

# Community Conversations

In the fall of 2018 the Center for School Behavioral Health at Mental Health America of Greater Houston, in collaboration with UNICEF USA and the City of Houston Mayor's Office of Education, held a series of community conversations in each of Houston's City Council Districts to learn about the social and emotional challenges preventing youth from succeeding in the classroom after Hurricane Harvey. This infographic provides a snapshot of what was learned.

**11** COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS  
**125** TOTAL PARTICIPANTS

## CONSENSUS: YOUTH ARE NOT DOING WELL ONE YEAR POST HARVEY



**45% OF DISTRICTS** reported a noticeable increase in anxiety among youth



**55% OF DISTRICTS** listed stigma surrounding mental health as a barrier to youth utilizing support services



**100% OF DISTRICTS** believe that it is difficult to find professional mental health supports in their community

### Discoveries



Youth are experiencing **WEATHER-RELATED TRIGGERS** (e.g. when it rains for consecutive days)



Main **SOURCES OF SUPPORT** have been from schools, churches, families, clubs, peers, websites, support groups, and social media



**GEOGRAPHIC AND CULTURAL BARRIERS** have sometimes prevented residents of various districts from accessing services



**SCHOOL COUNSELORS** have taken on the brunt of the work to support students, but they are often stretched thin by other administrative responsibilities (e.g. administering tests)

### What Can We Do?



**MORE TRAINING FOR TEACHERS AND PARENTS** on the signs and symptoms of mental health issues and how to understand and respond to trauma/trauma-related behaviors



**DECREASE STIGMA** associated with mental health challenges and illnesses



**INCREASE** school-based mental health services



Generate more opportunities for communities to **HAVE THEIR VOICES HEARD**



Encourage teachers and parents to **ADDRESS THEIR OWN MENTAL HEALTH**



**NORMALIZE ACCESS** to mental health services and make the services youth friendly

"We always believed in and were able to pull ourselves up by our bootstraps. Harvey washed away the bootstraps."

- Community Conversation participant, District D

