

## INTRODUCTION

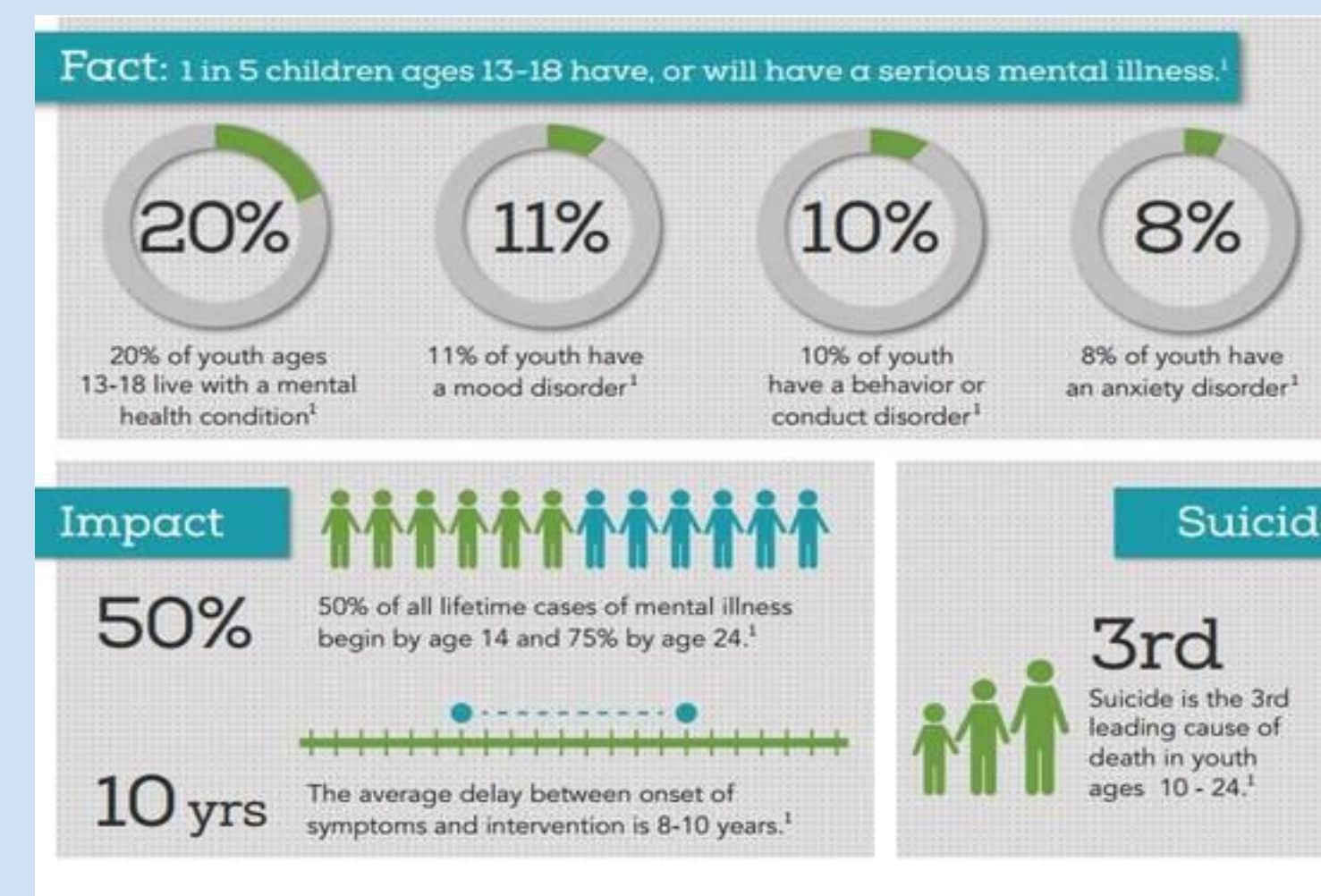
High school is by no means an easy time for adolescents. It's filled with heavy academics, stressful social scenes, and the anxiety of growing up. Many teens find themselves struggling with mental health disorders. These disorders affect mood, thinking, and behavior. Everyone goes through mental health concerns every so often, but a mental illness is when ongoing signs and symptoms affect a person's ability to function (Mayo Clinic Staff, 2015). How are kids able to thrive in their teen years if they are experiencing the pain and loneliness of suffering from a mental health disorder while trying to navigate the world of homework, tests, and friend groups? What are high schools doing to support students going through tough times?



## DATA AND FINDINGS

### What does each school offer?

School	Palo Alto High School	Castilleja	Sacred Heart Preparatory
What they offer for students dealing with Mental Health Issues	Trained counselors, psychiatrists, and therapists are available at all times in the school day. Also offers a wellness center.	Counseling office that is staffed by a middle school counselor who is 60% time, an Upper School counselor who is 50% time and myself. We are all trained therapists - There is someone available for counseling every day throughout the school day.	Trained therapists are available to talk at all times. Use an online booking method to create an easy schedule



## CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND NEXT STEPS

We live in an area where people are taking the mental health of adolescents very seriously. Each school has a guidance office with trained professionals to help when needed. Even though it was amazing that we have those places available, I still think there is a lot that could be improved.

### What could be improved?

In private schools, there is a lot more funding for these types of programs. One thing that was very resourceful is how Sacred Heart handled their appointments. A student who wants to talk to the head guidance administrator can either go in or book an appointment online. By making it easier and more accessible for students to book appointments, many possible barriers that teens may come across in their path to seeking help are lowered.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

### Background Research

Completed background research and paper.

### Interview

Asked each school a set of questions about what they offer to support students.

### Analysis

Compared each school's options.

## DISCUSSION, ANALYSIS, AND EVALUATION

- Suicide is the third leading cause of death in youth ages 10-24 (National Alliance on Mental Health).
- It can be challenging to spot the warning signs in a young adult struggling with a mental illness. It is easy to dismiss certain emotional experiences as part of adolescence.
- Schools and communities can make it easier for teens who are struggling to access support by creating physical spaces for teens to go to receive services or just to have some quiet time or a cup of tea.
- When teens have a place to go, it lowers the frequency with which loved ones have to face the daunting guessing game that is involved in trying to support the teen.
- At Palo Alto High School, students are lucky enough to have many options for places to go when they are not feeling their best selves.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS / REFERENCES

### Works Cited

- American Psychological Association. (n.d.). Teen suicide is preventable. Retrieved December 18, 2017, from <http://www.apa.org/research/action/suicide.aspx>
- Anderson, M., & Cardoza, K. (2016, August 31). Mental health in schools: A hidden crisis affecting millions of students. Retrieved November 9, 2017, from NPR website: <https://www.npr.org/sections/ed/2016/08/31/464727159/mental-health-in-schools-a-hidden-crisis-affecting-millions-of-students>