

Former educator works to provide students with free mental health care options in schools

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Former Discovery Principal Recalls Madison Shooting Amid Florid...



MADISON, Ala. -- Alabama, unfortunately, is no stranger to school shootings.

Sharon Willis was the principal at Discovery Middle in 2010, when a student

brought a gun to school, and killed his classmate. Today, her mission is to help provide mental health counselors to local schools.

"We've got great schools in north Alabama, but if it can happen at Discovery, if it can happen in Parkland, it can happen anywhere in our nation and it does."

The days after the shooting at Discovery Middle School in 2010 are tough to think about for her. "The students that were left with the aftermath. They needed some serious mental health help."

Counselors were provided, and healing began. But Willis says she often wonders, what if those counselors trained in mental health had been there before the shooting?

"You want to think you can prevent things like this from happening. They know what to look for. And not only that, they know what interventions to provide for students who are struggling."

Providing Mental Health Counselors For Schools



Willis retired after 39 years in education in 2016, and immediately transitioned to

the executive director role of The Enrichment Center, an organization that provides mental health counselors to schools.

"Kids go through a lot of grief, they go through bullying, we know what happens and they're willing to walk with them through those hard times."

The non-profit organization provides counselors on campus, free to all students. "It takes away the barrier of transportation, of trying to make it financially," said Willis.

So far, the enrichment program is in five schools in Madison, and 14 in Huntsville. Willis says they've even requested to start working in Morgan and Limestone County.

"But because I don't have the funding base there right now," she explained. "And the schools, they don't have the finances, we've just not been able to connect there."

However, she's hopeful that funding will come through eventually. "We wonder what we can do. I think what I'm doing, trying to put as many counselors in schools as I can is going to make a huge difference."

"I know we say we're praying for the folks in Florida, but we've also got to do something."

If you'd like to help The Enrichment Center expand their services to other school districts, you can find that information on their website here:



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Trump cites mental health in shooting, no mention of guns



