

GENDER MATTERS

from the New Hampshire Women's Foundation

WHEN YOU KNOW THE FACTS, YOU CAN ACT!

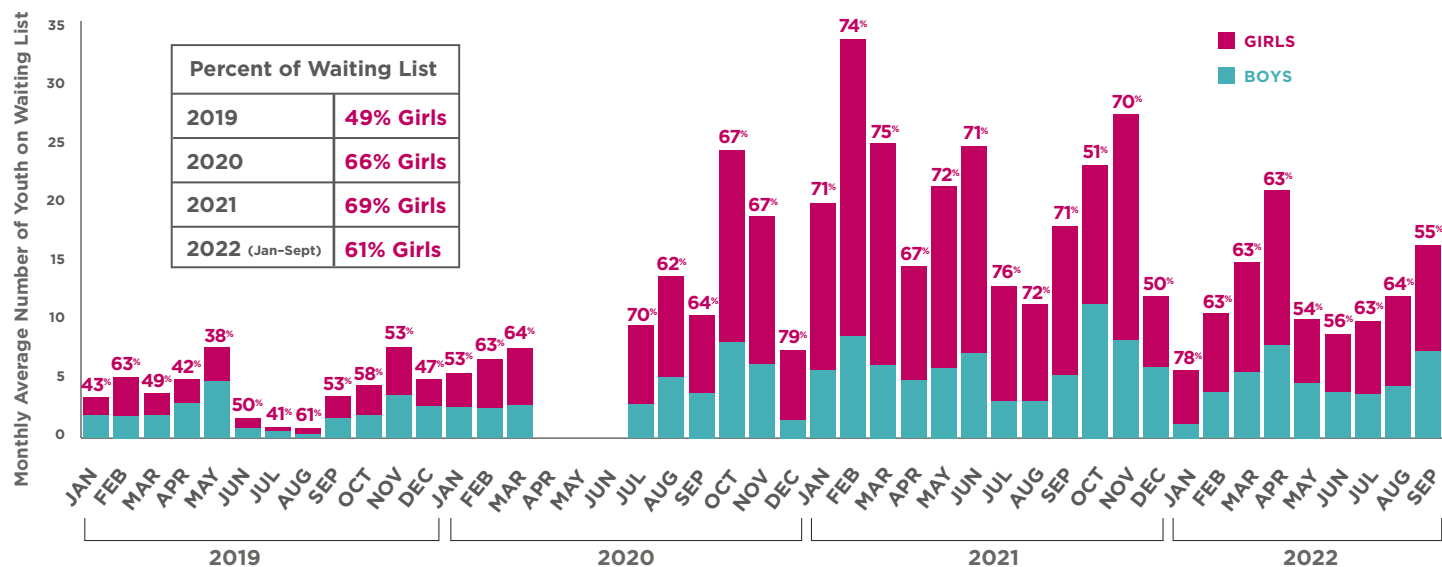
2023: ISSUE 1

New Hampshire Girls' Mental Health

In the past decade, New Hampshire's youth mental health has worsened, particularly for girls and girls of color.¹ During the COVID-19 pandemic, poor mental health and self-harm increased among youth, especially girls.²

GIRLS BECAME MAJORITY OF YOUTH PSYCHIATRIC INPATIENT WAITING LIST DURING PANDEMIC

New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services. (2022). *New Hampshire Youth Psychiatric Inpatient Waiting List Data Set, 2019 – 2022*.



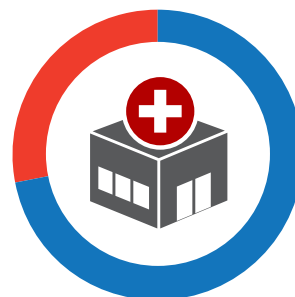
See "Page 1 Graph Note" in References for information on data collection methodology

Youth who seek psychiatric care from hospital emergency departments sometimes cannot be transferred because there are no beds available in psychiatric inpatient facilities. The number of youth in mental health crises seeking inpatient psychiatric care has increased significantly since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.³ In February 2021, the waiting list for youth inpatient psychiatric care reached its peak, with a daily average of 34 youth in emergency departments waiting for a psychiatric inpatient bed. **Before the pandemic, 49% of youth on the waiting list were female, but that number increased to 66% in 2020 and 69% in 2021.**⁴

In New Hampshire, 27% of girls and 13% of boys report self-harming (cutting, burning, etc.).⁵ **Of the 3,480 youth who were treated at a hospital for self-harm from 2016–2020, 72% were girls.**⁶

GIRLS ACCOUNT FOR OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF YOUTH SUICIDE AND SELF-HARM HOSPITAL VISITS

New Hampshire Health and Human Services Data Portal, Office of Health Statistics and Data Management, New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services, 2022.



Youth Suicide and Self-Harm Hospital Visits, 2016–2020

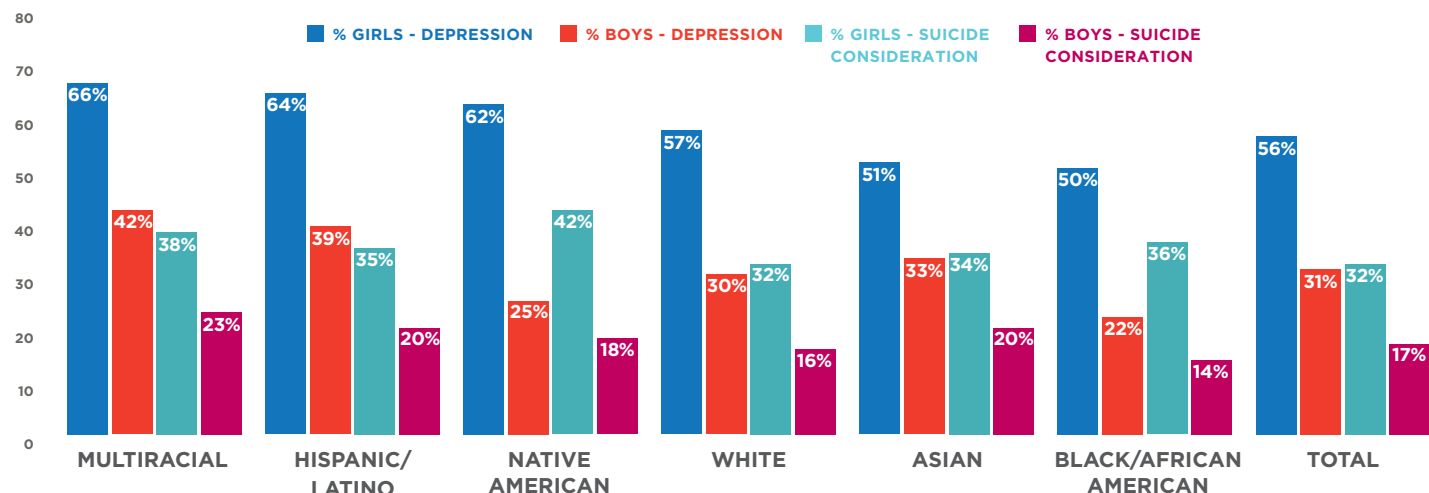
■ GIRLS
72%

■ BOYS
28%

The majority of New Hampshire girls experienced symptoms of depression during the pandemic and were nearly twice as likely to consider suicide than boys.⁷ **Many risk factors of poor mental health impact girls at higher rates than boys: bullying, sexual and dating violence, and negative body image.**^{8,9,10}

GIRLS FACE HIGHER RATES OF DEPRESSION AND SUICIDE CONSIDERATION THAN BOYS

New Hampshire Department of Education. "Youth Risk Behavior Survey", 2021.



RISK FACTORS OF POOR MENTAL HEALTH

New Hampshire Department of Education. "Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2021".



Electronic Bullying

Girls 29%
Boys 15%



Sexual Violence

Girls 14%
Boys 4%



Wish to Lose Weight

Girls 55%
Boys 31%

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Data

- NH DHHS and NH DOE should report, wherever possible, youth mental health aggregate data by gender identity, race, ethnicity, sexuality, geographic area, and insurance/Medicaid status.

Community Programming

- Increase mental health services in schools and invest in broader access to programming for girls to prevent and respond to bullying, sexual and dating violence, and negative body image.

Clinical Capacity

- Recruit and retain more mental health service providers across communities and leverage telehealth services to expand reach.
- Increase youth patient capacity across community mental health services, step-up and step-down care, and psychiatric inpatient beds.

RESOURCES

NH Rapid Response Access Point (988)

- 24/7 mental health service hotline
- Contact: Call/text 988 or chat online at www.NH988.com

NAMI NH

- Resources, information, and support for all mental health related needs
- Contact: 1-800-242-6264 or online at www.naminh.org

REFERENCES: For citation references and methodology please see NHWomensFoundation.Org/GM2023GirlsMentalHealth

Page 1 Graph Note: New Hampshire Hospital Waiting List was not collected between April 2020 to mid-July 2020 during a transition period when youth began transferring to Hampstead Hospital. The data was not collected on weekends or holidays. The data was collected as a male/female binary."