



Youth Mental Health Crisis Is Impacting Schools and Teachers

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Maine schools are wrapping up their final days of the school year, a year where educators, students, staff and parents attempted to return to normal. Students returned to full-day instruction, with larger class sizes than they had experienced previously. Students were expected to come to school prepared, with their school supplies, snacks and water bottles packed in their backpacks. Expected to go back to what school has always been without the support or interventions in place to address the mental health crisis many students are experiencing.

Students are not only bringing their physical backpacks to school, they are also carrying invisible backpacks; filled with heavy items, often not visible at first glance, but impacting their school journey. These challenges have been present in our youth prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, now more than ever, in our local public schools educators, teachers, staff and parents are seeing the weight of what our young people are carrying.