

Mental Health in Schools: A Definition

The Policy Leadership Cadre for Mental Health in Schools... points out that discussion of mental health usually focuses on “mental illness, disorders, or problems.” Moreover, there is a strong tendency to define emotional and behavioral problems as “disorders.” This deficit-based definition is only part of the picture. The authors...refer to the vision statement...of the Report of the Surgeon General’s Conference on Children’s Mental Health (2000), which states: “Both the promotion of mental health in children and the treatment of mental disorders should be major public health goals.” They point out that the term “mental health in schools” should “encompass considerations of the school’s role related to both positive mental health (e.g., promotion of social and emotional development) and mental health problems (psychosocial concerns and mental disorders) of students, their families, and school staff.”

