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The State of Mental Health in the Mountain West

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THE STATE OF MENTAL HEALTH IN THE MOUNTAIN WEST

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The Lincy Institute | Brookings Mountain West



About the Data

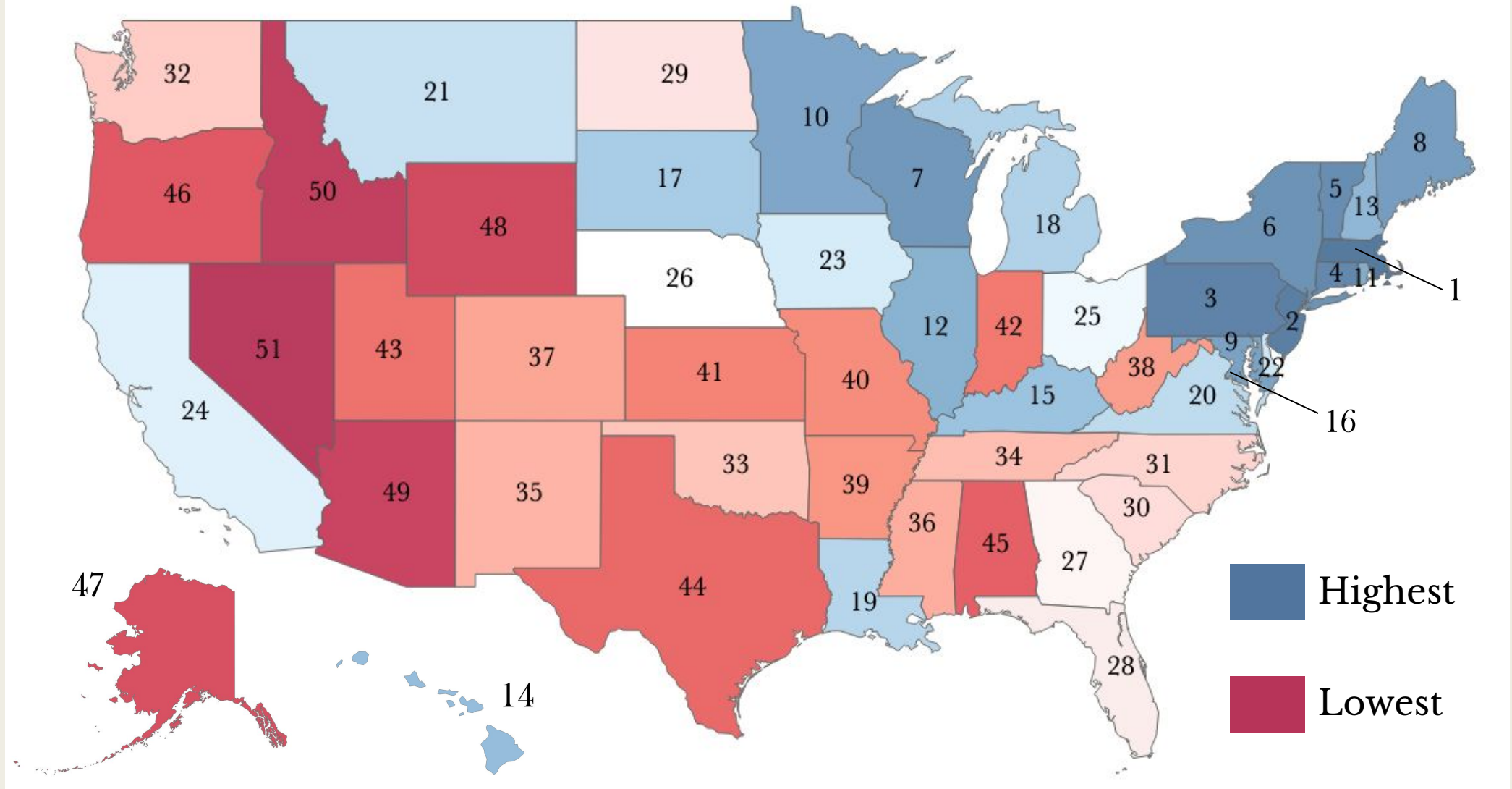
- “The State of Mental Health in America 2022”
 - Source: Mental Health America (2022)
 - Mental health rankings and performance data for total population, adults, and youth, by state
 - Year(s): 2022
- “America’s School Mental Health Report Card”
 - Source: Hopeful Futures Campaign (2022)
 - Mental health metrics for youth and school workforce policies, by state
 - Year(s): 2015, 2020, 2021, and 2022

Research Questions

- How do the Mountain West states (Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, and Utah) perform in the quality of mental health care services?
- How prevalent are mental health issues in the Mountain West?
- How accessible is the mental health workforce to adults and youth?



Figure 1: Overall Mental Health Rankings, Un



*Adapted from "The State of Mental Health in America 2022" by Mental Health America

Table 1: Overall Mental Health Rankings,

Category	Arizona	Colorado	Nevada	New Mexico	Utah
Overall Ranking	49	37	51	35	43
Prevalence of Mental Illness Ranking	32	45	46	43	47
Access to Care Ranking	46	21	39	20	26
Mental Health Workforce Availability	710:1	270:1	460:1	250:1	290:1

*Adapted from “The State of Mental Health in America 2022” by Mental Health America

- Lowest overall ranking: Nevada (51st)
- Lowest mental health workforce availability: Arizona (710:1)

Table 2: Adult Mental Health Metrics, Mountain West, 2022

Category	National Average	Arizona	Colorado	Nevada	New Mexico	Utah
Adult Rankings	-	35	51	40	15	43
% Adults With Any Mental Illness	19.86	20.06	23.20	21.97	21.39	26.86
% Adults With Substance Use Disorder in the Past Year	7.74	7.11	11.75	9.32	7.70	6.56
% Adults With Serious Thoughts of Suicide	4.58	5.01	5.54	4.94	4.81	6.19
% Adults With Cognitive Disability Who Could Not See a Doctor Due to Costs	29.67	31.35	28.69	24.31	26.15	33.31

*Adapted from "The State of Mental Health in America 2022" by Mental Health America

- Lowest adult ranking: Colorado (51st)
- Highest % of adults with Any Mental Illness (AMI): Utah (26.86%)

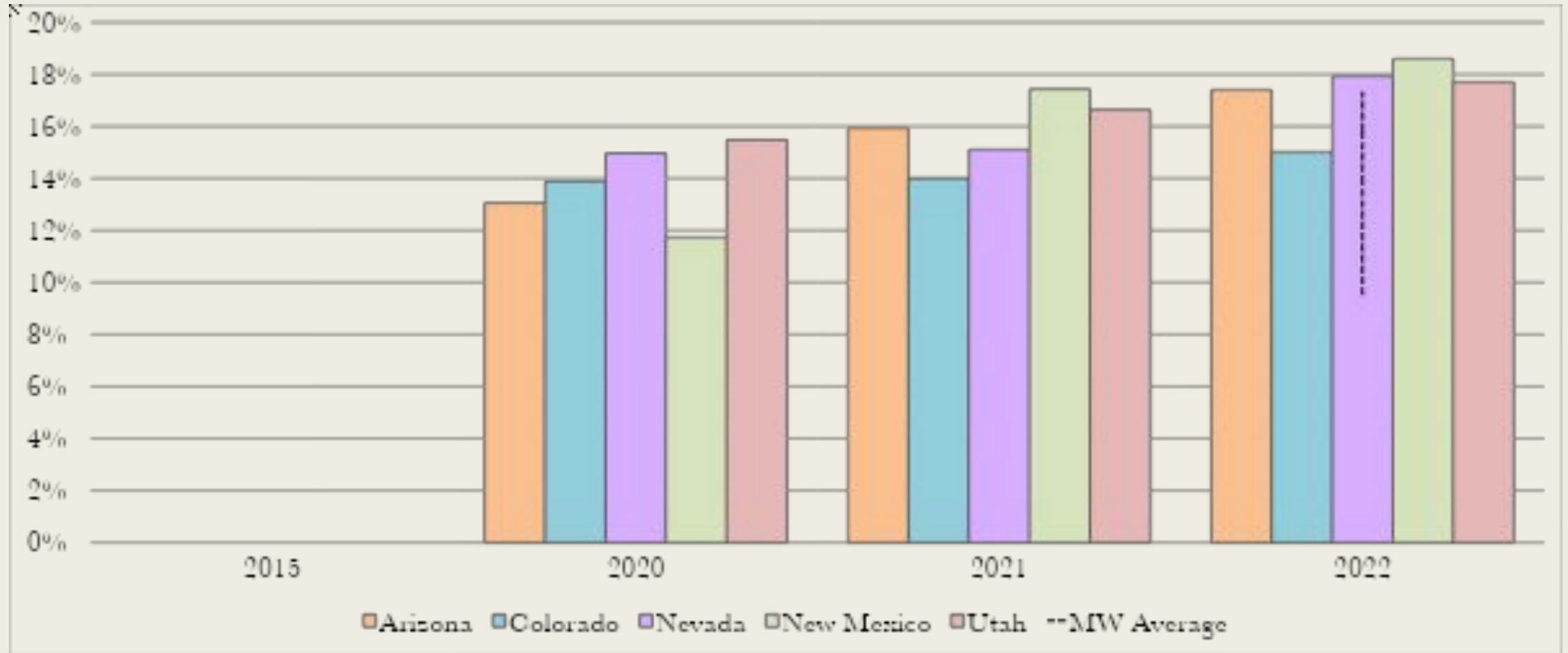
Table 3: Youth Mental Health Rankings,

Year	Arizona	Colorado	Nevada	New Mexico	Utah
2015	46	31	51	50	23
2020	30	13	51	41	32
2021	49	42	51	50	32
2022	49	13	51	47	32

*Adapted from “America’s School Mental Health Report Card” by the Hopeful Futures Campaign

- Lowest overall ranking for all observed years: Nevada (51st)
- Most variability between years: Colorado

Figure 2: Youth with At Least One Major Depressive Episode in the Past Year, Mountain West



*Adapted from “America’s School Mental Health Report Card” by the Hopeful Futures Campaign.

- Highest rate for $\frac{3}{4}$ years: New Mexico
- Lowest rate for $\frac{3}{4}$ years: Colorado

Table 4: School Mental Health Workforce, Mountain West, 2022

Metric	Recommended Ratio	Arizona	Colorado	Nevada	New Mexico	Utah
Ratio of School Psychologists to Students	1:500	1:1,593	1:1,578	1:1,866	1:3,673	1:2,720
Ratio of School Social Workers to Students	1:250	1:3,382	1:2,258	1:8,730	1:945	1:8,198
Ratio of School Counselors to Students	1:250	1:905	1:324	1:544	1:473	1:591

*Adapted from “America’s School Mental Health Report Card” by the Hopeful Futures Campaign

- Mountain West below all three recommended ratios
- Lowest availability of school social workers: Nevada (1:8,730)

Key Takeaways

Nevada

Ranks 51st and last among 50 states and D.C. in overall mental health rankings for 2022

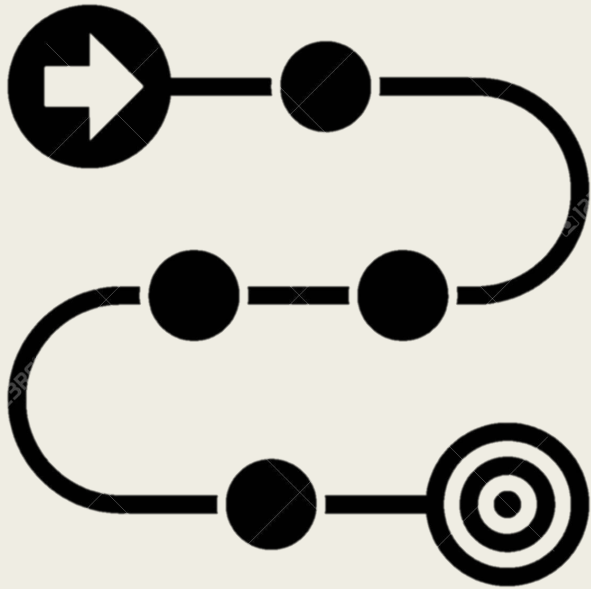
Ranks 51st and last among 50 states and D.C. in youth mental health rankings for 2015, 2020, 2021, and 2022

Mountain West

Nationally among the worst states for mental health rankings

Mountain West below recommended ratios for ALL categories of youth mental health professionals: school psychologists, social

Future Directions



- Examine high performing states for mental health policy recommendations



- Close the workforce gap in mental health