



Building connections for  
mental wellness

**1 IN 5  
YOUTH**

**IN OUR COMMUNITY**

**WILL FACE A  
MENTAL HEALTH  
CHALLENGE<sup>+</sup>**

## What is Better Together?

Better Together is a collaborative community project intended to improve mental health, reduce the number of youth at risk for depression (ages 12–18), promote an overall culture of mental wellness and normalize mental health conversations.

Better Together is an extraordinary opportunity to improve mental health in La Crosse County, funded through 2024 by the Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin Endowment at the Medical College of Wisconsin. La Crosse County—one of 10 communities statewide selected to receive this grant—was chosen due to its proven history of creating positive change through innovation and collaboration.



# MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES...

AFFECT  
OUR YOUTH

**50%**  
BEGIN  
BY AGE 14

50% of mental health challenges begin by age 14 and impact learning, relationships and lifestyle choices\*

ARE  
COMMON

**28%**  
AT RISK

28% of La Crosse County youth reported being at risk for depression^

**CAN BE  
PREVENTED**

Through strong relationships, healthy lifestyles and caring communities

It's ok to talk about mental health.  
There is hope.

**SO, LET'S  
TALK  
ABOUT  
IT!**

## STRATEGIES FOR CHANGE

COMMUNITIES

Increase awareness of and improve attitudes about mental health throughout **communities**

YOUTH

Increase resilience, coping skills and social connectedness among **youth**

PARENTS/EDUCATORS

Give **parents, educators and others** additional ways to support youth

SYSTEMS

Encourage and support cooperation and communication across **mental health support systems** and networks

## VISION

Better Together envisions a future in which mental wellness continually improves throughout La Crosse County and conversations about mental health are increasingly common and regarded as normal.

In partnership with key community organizations, Better Together seeks to help youth better understand mental wellness, feel a stronger sense of belonging and a greater sense of purpose, develop positive relationships with trusted adults and learn skills to enhance coping and resiliency.

This unique grant will also enable Better Together and its partners to help adults in La Crosse County best support youth in mental wellness and to create stronger communication pathways that encourage mental wellness throughout entire communities.

This project is funded by the Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin Endowment at the Medical College of Wisconsin.

## LEARN MORE

Help Better Together promote an overall culture of mental wellness and normalize mental health conversations throughout La Crosse County.

[bettertogetherlacrosse.org](http://bettertogetherlacrosse.org) / 608-371-9789  
[info@bettertogetherlacrosse.org](mailto:info@bettertogetherlacrosse.org)

## BETTER TOGETHER PARTNERS

Organizations and individuals from important facets of our community are working with Better Together to help promote mental wellness.

See the complete list at [bettertogetherlacrosse.org](http://bettertogetherlacrosse.org).

**Healthcare | Health and Human Services | Education | Law Enforcement**  
**Youth-Serving Organizations | Community Agencies | Funders | Mental Health Advocates**

### References

+National Institute of Mental Health ([www.nimh.nih.gov](http://www.nimh.nih.gov)).

\*Kessler, R.C. et al. (2005). Lifetime prevalence and age of onset distributions of DSM-IV disorders in the National Comorbidity Survey Replication. Archives of General Psychiatry, 62(6), 593-602.

^2017 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, as administered in several La Crosse County (Wisconsin) schools.