Michigan schools are working to address student mental health through a variety of programming. Following a series of student suicide deaths about a decade ago, Lake Orion Community Schools implemented a mental health initiative for students across the district. The initiative includes peer support for middle and high school students, a bullying prevention program for children, and biannual Real Talk events that provide a forum for students to talk about mental health issues. Other Michigan school districts are finding ways to support students who have experienced childhood trauma, such as abuse or neglect. A River Rouge elementary school has created spaces for students to practice stress reduction techniques, and the Novi school district has increased the number of social workers available in all of its schools. According to experts, fostering social and emotional connectedness in school communities is critical to student mental health. "The issue of kids not feeling a part of school culture is something schools can immediately work on," said Ron Berger of the New York-based organization EL Education. "It's important we work on school cultures where everyone belongs."

Spark Extra! Learn more about mental health promotion in schools [2].

Links within this resource