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# More AL schools add mental health counselors for students

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By [Lydia Nusbaum](#) | August 31, 2018 at 6:48 PM CDT - Updated September 4 at 4:51 PM

MONTGOMERY, AL (WSFA) - Schools in Alabama are placing mental health counselors for students to visit during hours.

"A lot of times what looks like behavioral issues is a cry for help," said Kim Hammack, the director for the Mental Illness Community Program within the Mental Health Substance Abuse Division at the Department of Mental Health.

Hammack said in the last 12 months, 11 school systems have signed up to incorporate therapists in their schools.

"If you're able to put mental health in the school system, and the culture of that school is very accepting of the care, it is very positive for that child," she said.

Michelle Stovall is the student services coordinator for Madison County Schools. She said they added mental health counselors to four schools for the 2018-2019 school year, bringing the total number of schools with counselors up to 26.

"They provide students with a lot of support. They come in with trauma issues. That can be from anything, shock, fear," said Stovall. "Those things typically manifest in physical ways in the classroom."



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