist in the community. Mental health walk in at the hospital, where you can go and speak to a trained professional if you are in crisis. I want mental health to be taken as seriously as cancer because it is."

"Anonymous Meetings. Some people are scared to speak to someone and sometimes feel uncomfortable to talk face to face. It may be because they're scared or are pressured to do so. Creating an anonymous online meeting or a place where people can write their feelings out and reach out to someone can help them feel safe and wanted."