

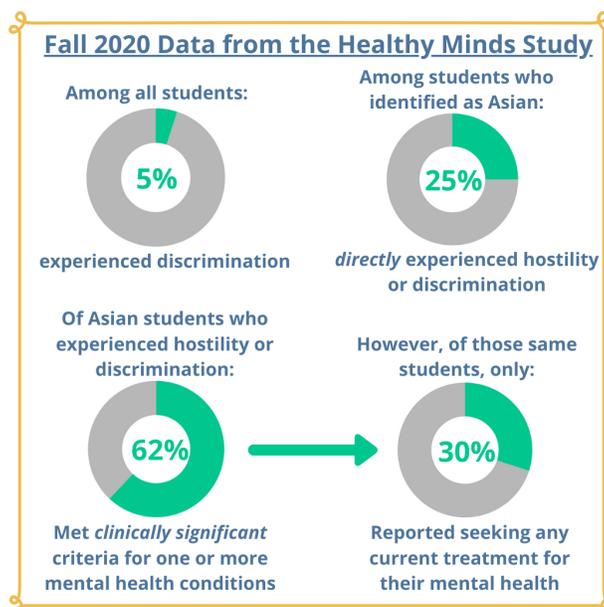


Condemning Anti-Asian Racism and Violence

Our team at the Healthy Minds Network is horrified by the senseless and tragic continued displays of white supremacist racist violence. We stand in solidarity with the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities during this time. Most recently, racism manifested in the loss of eight lives in Atlanta, GA. Discrimination and racism against AAPIs is not a new phenomenon. Rather, anti-AAPI responses to the COVID-19 pandemic at both governmental and community levels have further exacerbated the presence of xenophobia and hate crimes against AAPI communities, inducing negative downstream impacts on population mental health.

As a research organization, we hope that our data can help drive action to address discrimination and its effects on student mental health. Our data from the past two years show that 52.7% of AAPI students experience discrimination, compared to the national average of student experiences of discrimination across all races and ethnicities (30.7%). During the fall 2020 semester, the Healthy Minds Network continued to collect data on experiences of discriminatory or hostile behavior due to race and ethnicity as a *direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic*.

Our data confirm that AAPI students are experiencing the highest rates of COVID-related race-based discrimination, and AAPI students who have experienced discrimination have higher prevalence rates of mental health problems than AAPI students who have not experienced discrimination. Furthermore, our data show that AAPI students with apparent symptoms underutilize mental health services, and the “treatment gap” among AAPI students is the largest of any group in our data. These findings underscore the urgency to support AAPI students on campuses across the United States.



These data are consistent with a long history of discrimination, bias, and violence against AAPI individuals and communities, as reflected in previous research on both AAPI communities and communities of color. There is already a substantial body of research linking [racial discrimination](#)¹ to [adverse mental health](#)² as well as lower use of [formal treatment pathways](#).³ In a recent HMS study, the odds of having attempted suicide in the past year were nearly two times greater for [Asian international students](#)⁴ compared to their white counterparts. In another HMS study of college students with mental health symptoms, students who identified as Asian were the *least likely of all racial and ethnic groups to perceive a need for services*.⁵

Given the mental health challenges Asian student populations are facing, it will be crucial to **make an active effort toward resolving mental health treatment disparities looming in these communities**. It is now more important than ever to address this help-seeking disparity and strengthen mental health outreach and service delivery programs that support often-overlooked Asian students struggling with their mental health.

The Healthy Minds Network is devoted to continually illuminating mental health disparities and striving for mental health justice through research. Sasha Zhou, Co-Investigator of the Healthy Minds Study, authored a piece focused on [AAPI mental health in the COVID-19 era and specific research-driven strategies](#)⁶ for addressing help-seeking barriers among AAPI students. Our team is also working on several other publications that will identify areas for improvement in support systems for AAPI students. We are continuing initiatives like our Healthy Minds Writing Lab, which seek to support and uplift AAPI scholars whose voices and efforts are underrepresented in research. We are committed to fighting against racism and hatred in all forms, and we encourage you to connect with us about these and other opportunities to work together on research in support of AAPI communities.

To our friends and colleagues who are struggling right now, we encourage you to create space for self-care and care of your community. It is natural and valid to feel overwhelmed by the pace at which alarming and hateful events have been occurring. We encourage you to consider reaching out to your family, friends, religious and spiritual institutions, mental health professionals, local community, and support groups.

Our team humbly shares the Asian American Psychological Association's [Statement on the Atlanta-Area Mass Shooting](#).⁷ We hope you may find strength and unity in their words and in ours, and support in the resources shared by the AAPA.

In solidarity,

—The Healthy Minds Team

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