

Maryland Libraries Youth Services Mental Health Survey 2024

Response Summary

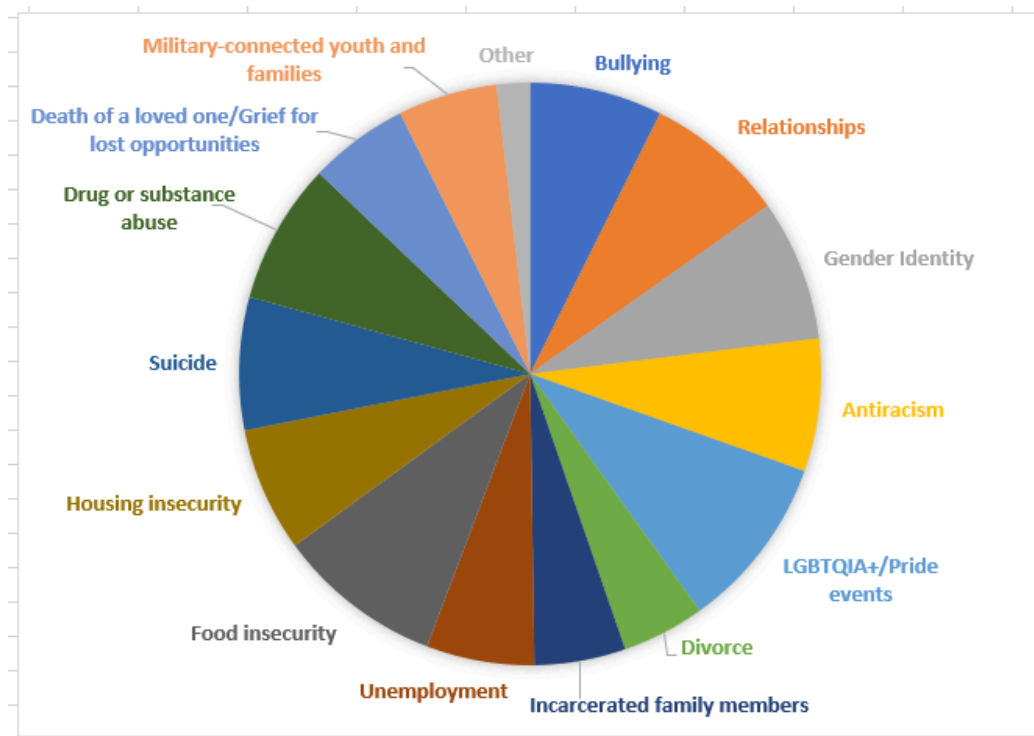
In August 2024, the Maryland State Library Agency (MSLA) conducted a survey of the state’s 24 public library systems to learn more about their services to youth in the area of mental health. All 24 library systems responded to the survey.

Key Findings

- All of Maryland’s 24 public library systems offer youth and mental health programming in their branches.
- Maryland public library systems reported more than 2,000 programs specifically directed toward youth mental health over the past year.
- 79 % of library systems described training offered to their staff to address de-escalation or trauma-informed response to help build relationships with youth and customers of any age.
- Five library systems offer youth programming in at least one of their mobile units.
- 28% of library systems* offered programming for Teen Mental Health Month this year.

* Several other library systems provide programming that addresses teen mental health throughout the year, choosing not to explicitly offer it at a certain time of the year or label it as such.

Public Library Programs on Youth Mental Health Topics



Program Examples

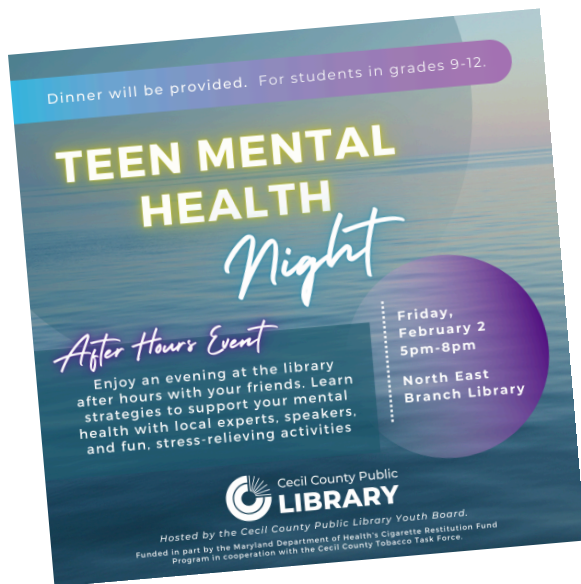
Programs offered to support youth mental health during Teen Mental Health Month included therapy dogs, guest speakers, grief support groups, creative expression/journaling/art, self-care, yoga, quiet corners and stress balls. Library systems also have formed valuable partnerships with county health agencies, schools, hospices, meditation and yoga centers, and other organizations.

All Maryland library systems listed additional programs, spaces, resources, or services that support the mental health of all ages of youth. Some examples include sensitive-topic bookmarks, access to Night Room/calming spaces, check-ins with teens to see how they are, social workers in the library, hygiene resource centers, feedback boards, and sensory carts.



In Their Words

“We recognize libraries are a crucial part of our social infrastructure and are part of many collaborations in this work with presenters, partners, trainers, and most importantly youth themselves to enhance our branches as psychologically safe spaces.” - Anne Arundel County Public Library



“By providing evidence-based, trauma-informed Mental Health First Aid training for CCPL staff, community partner agencies, and members of the public, CCPL acts as a local leader in providing youth mental health information and support.” - Cecil County Public Library

“In addition to providing a safe and welcoming space for youth to connect, the library supports youth mental health through access to programs and services that provide opportunities to share, be heard and receive support.” - Enoch Pratt Free Library

“In addition to providing access to free resources, both print and digital, we offer a safe space in the library, programming that is relevant to their interests and needs, and we partner with many organizations who advocate for youth mental health awareness and

support.” - Frederick County Public Libraries

“Our library recognizes the impact of creating a welcoming environment through collections and programs for all of our patrons on mental health, including that of our youth.” - Worcester County Library