The English language has over 400 words for emotions. Studies show that men and women experience the same amount of emotion, but women tend to show it more. Of 11-17 year olds who took MHA’s Youth Screen:

- 55% said they often felt irritable or angry
- 69% said they often worry a lot
- 68% said they often felt sad or unhappy
- 45% said they often do not show their feelings

According to the National Survey of Children’s Health:

- 2.2 million children have ever lived with a parent or guardian who has died
- 5 million children feel like their family often has a hard time covering “the basics” like food, or housing
- 7.7 million children have lived with someone who had a drug or alcohol problem
- 6.1 million children have lived with someone who had a mental illness or who was suicidal
- 2.9 million children have been treated unfairly because of their race or ethnicity
- 5.2 million children have seen or heard physical abuse between adults in their home
- 6.2 million children have been victims of violence or witnessed it in their neighborhood

And it doesn’t stop there...  

- 36% of children (ages 2-17) have been emotionally bullied or teased in the past year
- 82.9% of LGBTQ youth (age 11-17) who take a screen at mhascreening.org score “at-risk” for a mental health disorder
- 1.2 million children (ages 8-18) are estimated to be caregivers
Without healthy coping skills, the emotions that come along with the issues kids are facing can result in behavior problems.

4.6% of children (ages 3-17) have been diagnosed with either Oppositional Defiance Disorder or Conduct Disorder & Boys are 2x more likely than girls to have these disorders.

MISBEHAVIOR IN SCHOOLS IS OFTEN ADDRESSED WITH DISCIPLINARY MEASURES LIKE SUSPENSION, EXPULSION, OR EVEN ARREST.

7 million students received in-school or out-of-school suspensions in the 2011-2012 school year.

3 and 4 year olds are expelled from childcare centers at 13x the rate of K-12 aged youth.

92 thousand students were involved in school-related arrests during one year.

But discipline like this often leaves kids and teens feeling isolated and labelled, further fueling the feelings that cause the misbehavior in the first place and leading to poor outcomes down the road.

48% of 11-17 year olds who took MHA’s Youth Screen said they often felt that they were “bad.”

10x more likely to drop out of high school, experience academic failure, be held back, hold negative school attitudes, and face incarceration than those who are not.

It doesn’t have to be this way. By providing supportive environments and teaching kids and teens to recognize their emotions and address them in healthy ways, we can change lives.

School-age children whose mothers nurtured them in early childhood have larger hippocampi, a key structure in the brain important to learning, memory, and responding to stress.

Students who have strong social emotional skills have better physical and mental health, more employment opportunities, fewer relationship problems, and are less likely to abuse substances as adults.

When schools have gay-straight alliances and policies against LGBTQ harassment, gay students have fewer suicidal thoughts and attempts.

Restorative discipline practices show great promise, with some K-8 schools showing as high as a 67% reduction in suspensions over a multi-year period.

Learn more about how you can help kids and teens develop healthy coping skills by visiting www.mentalhealthamerica.net/backtoschool.