Now more than ever, students are openly discussing mental illness without fear of the stigma that surrounds the topic. CAUSE youth are concerned that depression, anxiety, neglect and emotional/physical abuse is far too prevalent among their peers and our schools need more support for mental health. Young people don’t often know where to turn or where to seek help when struggling with mental illness. Recent school shootings highlight the desperate need to invest in mental health services. In order to identify students’ mental health needs, CAUSE youth conducted a survey of students attending Ventura High School, which was distributed among peers, presented in classrooms and posted on social media. Over 130 surveys were collected, where students were asked about their experience with mental illness and accessing services that are currently offered at their school. All participants were then asked to vote for what they felt were the most important mental health services they think should be provided on campus.

Students want individualized therapy, support groups for physical & emotional abuse, and mental health counseling:

- 97 students said they would want VUSD to provide one-on-one therapy with a mental health professional who can help students develop an individualized treatment plan for their mental health.
- 94 students identified a need for support groups on campus for physical and emotional abuse. Support groups help create a space for healing, where students can share their stories, experiences, and lives in a way that makes them feel less alone and isolated.
- 92 students pointed to the need for access to mental health counselors on campus who may be more informal than therapists, but provide a first line of support for students seeking to improve their emotional well-being.