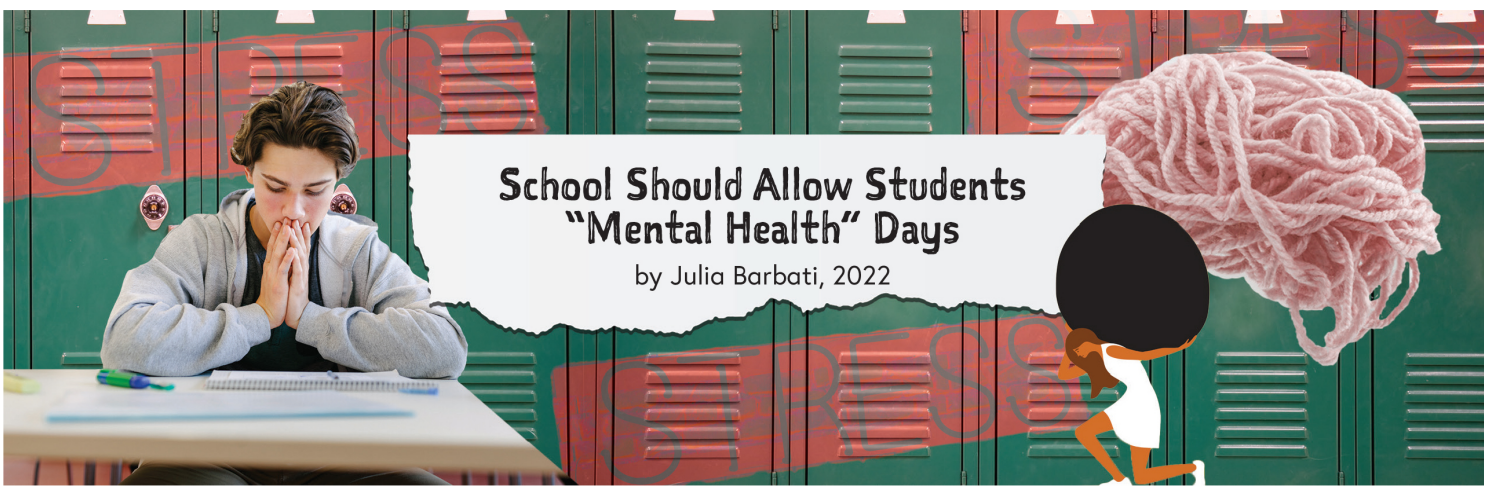




School Should Allow Students “Mental Health” Days

by Julia Barbati, 2022

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- 1 I think we can all agree that sometimes we need a break, mentally. With busy lives of work and school, along with the stress of daily **occurrences** in the world, life can easily become overwhelming. With that being said, schools should **impose** mental health days for students.
- 2 Students are pressured every day to succeed and build a stable foundation for their future. If this foundation is not built correctly, it will negatively affect the rest of the students’ lives and because of this, anxieties fill our minds.
- 3 Most of the time, assignments and studying take over nights, leaving a **horrific** sleep schedule and an endless cycle of fatigue. This cycle then leads to difficulty concentrating and not being able to function at full capability during the school day.
- 4 Not only is stress an outcome from school, but also from daily life. In high school, students start applying for jobs to pay for gas, insurance, recreational activities, etc. For some, there is a specific amount of money that needs to be **replenished** in order to be able to pay for these things. Therefore, a specific amount of hours needs to be worked weekly. Soon, free time is rare and there is no longer an equal split between work and a personal life. Combined with school work, it can be overwhelming.
- 5 Due to COVID-19, anxiety has become more common among students. Going back to school being almost completely normal was a big change that took time to get used to. With online school, it was easier to create a well-planned time management schedule, since most sports were canceled, and teachers were more **lenient** with assignments and tests.

- 6 Once students were able to go back to school on a daily basis, many came to the realization they were behind, which creates even more pressure for students as well as staff to catch up on what was missed in the last few years.
- 7 Now that there is an idea of the stress factors high school students experience daily, it is reasonable to need a mental health day every once and a while. Schools should allow students to take at least one mental health day per month. This can be any day during the month chosen by the student and would be an excused absence. If needed, parents can approve the mental health day and all teachers will be notified of the reason for absence.
- 8 Many benefits can come from taking a day to **regenerate** from daily life such as catching up on sleep, focusing on yourself, and being able to heal your mind. This creates a way for students to pause and focus on themselves to come back with a better mindset as well as the possibility of decreasing mental illness.
- 9 A recent study revealed that one in five teens between ages twelve and eighteen suffer from a mental illness. Schools are too blind to see that a large number of students are drained and mentally exhausted. A day off can truly make a difference.
- 10 An article on American education states that the biggest issue in the education system is “lack of motivation”. A big flashing sign is not needed to say that the lack of motivation comes directly from stress and being constantly overwhelmed. Did anyone ever think that students would be more motivated if we were not constantly being put to the test of our mental **capacity**? A mental health day brings the possibility of **rejuvenating** this “lost” motivation that is seen in many students.
- 11 Mental health needs to be taken seriously, especially when dealing with the future of the world. Mental health days should be imposed in schools to help students take a break from their daily stress and anxiety. Since students do not have a choice to go to school, our needs should be prioritized and important to schools.