

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

House Bill No. **11281**



Introduced by **Representative ERIC G. YAP**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to improve the delivery of mental health services for the Filipino youth in basic education institutions, secondary schools, and State Universities and Colleges (SUCs). It mandates the deployment of at least one (1) licensed mental health professional in each institution and strengthens early intervention efforts for the students.

Mental health disorders among children and adolescents have become a growing public health concern, with excessive screentime seen as a contributing factor to it. It has also exposed young people to addictive platform designs, which adversely affects their mental health, and impedes their emotional development and academic performance¹. Despite the enactment of Republic Act No. 11036, otherwise known as the “*Mental Health Act*”, access to mental health services in schools remains limited, and many educational institutions lack adequate personnel and structured intervention programs.

This bill offers annual mental health screening, counseling services, and teacher training on mental health and psychosocial support. It likewise mandates the deployment of licensed mental health professionals, establishes an annual Digital Detox Week, and requires the publication of a national report on youth mental health and digital behavior. These steps are taken to strengthen prevention, facilitate early intervention, and improve coordination among the education, health, and digital governance sectors.

Promoting the mental health and digital wellbeing of Filipino learners is essential to improving educational outcomes and developing a healthy, resilient, and productive generation. Institutionalizing these interventions will enable the government to provide sustained and evidence-based support to young Filipinos.

In view of the foregoing, the immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



HON. ERIC G. YAP

¹ World Health Organization (2026). Mental health of adolescents. World Health Organization. Accessed via <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/adolescent-mental-health>. Accessed on 8 July 2026.

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AN ACT
INSTITUTIONALIZING SCHOOL-BASED MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR
THE YOUTH, PROVIDING FOR THE DEPLOYMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH
PROFESSIONALS AND STRENGTHENING EARLY INTERVENTION
MECHANISMS, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in the Congress assembled:

SEC. 1. *Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “*Mental Health and Digital Wellbeing for Youth Act*”.

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is the policy of the State to protect the mental, emotional, and psychological health of the Filipino youth. Recognizing the rising incidence of depression, anxiety, self-harm, and digital addiction among students, the State shall institutionalize responsive, school-based mental health services and regulate the harmful effects of digital platforms on the well-being of minors.

SEC. 3. *Objectives.* – This Act seeks to:

- a. Ensure access to early, preventive, and non-stigmatizing mental health support in all public secondary schools and State Universities and Colleges (SUCs);
- b. Deploy trained mental health professionals to educational institutions nationwide;
- c. Regulate youth-targeted digital platforms to prevent algorithmic harm and addictive design;
- d. Promote digital literacy and emotional resilience among students; and
- e. Create a nationwide platform for youth mental health support through technology.

SEC. 4. *School-based Mental Health Services.* – The Department of Education (DepEd) and the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) shall implement

comprehensive mental health services in all public secondary schools and SUCs, including:

- a. Deployment of at least one licensed mental health professional (e.g. psychologist, guidance counselor, or psychiatric nurse) per high school and university campus within three (3) years from the effectivity of this Act;
- b. Annual mental health screenings and wellness profiling for students;
- c. Creation of safe spaces for counseling, peer support, and emotional processing;
- d. Implementation of a confidential and non-punitive referral system for at-risk students; and
- e. Mandatory training programs for teachers and staff on mental health first aid, trauma-informed approaches, and empathy-based discipline.

SEC. 5. *Digital Detox Week.* – All schools shall observe an annual “Digital Detox Week”, a week-long series of activities promoting offline connections, creative expression, nature engagement, and digital self-regulation.

DepEd and CHED shall integrate Digital Detox Week into the immediately succeeding official school calendar after the effectivity of this Act.

SEC. 6. *Report on Youth Mental Health and Digital Behavior.* – DepEd, CHED, and the Department of Health (DOH) shall publish an annual report on Youth Mental Health and Digital Behavior, covering:

- a. Trends in depression, anxiety, digital usage, and suicide risk among students;
- b. Regional disparities and emerging mental health issues; and
- c. Policy recommendations and accountability measures for digital platforms.

SEC. 7. *Appropriations.* – The necessary funds for the implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act (GAA). The DepEd, CHED, DOH, and the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) shall coordinate to ensure adequate and timely release of funds. Local government units (LGUs) may also allocate funds to support this Act within their jurisdiction.

SEC. 8. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the DOH, DepEd, CHED, and DICT shall convene a Joint Task Force to draft the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

SEC. 9. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not affected shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 10. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, executive orders, issuances, and rules and regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 11. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,