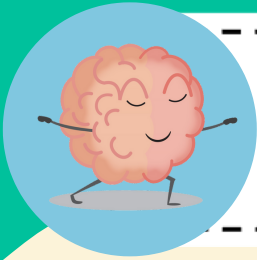


MENTAL HEALTH DAYS = EXCUSED ABSENCES



Did you know that, under a new California law, student absences for mental health purposes must be **excused** by public schools, no questions asked?

STUDENTS ARE STRUGGLING

In California, 45% of teens report having recently **struggled with their mental health**; 1 in 3 has recently experienced **serious psychological distress**. Suicide is the second-leading cause of death for teens in California.

MENTAL HEALTH = HEALTH



Mental health is a critical part of overall health and well-being. For teens, mental health **affects brain development, social and emotional skills, and academic success**. For students not experiencing chronic absenteeism, the occasional mental health wellness day can keep a student in a **healthy frame of mind**. It also teaches students to prioritize their mental health from an early age.

FOR MORE RESOURCES

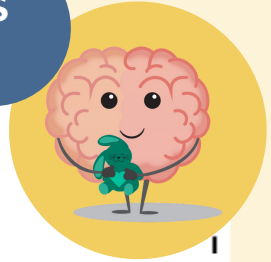
Including SafeSpace's Pocket Guide to Supporting Your Teen's Mental Health and advocacy info for your school, visit bit.ly/student-mental-wellness.



Community
Equity
Collaborative



WHAT LOCAL STUDENTS ARE SAYING



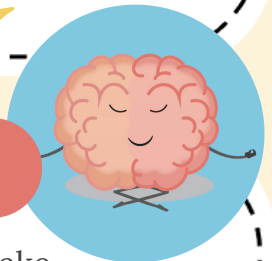
"Burnout and excessive stress **deserves a break** as much as a cold."

"It is a **much healthier choice in the long run** to be absent for one day than it is to push yourself and burn out faster."

"If one day I have too much anxiety or built up stress that I would not be able to **succeed in my school day**, that is just as important as when I am sick and have to stay home because I am throwing up."



WHAT YOU CAN DO



- Allow your student to take **occasional mental health days** when needed.
- **Let others know** about this change through your school's parent and/or student groups.
- Ask your **school's leaders** whether attendance policies mention mental health absences. Check out our [advocacy tools](#) to ensure policies are accessible to students and families.