

Big rise in rates of depression among students



Rates of depression among college students have surged in the past decade. A new study from Boston University reports that the number of students experiencing anxiety or depression more than doubled between 2013 and 2021. They found

that the number of students suffering from anxiety jumped by 110 per cent. The number of students with depression skyrocketed by 135 per cent over the eight-year period of the study. In 2021, over 60 per cent of students met the criteria for having some form of mental illness. This is double the rate from eight years ago. Alarm bells are now ringing among mental health therapists. However, the number of students seeking therapy has fallen by 18 per cent.

Rates of depression among students had been on an upward trend even before 2013. Researcher Dr Sarah Lipson said: "College is a key developmental time. The age of onset for lifetime mental health problems also directly coincides with traditional college years." She said: "Living in a new setting, and away from home, can often create overwhelming and stressful circumstances." She added that 75 per cent of lifetime mental health problems will be present in people by the age of 24. Dr Lipson cited the COVID-19 pandemic, the loneliness of lockdowns, and school closures as factors that exacerbated this mental health crisis. Many students fear for their future, which they see as being increasingly full of uncertainty.

Sources: [nypost.com](https://www.nypost.com) / [dailymail.com](https://www.dailymail.com) / [foxnews.com](https://www.foxnews.com)

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

depression / decade / anxiety / skyrocketed / criteria / mental illness / alarm bells / trend / college / traditional / stressful / pandemic

True / False

- 1) Students at Boston University were the most depressed in the USA. T / F
- 2) The number of students with anxiety increased by 110% in eight years. T / F
- 3) Over 60% of college students have some form of mental health problem. T / F
- 4) Only 18% of college students have not seen a therapist. T / F
- 5) Rates of depression had been going down until 2013. T / F
- 6) A doctor said living away from home can reduce stress. T / F
- 7) Most people with mental health problems will have them before 24. T / F
- 8) Many students are worrying about an uncertain future. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. rates | a. indicators |
| 2. jumped | b. happens together |
| 3. criteria | c. searching for |
| 4. therapists | d. start |
| 5. seeking | e. leapt up |
| 6. key | f. riskiness |
| 7. onset | g. percentages |
| 8. coincides | h. worsened |
| 9. exacerbated | i. crucial |
| 10. uncertainty | j. psychologists |

Discussion

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) How stressful is going to college?
- c) How difficult is it to move away from home?
- d) How stressful is the COVID-19 pandemic?
- e) How does loneliness affect mental health?
- f) What are your biggest worries?
- g) How certain or uncertain is your future?
- h) What questions would you like to ask a mental health therapist?

Phrase Match

1. Rates of depression among college students
 2. the number of students experiencing anxiety
 3. students met the
 4. This is double the
 5. the number of students seeking
 6. Rates of depression among students had been
 7. Living in a new
 8. the loneliness
 9. factors that exacerbated this
 10. being increasingly full
- a. on an upward trend
 - b. of lockdowns
 - c. therapy has fallen
 - d. mental health crisis
 - e. rate from eight years ago
 - f. of uncertainty
 - g. have surged
 - h. setting
 - i. or depression
 - j. criteria

Discussion

- a) What do you know about depression?
- b) Why might students be depressed?
- c) How can we help people with depression?
- d) Why is so little understood about depression?
- e) How well does your country help people with mental health issues?
- f) What's the difference between depression and anxiety?
- g) Have you ever had anxiety or depression?
- h) Would you seek help if you were depressed?

Spelling

1. ugrdse in the past decade
2. the number of students experiencing xyeatni
3. more than dledubo between 2013 and 2021
4. ktrdcokesye by 135 per cent
5. over 60 per cent of students met the riptaice
6. the number of students seeking yaprteh
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8. directly nciecsido with traditional college years
9. Dr Lipson cetdi the COVID-19 pandemic
10. the slensoniel of lockdowns
11. school escroslu
12. drbteexeaac this mental health crisis

Role Play

Role A – Money

You think money is the biggest worry. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their worries aren't as big. Also, tell the others which is the least worrying of these (and why): health, crime or global warming.

Role B – Health

You think health is the biggest worry. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their worries aren't as big. Also, tell the others which is the least worrying of these (and why): money, crime or global warming.

Role C – Crime

You think crime is the biggest worry. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their worries aren't as big. Also, tell the others which is the least worrying of these (and why): health, money or global warming.

Role D – Global Warming

You think global warming is the biggest worry. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their worries aren't as big. Also, tell the others which is the least worrying of these (and why): health, crime or money.

Speaking – Worries

Rank these with your partner. Put the biggest worries at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- Money
- Health
- Family
- The future
- Global warming
- Crime
- Old age
- Social media