

# MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTS

Middle school is a time of enormous transition—physically, emotionally, socially, and academically. Many of Manchester’s youth face additional hardships, like poverty, violence, and other traumas, that greatly affect their overall well-being.

The COVID-19 pandemic has further impacted their social interaction and access to routine, leading to higher levels of anxiety, depression, loneliness, and suicidality. Behavior health supports and trauma-informed approaches are more critical than ever. Unfortunately, accessibility and stigma are barriers to getting help.



The Youth Enrichment Partnership (YEP) breaks down these barriers by bringing mental and behavioral health supports to the places middle school students already go and feel comfortable, like their schools, after-school, and summer programs. It also provides trauma-informed training to school and agency staff which adds stability and safety in a time of great uncertainty.



Licensed, clinical mental health professionals provide intakes, counseling, and other behavioral health supports. By having these supportive services in a familiar setting there is a reduction in barriers such as stigma, cost and transportation.



Equine-assisted therapy improves physical, emotional, and psychological well-being of youth by alleviating the risks and poor outcomes from exposure to trauma and violence.



Music therapists engage students through song writing, playing instruments, and moving to music. These activities help reduce stress, anxiety, and depression and improve self-expression, and communication.



Students learn to talk about hard topics and express their feelings through the discussion of films and music. Programs also focus on how social media and online presence can impact mental health and their lives.

## THE REAL IMPACT OF YOUR GIFT



Kenny, a participant at one of the YEP programs, was in crisis and reached out to Amoskeag Health requesting weekly onsite behavioral health services.

"I would never talk to a therapist about this, but it's different because I know them," he said.

Having a regular, familiar face on-site at the Hubs helps mental health clinicians build rapport and reduce stigma around seeking behavioral and mental health services.