



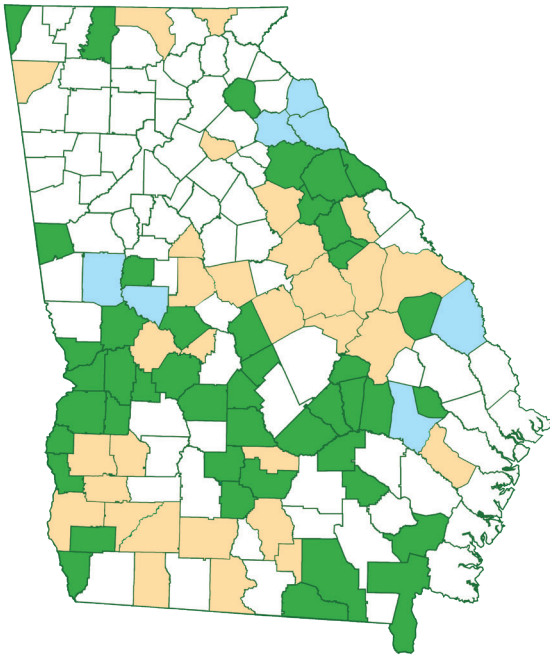
Nationally, 2 in 10 children have one or more emotional, behavioral, or developmental conditions.¹ Undiagnosed, untreated, or inadequately treated conditions can result in poor immediate as well as lifelong outcomes, including significant impact to a child's education. Children with Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), autism, or developmental delays are **twice as likely to be chronically absent from school** compared to kids without these conditions.²

The Youth Behavioral Health Landscape in Georgia

Georgia Kids in Crisis

- In Georgia, **suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death** among youth ages 10-17.³
- **48%** of children ages 3-17 struggle to or are not able to access needed mental health treatment and counseling.⁴
- **Approximately 70% of youth** in Department of Juvenile Justice long-term facilities have a mental health diagnosis severe enough to require ongoing treatment.⁵

Accessing Behavioral Health Services in Georgia



When looking at Georgia's counties:

90 do not have a licensed psychologist⁶

53 do not have a licensed social worker⁷

45 do not have a licensed psychologist **OR** a licensed social worker⁸

- Orange: Counties without a licensed psychologist
- Blue: Counties without a licensed social worker
- Green: Counties without both

The Role of Schools

Schools often serve as the primary point of access to behavioral health services and supports.



Social Workers^{9, 10, 11}

What We Have:

1 for every 1,986 students

What We Need:

1 for every 250 students



School Psychologists¹²

1 for every 2,137 students

1 for every 500 students



School Nurses¹³

1 for every 919 students

1 for every 750 students

Why We Need Behavioral Health Services

Untreated behavioral health conditions in children and adolescents can lead to:^{14, 15}

- Drug and alcohol abuse
- Low educational attainment
- Violent or self-destructive behavior
- Lower rates of employment in adulthood
- Poor physical health (immediate and long term)

Policy Recommendations

- ✓ Sustain and expand support for the Georgia Apex Program to continue advances in school-based mental health.
- ✓ Ensure full implementation of the Behavioral Health Care Workforce Database and develop strategies to address identified provider shortages and diversify the workforce.
- ✓ Allocate more funding to strengthen crisis support and intervention services, including continued implementation of 988 and mobile crisis services for children and adolescents.

What's Next?

We need to fully implement Georgia's comprehensive three-year [System of Care State Plan](#)* for child and adolescent health and support the work of Behavioral Health Innovation and Reform Commission to develop policy which can improve children's behavioral health outcomes.

*Read Georgia's System of Care State Plan at: <https://dbhdd.georgia.gov/document/meeting-presentation/soc-state-plan-2020-updated81120pdf/download>.



References for Crisis in Child and Adolescent Behavioral Health

Suggested citation: Voices for Georgia's Children. (2023). Fact Sheet: Crisis in Child and Adolescent Behavioral Health. Voices for Georgia's Children. <https://adobe.ly/3sUtzdS>.

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