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Title

The Impact of Therapy in K-12 Public Schools on Students Personal and Academic Life

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The Impact of Therapy in K-12 Public Schools on Students Personal and Academic Life

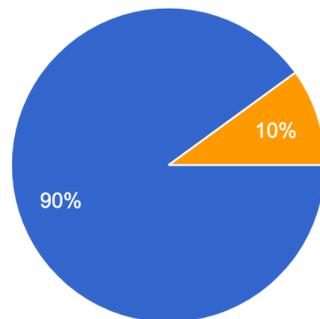
OVERVIEW

Therapy is a vital tool for getting on track with not only your personal life but your academic life as well. The current student-to-therapist ratio in California is 1 of every 998 students but the recommended ratio is 1 for every 500 students. Ever since the COVID-19 pandemic, psychologists have been in high demand, especially at schools, but the labor force is simply unavailable. I am interested in exploring the academic and personal benefits students gain when they are offered therapy through their schools. Does implementing counseling programs in k-12 schools help students of color close the achievement gap? While there are many educational barriers, students of color are most likely to be negatively impacted by educational policy changes, further contributing to economic poverty in marginalized communities. Suspension rates and dropout rates are about significantly higher for students of color, leading to disproportionate representation in higher education and high positions of power. When underrepresented individuals can take space in high positions of power, more resources are created to help relieve communities from poverty.

FINDINGS

I conducted a survey asking current and former students of k-12 public schools about their experiences and thoughts regarding the importance of therapy in schools. Based on a survey I conducted, the following pie chart shows about 90% of the students that have been surveyed

10 responses



- Yes
- No
- Maybe

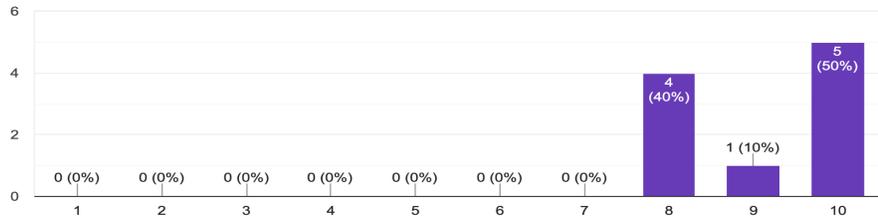
believe therapy can lead to a student's academic success.

The budget set aside for k-12 school psychologists is highly underfunded and goes to show the lack of understanding and urgency of the school's view toward students' mental health. Mental health has been a topic that has recently been

shed light. When surveyed, the graph chart below shows that students typically place school

psychologists in high importance on a scale of 1-10. There need to be more therapists provided in school that meet the recommended ratio.

on a scale of 1-10, how important do you believe it is for schools to provide and promote school psychologists?
10 responses



POLICY OPTIONS

I recommend two policy options that will help increase the number of psychologists provided

in schools. My first recommendation is to create a program that makes the job more desirable to meet the high demand. The program would provide a generous stipend of 5k and guaranteed placement in a school once the credentials needed are met.

Once there are enough employees to meet the demand, all schools shall require collaboration between teachers and psychologists that focus on students who seem to be the most vulnerable. Teachers can flag their students for behavioral issues, poor academic performance, or acting out and those students will be prioritized for counseling. The therapist will also be given the ability to track how their therapy sessions correlate with the student's academic success, providing them access to their grades during any period.

CONCLUSION

Education is an avenue in which students can have the opportunity to get themselves a higher economic status than the one they are born under. Oftentimes it is students of color who are often overlooked and left behind. The free access to therapy services that schools provide while also fostering more attentive and engaged relationships between teachers and students is essential to the academic success of students. Counselors will observe the impact of therapy on their clients' academic outcomes and provide valuable feedback to educators. It is often challenging for students who are struggling with mental health issues, such as depression, anxiety, trauma, or problems at home, to prioritize their academic performance. The policy options provided are a structured and comprehensive approach to address systemic challenges and work towards a more inclusive and effective education system. Schools can counteract the negative stigma, promote early intervention, and create a healthier and more inclusive environment for students to address their mental health needs.