
STATE OF IOWA DEPARTMENT OF

Health AND Human

SERVICES

State of Iowa Youth Advisory Council

State of Iowa Youth Advisory Council



Our Team and Support Team



Bri Deason
Youth Development
Specialist
IYC & SIYAC
Coordinator



Kayla Powell
NYTD & Youth
Development
Coordinator



Steve Michael
Criminal & Juvenile
Justice Planning
Administrator



Tim Johnson
Juvenile Justice
Planning Coordinator





Zach Klopping
Mental Health
Committee Chair



Anika Yadav
Education
Committee Chair

History of SIYAC

Established in 2001 by Governor Tom Vilsack as a way for youth to inform legislators and policymakers on youth issues.

In 2009, SIYAC became a statutory council (aka became law) within the section of the Iowa Code (216A.140.8) under the umbrella of the Iowa Collaboration of Youth Development



State of Iowa Youth Advisory Council (SIYAC)



- Group of 21 youth, ages 14-20
- Written into Iowa Code §216A.140(8)
- Purpose: foster communication among a group of engaged Iowa youth and the governor, general assembly, and state and local policymakers regarding programs, policies, and practices affecting youth and families; and to advocate for youth on important issues affecting youth.



State of Iowa Youth Advisory Council 2024 Legislative Priorities

Mental Health in Schools

Modify Iowa Code §281-14.4 to implement Behavioral Health Resource (BHR) Coordinators in every Iowa middle and high school who will provide schools access to accurate mental health resources to support students and families. These duties can be assigned to an existing staff member.

Student Representation on School Boards

Support HF658, a bill authorizing boards of directors of school districts to appoint student liaisons to their boards. This bill would ensure school boards attention to students' needs as well as advance student engagement, civic education and overall community involvement.

School Substance Abuse Response

Amend Iowa Code §279.9 to include rehabilitation as an option for substance abuse response in schools, in addition to the already stated options of expulsion and suspension. This change would assist students in recovering from addiction.

For more information, contact
Lulu Roarick, SIYAC Chair
roaricklulu@gmail.com



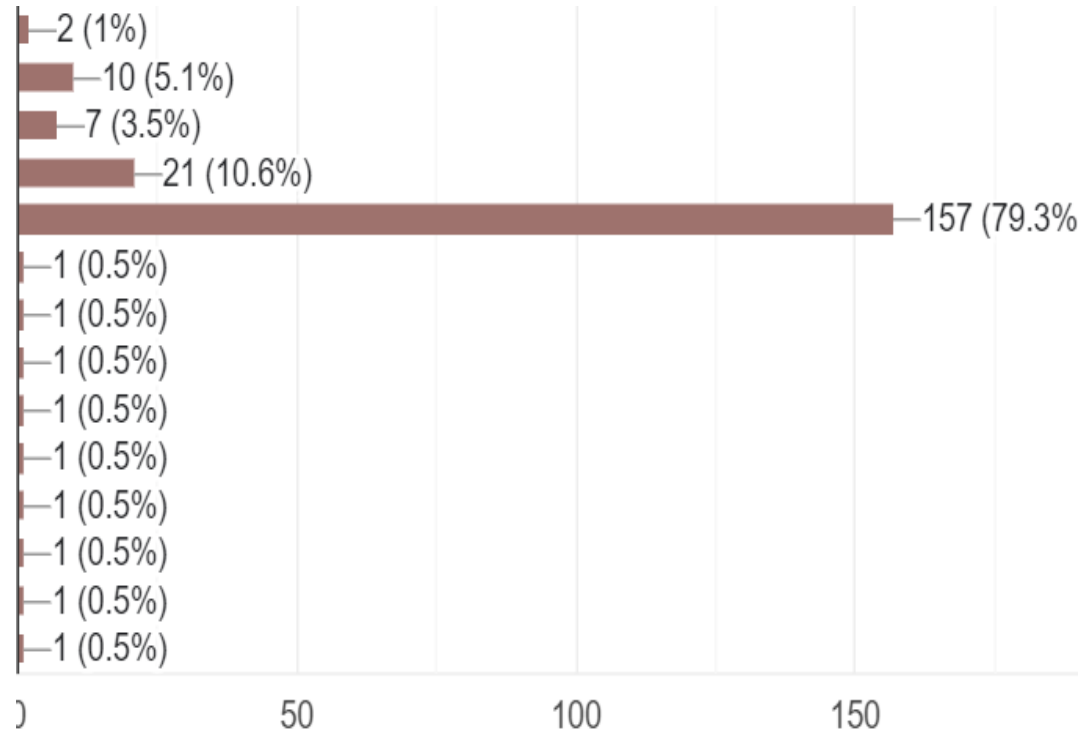
Youth Participatory Action Research Data

Location

- Ottumwa: 54 (27%)
- Iowa City: 36 (18%)
- Bettendorf: 12 (6%)
- Eldon: 10 (5%)
- Vinton: 6 (3%)
- Des Moines: 5 (2.5%)
- North Liberty: 5 (2.5%)
- Norwalk: 4 (2%)
- Dubuque: 2 (1%)
- Ankeny: 2 (1%)
- West Des Moines: 2 (1%)
- Earlham: 2 (1%)
- Davenport: 2 (1%)
- Other: 8 (4%)
- Altoona: 2 (1%)
- Ames: 2 (1%)
- Urbandale: 2 (1%)
- Sioux City: 2 (1%)
- Fort Madison: 2 (1%)
- Waukee: 2 (1%)
- Treynor: 2 (1%)
- Sigourney: 2 (1%)
- Cedar Rapids: 2 (1%)
- Oskaloosa: 2 (1%)
- Swisher: 1 (.5%)
- Dallas Center: 1 (.5%)
- Underwood: 1 (.5%)
- Cedar Falls: 1 (.5%)
- Keota: 1 (.5%)
- Cumming: 1 (.5%)
- Schaller: 1 (.5%)
- Coralville: 2 (1%)
- Urbana: 1 (.5%)
- Strawberry Point: 1 (.5%)
- Hull: 1 (.5%)
- Bellevue: 1 (.5%)
- Lowden: 1 (.5%)
- Rock Valley: 1 (.5%)
- LeClaire: 1 (.5%)
- Boone: 1 (.5%)
- Centerville: 1 (.5%)
- Fairfield: 1 (.5%)
- Blue Grass: 1 (.5%)
- Amana: 1 (.5%)
- Pleasantville: 1 (.5%)
- Blakesburg: 1 (.5%)
- Crescent: 1 (.5%)
- Decorah: 1 (.5%)
- Mechanicsville: 1 (.5%)
- Pandora: 1 (.5%)
- Shellsburg: 1 (.5%)
- Anamosa: 1 (.5%)
- Council Bluffs: 2 (1%)

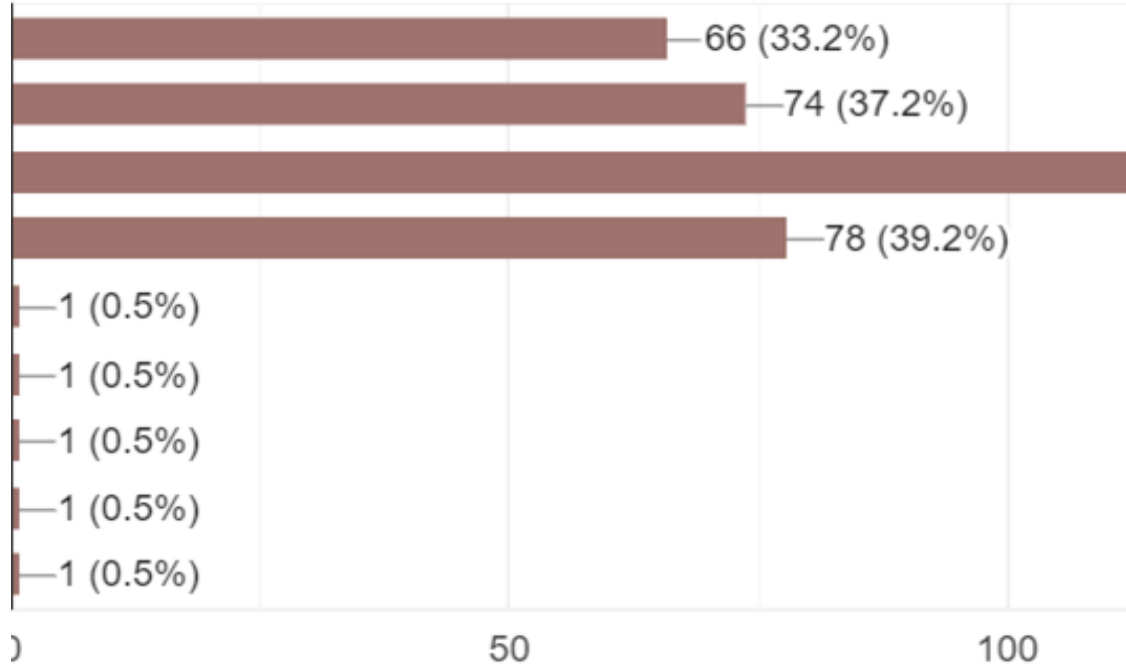
Mental Disorder

- Anxiety: 67 (33.3%)
- Mood: 28 (13.9%)
- Eating: 17 (8.5%)
- Personality: 10 (5%)
- None: 128 (63.7%)
- Unsure: 1 (.5%)
- Undiagnosed: 1 (.5%)
- Other: 1 (.5%)



Major Areas Impacted

- Environmental/Agriculture: 66 (33.2%)
- Public Health: 74 (37.2%)
- Education: 142 (71.4%)
- Equity Issues: 78 (39.2%)
- Criminal Justice: 1 (.5%)
- Economic Policy: 1 (.5%)
- Other: 2 (1%)

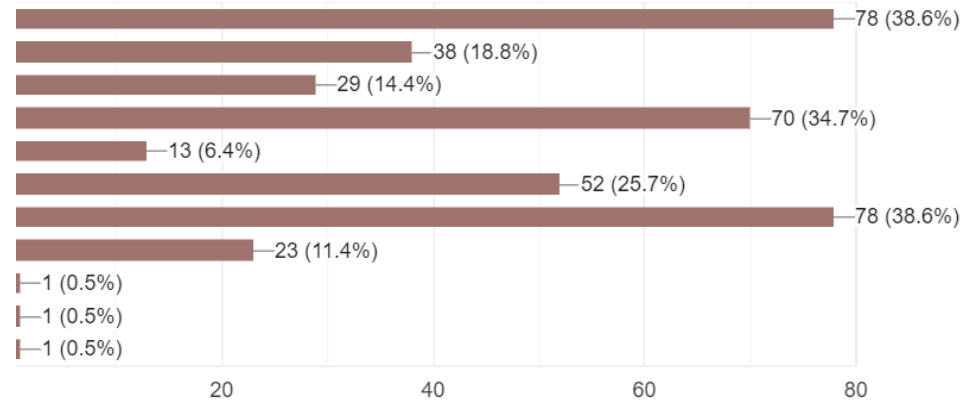


Change Themes

- Mental health/healthcare
- Gun control
- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion
- Environment
- Transportation
- Education/STEM
- Sex Education
- LGBTQ+ Rights
- Vaping, dugs, alcohol
- Period Products
- Civic Engagement
- Juvenile Justice
- Youth Voice
- Community Engagement
- Opportunity

Legislation Personal Impact

- **Book Banning: 78 (38.6%)**
- Parent Consent Pronouns: 38 (18.8%)
- Child Labor Laws: 29 (14.4%)
- **DEI Restrictions: 70 (34.7%)**
- Food Stamp Changes: 13 (6.4%)
- Parent Consent Classes: 52 (25.7%)
- Gender Affirming Care Ban: 25 (11.9%)
- Dress Code: 1 (.5%)
- Other: 1 (.5%)
 - Youth from California



Change for Iowa Youth



- “More mental health services, more support for LGBTQ+ communities.”
- “I’d like to see more trans rights and easier access to gender affirming care, as well as more available therapy for all in iowa youth in high schools.”
- “Mental health support”
- “Gun laws in the sight of youth to be limit, Mental Health for youth, Diversity emphasis for youth to look up too”
- “Education on Mental health”

Mental Health Position Statement

STATE OF IOWA DEPARTMENT OF
Health & Human
SERVICES

Behavioral Health Resource Coordinators

SIYAC MENTAL HEALTH COMMITTEE POSITION STATEMENT

CONTACT: ZACH KLOPPING | ZACH.KLOPPING@GMAIL.COM

Position:

The State of Iowa Youth Advisory Council supports adapting Iowa Code §281.14.4 to implement Behavioral Health Resource Coordinators in every middle and high school in Iowa. These coordinators would give schools access to accurate mental health resources without placing the monetary cost on them to hire more employees.

Current Situation:

The current state of adolescent mental health in Iowa reveals concerning statistics. According to the CDC, the suicide rate for adolescents aged 15-19 stands at 13.8 per 100,000, which is 34th among US States (1). The 2016 Iowa Youth Survey indicated that 13.5% of 8th graders and 16.9% of 11th graders seriously contemplated suicide (2). Shockingly, the 2021 Iowa Youth Survey reports a significant increase in these numbers, with 21% of 8th graders and 24% of 11th graders now seriously considering suicide. Additionally, the 2021 survey found that a notable percentage of students, 29% of 8th graders and 36% of 11th graders, reported feeling sad or hopeless in the last two weeks (3).

These findings are consistent with broader mental health concerns among youth. The Iowa Department of Education highlights that 1 in 5 children aged 13-18 has or will experience a serious mental illness (4). The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration notes a worrisome rise in the Major Depressive Episode rate among Iowa youth aged 12-17, increasing from 7% in 2004-2007 to 16.2% in 2016-2019 (5). Furthermore, the Health Resources and Services Administration reveals that 10.8% of Iowa children aged 3-17 are currently dealing with anxiety (6), and 4.8% are grappling with depression (7). These figures underscore the urgent need for comprehensive mental health support to address the growing challenges faced by Iowa's youth.

Rationale:

Iowa adolescents are experiencing extremely high rates of mental illness. These issues have a significant effect on both student's well-being and academic performance. A multitude of studies have proved this effect. One such study, a meta-analysis of 959 other studies, found that "When adjusted for socio-demographic factors, mood disorders, like anxiety and depression, were significantly related to school dropout"(8). Another, by Harvard University Professor

- Identify school staff member to serve as Behavioral Health Resource Coordinators
- Be the key person to provide resources to staff, youth, & families
- Be up to date with available resources

Past SIYAC Metal Health Work



Mental Health Committee:

Blythe Kelly
Karen Kawala
Kiran Marla
Kunal Chugh
Lily Glenn

Position Statement Title
By: Blythe Kelly

Contact: Blythe Kelly | Urbandale | blythekelly01@gmail.com

Position Statement:

The State of Iowa Youth Advisory Council supports that Iowa Code §256.11 be amended to include mental health as part of Iowa school's health education.

Position

I. It should be the position of the State of Iowa Youth Advisory Council, the voice of the Iowa's youth, to support an act to amend the Iowa education law to recognize a health education program is multidimensional and clarity that in health education there is a natural interrelationship between mental health and other forms of health education described in Iowa Code, §256.11.

Rationale

- I. According to Iowa Code §256.11, Iowa school districts recognize that health education has multiple dimensions, but mental health is not currently included in what shall be taught.
 - Describe the current problem, circumstance, or history briefly.**
 - This issue directly affects youth in Kindergarten through 12th grade.
 - Who does this issue directly affect?**
 - A. New York, Virginia, and Florida implemented mental health as part of their health education program.
 - Why should (designated Audience) support it? Essentially why is it a priority?**
- III. To educate Iowa students about mental health literacy, stigmas and myths, and increase knowledge of self-help seeking resources.
- IV. In Iowa, suicide is the second leading cause of death for youth over 15 (Suicide: Iowa). Over 90 percent of youth who die by suicide suffer from depression or another diagnosable and treatable mental illness at the time of their death.

*Recommended 2-3 paragraphs

SIYAC 2021-2022 Priority Areas

The State of Iowa Youth Advisory Council met in November to establish their priority areas for the year, dealing with Education, Environment, Health, Racial Equity, and Service.

Health

Working with schools and mental health organizations to improve mental health in Iowa schools and propose a position statement to introduce menstrual product availability into high schools.



Environment

Increasing public awareness and promote small scale environmental change by sharing a position statement that supports increased elementary education around the environment and recycling.



Service

Assisting in planning the group service project help with individual service projects, and make service opportunities more available for youth.



Education

Proposing a position statement to support the change of and innovation in the K-12 Education System and to invest in staff and student retention by investing in hands-on learning materials and project or opportunity based learning in classrooms.



Racial Equity

Increasing public awareness on issues relating to racial equity by creating a podcast.



The State of Iowa Youth Advisory Council (SIYAC) was created by Iowa Code § 216A.140(8) under the Department of Human Rights (DHR) "to foster communication among a group of engaged youth and the governor, general assembly, and state and local policymakers regarding programs, policies, and practices affecting youth and families; and to advocate for youth on important issues affecting youth".

SIYAC focuses on service and volunteering, along with creating opportunities for youth to get involved in their communities. All state bills pertaining to youth are also reviewed and discussed by the council. We encourage you to reach out for a youth perspective.



State of Iowa Youth Advisory Council 2017 Legislative Agenda

Expanding Youth Voting Rights - SF 61 & HF 167 - implement opportunities for youth to have a voice in primary decisions for all state officials as long as the voter will be 18 at the time of the election.

Recreational Land Creation- HF 335 - allow private land owners to open their land for public use in exchange for a property tax break of \$10 an acre, providing youth with better opportunities for recreational activities.

Online Driver's Education- mandate the implementation of an online option for current driver's education curriculum available to all students.

Expanding 1% Sales Tax for Education- SF 9 - extend the 1% SAVE (Secure Advancement Value Education) tax that is currently issued solely to Iowa's public schools from 2008 to 2029 until 2049.

Radon Testing- SF 7 - require mandatory radon testing for all public schools in Iowa every ten years to ensure every child in Iowa is educated in a safe environment.

Tanning Restrictions for Minors- SF 117 & HF 111 - ban youth under the age of 18 (minors) from using tanning facilities that emit ultraviolet radiation, and increase posted warnings about the dangers of tanning throughout the facilities.

Tobacco 21- SF 5 - raise the minimum purchasing age of all tobacco products from 18 to 21 years old.

Energy Drink Restriction for Minors- restrict the sale of energy drinks and shots to minors that contain more than 80 mg of caffeine per 8 fl. oz.

Synthetic Drug Legislation- HF 296 - implement stronger language in synthetic drug legislation that allows prosecutors to use common-sense criteria to determine if the substance in question is a synthetic drug, regardless of its name or chemical components.

Gender Identity Inclusion in the Iowa Hate Crimes- SF 73 & HF 88 - incorporate gender identity under the protection of the Iowa Hate Crime Statute, allowing law enforcement to prosecute hate violence as hate crimes rather than the lesser charge, of a felony.

Statute of Limitations Elimination for Sexual Assault- elimination of the statute of limitations for sexual assault crimes to allow victims more time to seek justice for crimes committed against them.

Sexual Violence Education- HF 161 - implement a preventative standardize sexual assault curriculum in mandatory health classes in Iowa high schools to educate students on healthy relationships, sexual consent and sexually transmitted diseases.

Suicide Prevention Training- HF 352 - require teachers to receive suicide prevention and trauma-informed care training to obtain or renew their license.

Conversion Therapy Ban- SF 74 & HF 93 - protect minors in Iowa from mental health practitioners violating a youth's basic human rights by attempting to change their sexuality or gender identity through psychological or physical means.

Erie's Law- require all public schools to implement a prevention-oriented child sexual abuse program. In partnership with Achieving Maximum Potential, (AMP).

Questions?