

# Case Studies

## Evidence of Impact Catalog



*Overcoming stigma and empowering students*

*Removing access and language barriers to mental health support*

*Addressing unmet needs for rural students*

*Developing resilience and keeping kids in the classroom*

*Engaging teens with SEL and support they like and relate to*

*Building community buy-in from staff and families*

## Introduction

---

# How 6 school districts are making mental health support more affordable, accessible—and authentic

From rural Texas to urban Massachusetts, school districts across the country are struggling to provide adequate resources to meet student mental health needs.

While recent data from the CDC indicates 42% of students feel persistently sad or hopeless, even the most well-funded schools are only able to provide individualized support to about 10–15% of those students.



This report provides a snapshot of how six public school districts leveraged technology to help address their unique challenges, including:

- Overcoming stigma and empowering students (Putnam County, FL)
- Removing access and language barriers to mental health support (Irving, TX)
- Addressing unmet needs for rural students (Pecos, TX)
- Developing resilience and keeping kids in the classroom (Gloucester, NJ)
- Engaging teens with SEL they like and related to (Cumberland County, NC)
- Building community buy-in from staff and families (Chelsea, MA)

## CASE STUDY

# Putnam County Schools

*Overcoming stigma & empowering students*



## CHALLENGE

Educators at Putnam County school district in Palatka, Florida wanted to address students struggling to self-regulate their behavior and emotions. Counselors spent a lot of time with the same few students, while others were suffering in silence.

## SOLUTION

To address this growing concern, the district's Director of Student Services introduced staff to Alongside as a potential Tier 1 solution.

The district piloted the app at one middle school in the spring of 2023 and expanded it into more schools the following year.

## OUTCOMES

- Students use Alongside to self-regulate in the classroom instead of going to the guidance office
- Staff accesses valuable insights into what topics are causing distress
- Students previously reluctant to seek help are able to access it discreetly



[Hear from district leaders and get the full story!](#)

## AT A GLANCE

- 16 school counselors serve 10,000 students across 20 schools
- 68% of student body is economically disadvantaged



**Diana Drew**

Director of Student Services

*"Giving students the autonomy to use the tools in Alongside motivates them"*

CASE STUDY

# Putnam County Schools

Overcoming stigma & empowering students



## Usage stats from 2023-24 school year

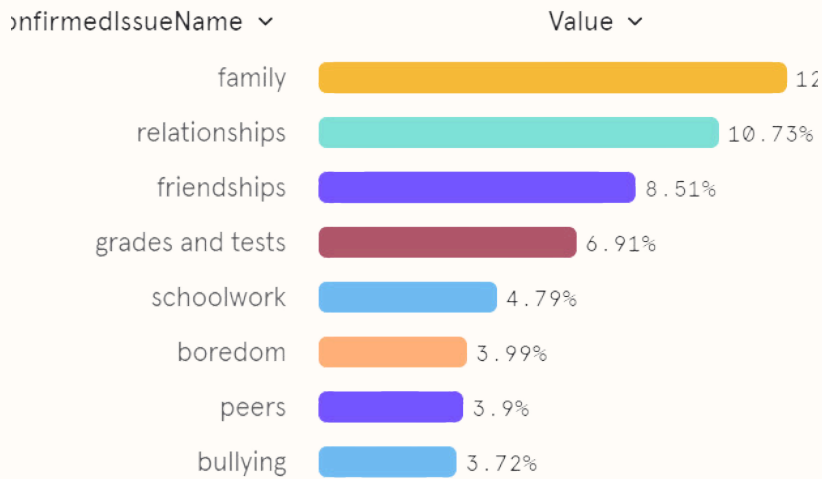
#, Activities

3,663

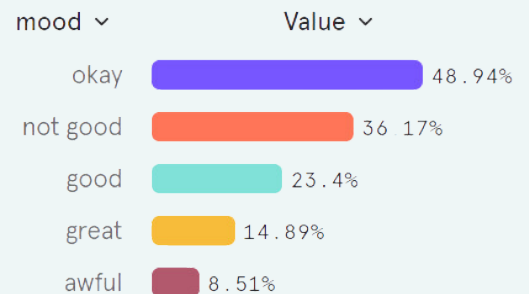
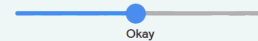
%, Activities Rated as Helpful

84.69

## Topics students seek help on...



## Mood Tracker



## CASE STUDY

# Irving Independent School District

*Removing access and language barriers to mental health support*



IRVING

## CHALLENGE

Irving ISD serves a diverse, high-needs student population with a significant number of English language learners. With a high student-to-counselor ratio, supporting students' emotional and behavioral needs—especially outside of school hours—was challenging.

## SOLUTION

The district introduced Alongside to assist English Learners (EL), especially those with aggression or dysregulation.

The platform's translation capabilities enabled students to express their feelings without needing an in-person translator, allowing them to communicate freely and be understood.

## OUTCOMES

- Students spent more time in class and were better able to manage and process their emotions.
- Students experiencing severe issues were identified and received additional support.



[Hear from district leaders and get the full story!](#)

## AT A GLANCE

- ~60 school counselors serve 31,400 students across 37 schools (514:1 ratio)
- 45% of students are English learners or emerging bilingual



**Anne Lantey**  
Middle School Counselor

*"I introduced (an EL student) to the app... later on that afternoon she made a suicidal outcry"*

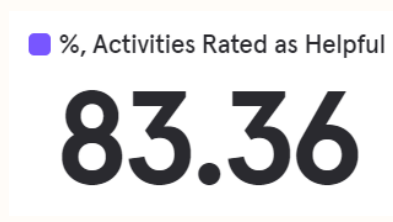
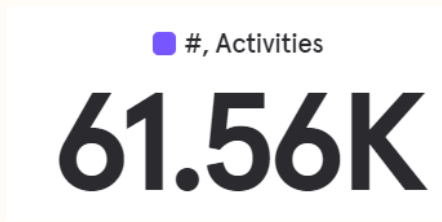
CASE STUDY

# Irving Independent School District

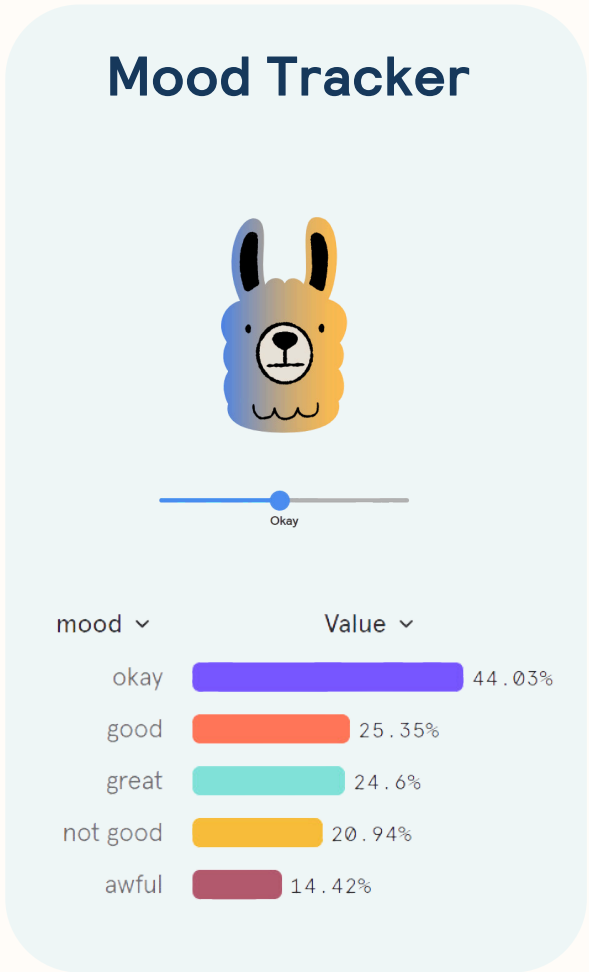
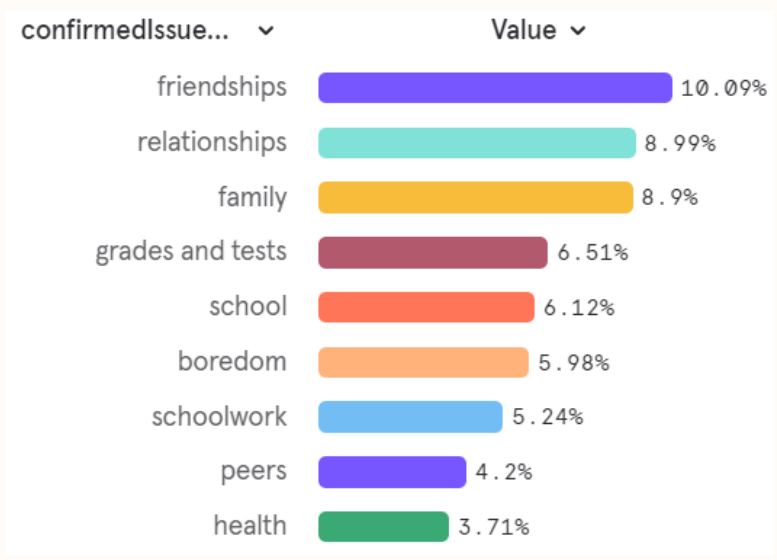
Removing access and language barriers to mental health support



## Usage stats from 2023-24 school year



## Topics students seek help on...



## CASE STUDY

# Pecos Barstow– Toyah ISD

*Addressing unmet needs for rural students*



## CHALLENGE

Pecos–Barstow–Toyah ISD in rural south Texas faced challenges providing mental health support due to its remote location, with the nearest mental health practice an hour away. Additionally, many students were reluctant to ask for support at school.

## SOLUTION

The district piloted Alongside in 2023 to address these challenges, offering students a barrier-free platform for emotional support.

Due to positive feedback and high usage, the district expanded the app's availability to more schools, allowing 1,300 students to access it during and after school hours.

## OUTCOMES

- Students use Alongside to manage emotions, develop coping skills, and set goals, even during school breaks when other support is unavailable.
- Counselors and emergency responders receive real-time notifications for students needing more intensive support.



[Hear from district leaders and get the full story!](#)

## AT A GLANCE

- PBTISD serves 2,800 students at 5 schools
- 90% of students belong to minority groups
- 52% live in poverty



**Lynn Price**  
Lead Counselor

*"Many students don't like talking to an unfamiliar adult... therefore teletherapy remained an imperfect solution for us"*

## CASE STUDY

# Pecos Barstow- Toyah ISD

*Addressing unmet needs for rural students*



## Usage stats from 2023-24 school year

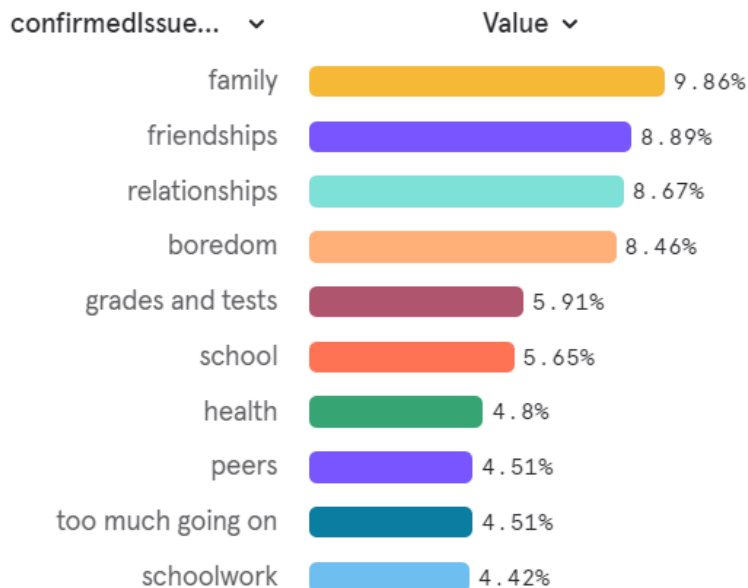
#, Activities

12.48K

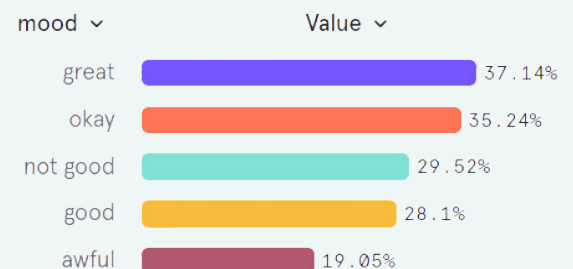
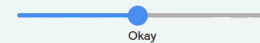
%, Activities Rated as Helpful

80.27

## Topics students seek help on...



## Mood Tracker



## CASE STUDY

# Gloucester Township Schools

*Developing resilience and keeping kids in the classroom*



## CHALLENGE

Gloucester Township Public Schools faced challenges with large counselor caseloads and needed additional mental health resources that could integrate seamlessly with students' existing technology use.

Additionally, the district sought to empower students with tools to develop resilience and self-efficacy when facing challenges, with a goal of reducing missed instructional time.

## SOLUTION

The district piloted Alongside in one of its middle schools to provide extra support for students. The platform allows students to proactively plan and cope with challenges, fostering their independence while integrating with familiar technology.

## OUTCOMES

- Due to early success, Gloucester expanded partnership with Alongside to include all of its middle schools.
- The platform consistently receives positive feedback from students who say it helps them manage stress and build confidence.



[Hear from district leaders and get the full story!](#)

## AT A GLANCE

- 17 school counselors serve 6,500 students across 11 schools
- >50% of students belong to minority groups



**Steve Kline**

Supervisor of Clinical Services

*"We want our students to know that they are the first and best person who can help themselves"*

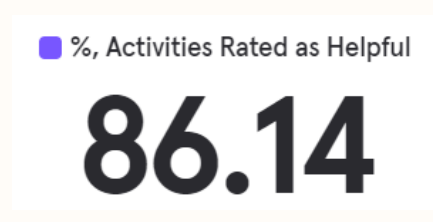
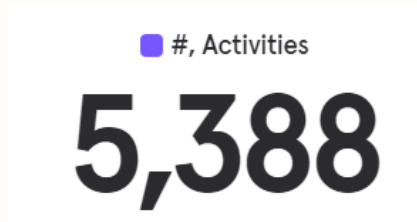
CASE STUDY

# Gloucester Township Schools

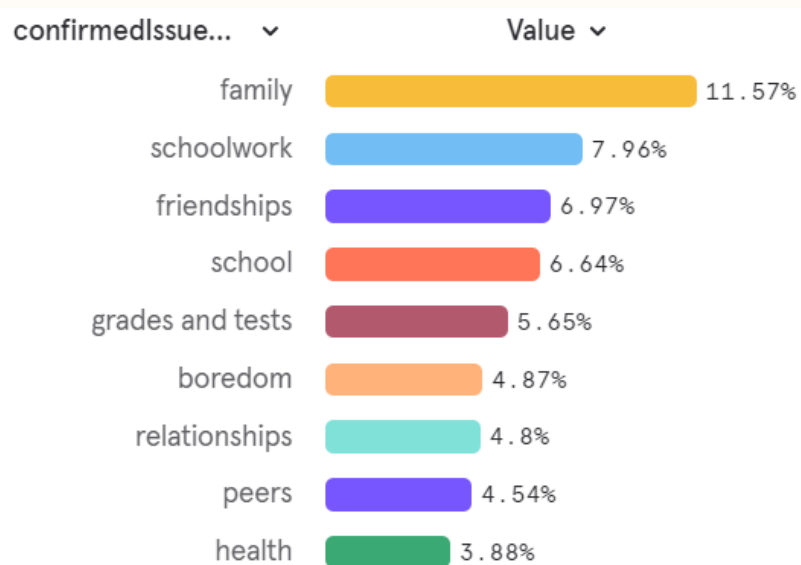
*Developing resilience and keeping kids in the classroom*



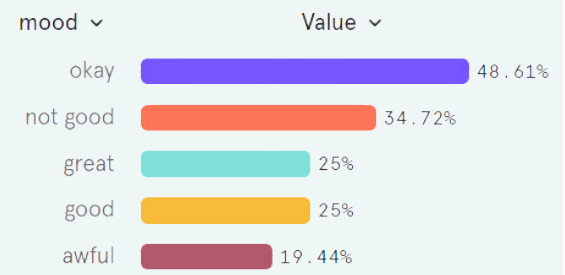
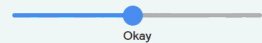
## Usage stats from 2023-24 school year



## Topics students seek help on...



## Mood Tracker



## CASE STUDY

# Cumberland County Schools

*Engaging teens with SEL & support they like and relate to*



## CHALLENGE

Cumberland County Schools in Fayetteville, North Carolina needed to provide barrier-free mental health support to its large and transient student population, many of whom struggle with anxiety and emotional challenges.

## SOLUTION

After extensive testing and positive early reviews from teens, the district implemented Alongside for 26,000 students in grades 6–12, responding to their expressed interest in a platform that respects privacy and provides empathetic support.

## OUTCOMES

- Students report that Alongside helps them control panic attacks, manage anxiety, and improve their emotional well-being.
- The platform is especially valued by those who find it difficult or stressful to talk to someone in person, providing a quick and effective way to access support.



[Hear from district leaders and get the full story!](#)

## AT A GLANCE

- CCS serves 50,000 students across 89 schools
- 25% of students come from military families, resulting in high student turn-over each year



**Dr. Natasha Scott**

Director of Student Services

*"We've struggled to find an SEL program that high school students would appreciate"*

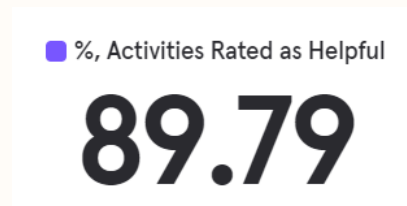
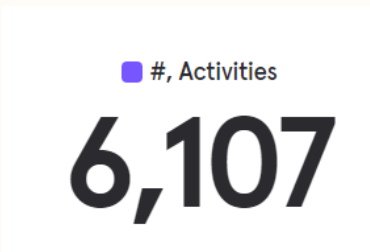
CASE STUDY

# Cumberland County Schools

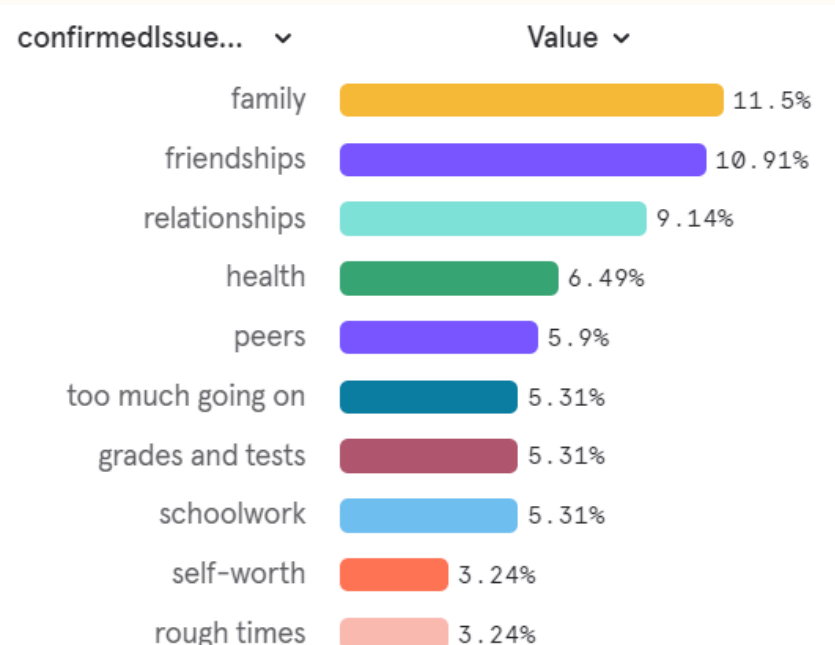
Engaging teens with SEL & support they like and relate to



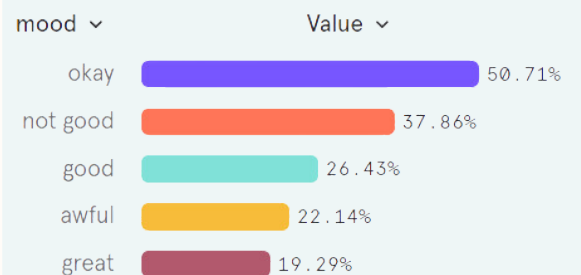
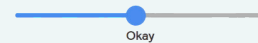
## Usage stats from 2023-24 school year



## Topics students seek help on...



## Mood Tracker



## CASE STUDY

# Chelsea Public Schools

*Building buy-in from staff and families through a community approach*



## CHALLENGE

CPS faced the challenge of reaching and supporting all students in a diverse and multilingual community. With only a small percentage of students typically accessing mental health services, the district looked for ways to engage a broader range of learners.

## SOLUTION

The district valued Alongside's ability to provide support in 60+ languages, fostering an inclusive environment for all students. To ensure successful integration, SEL leads across the district played a key role in incorporating Alongside into classrooms, complementing the existing SEL curriculum.

## OUTCOMES

- At some campuses as many as 80% of the students use the platform's skill building activities in their classrooms.
- 69% of students repeatedly use the chatbot, as an accessible starting point for seeking help.
- Positive feedback from students consistently emphasizes feeling supported and connected.



[Hear from district leaders and get the full story!](#)

## AT A GLANCE

- 6 school counselors serve 6,074 students across 11 schools
- 90% of students belong to minority groups



**Brenda Peña**  
Director of Social Work

*"Our SEL leads have taken the initiative to introduce this at the classroom level"*

## CASE STUDY

# Chelsea Public Schools

*Building buy-in from staff and families through a community approach*



## Usage stats from 2023-24 school year

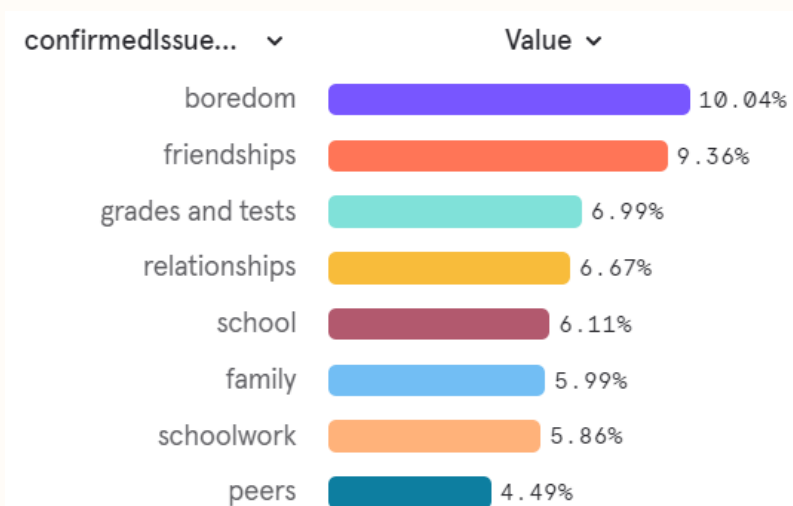
#, Activities

**6,859**

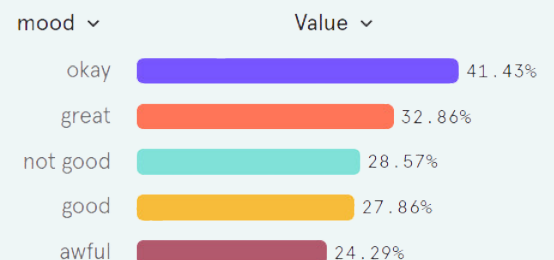
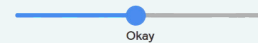
%, Activities Rated as Helpful

**80.27**

## Topics students seek help on...



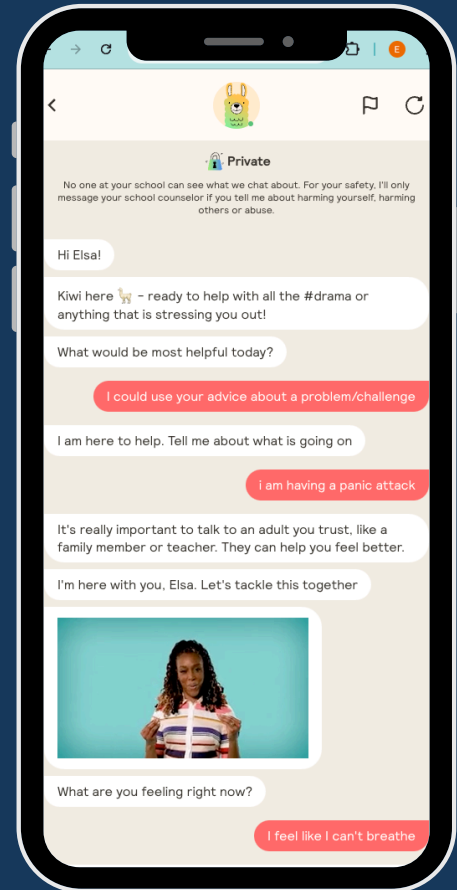
## Mood Tracker



# About Alongside

## How it works:

- Students log into Alongside with their school email and can chat, track their mood, journal or explore resources
- A student can chat about any topic and is matched with a relevant and personalized clinician-developed chat exercise
- Students set a small goal in the chat that focuses on taking one small step in real life to increase hope and self-efficacy a key component of resilience
- Students can share their chat summary with their school counselor, and connect to school or community resources.
- Students receive encouraging reminders to reinforce following through on goals



Learn more at [www.alongside.care](http://www.alongside.care)

Alongside is a mental health app that provides personalized prevention and early intervention to secondary school students. Students can experience immediate relief with Alongside's chatbot and in-app resources, which are created by a team of doctoral mental health experts and directly informed by evidenced-based clinical strategies. The founders of Alongside previously founded Actively Learn, a K-12 digital curriculum company acquired by McGraw Hill in 2021. Alongside was founded in April 2022 to support positive mental health and reduce the risk of developing anxiety, depression, and suicidality.