

Nearly 1 in 3 US adolescents are getting mental health treatment

July 31 2024, by Robin Foster



In findings that suggest more young Americans struggling with mental health issues are getting the help they need, a new poll shows that nearly a third of American adolescents and teens received some sort of mental

health treatment in 2023.

That translates to over 8 million young people between the ages of 12 and 17 getting counseling, medication or another treatment, the [survey](#) from the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) found.

"We're pleased to see that more people received mental health treatment in 2023 than the previous year," SAMHSA Administrator Miriam Delphin-Rittmon said in an agency news release announcing the survey.

Among [adolescents](#), the biggest increase from 2022 was in the number of those getting mental health medications: Nearly 14% of those age 12 to 17 received such a prescription in 2023, up from 12.8% the year before.

SAMHSA officials said they saw the increase shows that mental health treatment is finally being destigmatized.

Rates of adolescents getting mental health treatment has increased [virtually every year](#) since 2009, though the agency noted that changes in how the survey was done were introduced in 2021.

In 2022, the survey [estimated](#) that 7.7 million youths ages 12 to 17 had received [mental health treatment](#) of some kind. The increase in 2023 amounts to more than 500,000 more young people getting treatment, SAMHSA noted.

Meanwhile, the rate of adolescents reporting a major depressive episode has remained roughly flat since 2021, at just over 18% of those ages 12 to 17, the survey found.

Psychiatrists classify a [major depressive episode](#) as a period of feeling

depressed for at least two weeks.

"The [report](#) shows us that we must remain steadfast in our efforts to address the mental health and substance use crises," Delphin-Rittmon said during a Tuesday media briefing, CBS News reported.

While trends in [substance abuse](#) did not see major shifts in the 2023 [survey](#), alcohol use did see a statistically significant drop.

In 2023, 47.5% of adults and adolescents—about 134.7 million Americans—reported drinking alcohol in the past month, down from 48.7% in 2022.

But rates of problem drinking were largely unchanged in 2023, with 21.7% reporting binge drinking and 5.8% reporting "heavy alcohol use." And around 10.2% of adolescents and adults reported drinking to the point where they met the criteria of alcohol use disorder.

More information: The CDC has more on [teens and mental health](#).

© 2024 [HealthDay](#). All rights reserved.

Citation: Nearly 1 in 3 US adolescents are getting mental health treatment (2024, July 31)
retrieved 6 August 2024 from
<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2024-07-adolescents-mental-health-treatment.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--