



BUYER'S GUIDE

The Student Services Leader's Guide to Student Wellness Monitoring

How to choose the right student wellness monitoring solution to identify and support at-risk students

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Introduction

As a student services professional, you know the importance of providing mental health support and intervention to students when they need help the most. But unless a student reaches out to you for assistance, you may have no indication that they're struggling. They could be suffering in silence and at risk of violence, self-harm or worse.

Suicide is the second leading cause of death for children and adolescents.

Mental health has been called an epidemic among children and adolescents making student wellness efforts in schools more important than ever.

18.8%

Considered suicide

15.1%

Created a suicide plan

2.5%

Attempted suicide

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
2019 Youth Risk Behavior Survey

Your ability to identify at-risk students who need help is critical. But how can you know which students are in need of support — especially when you're tasked with looking after dozens or hundreds of them?

You can know with student wellness monitoring.

This guide will help you understand what to look for in a student wellness monitoring solution. Keep reading to learn:

- How you can identify at-risk students more easily and intervene earlier
- Why student wellness monitoring is a critical tool for student services teams
- What to look for when evaluating a solution for your school



Early warning systems can help schools address the student mental health crisis

Student early warning systems use readily available student data to identify students at risk, to diagnose the needs of at-risk students, and to identify interventions that may help at-risk students.

Early warning systems were originally intended to identify students at risk of dropping out of school. But these systems are increasingly being seen as tools to not only improve graduation rates, but to support the whole student and address critical student wellness needs and concerns.

As student mental health becomes a critical priority, student wellness monitoring provides the next generation of early warning systems to help schools identify students who are struggling and in need of support and intervention.

How a student wellness solution helps you address student mental health

Backed by AI, student wellness monitoring software can help student services teams keep an eye on hundreds of students' mental health indicators. By reviewing students' online searches and activities 24/7, this software gives you the ability to automatically detect signs of bullying, self-harm, suicide and violence, and nudity. These tools are able to comb through massive amounts of student activity data and use AI techniques like sentiment analysis to identify students who show signs of distress and may be in need of support.

When these signs are found, you're alerted so you can investigate and respond quickly. You're also able to identify and monitor dangerous and risky student behaviors before they escalate, such as TikTok challenges and suicide clusters.

When you're supported by continuous wellness monitoring, you have continuously updated insights into how your students' wellness as a whole is trending, as well as the ability to identify individual at-risk students.

Like a super-powered set of extra eyes and ears, a student wellness monitoring solution helps you stretch limited student services resources and be most effective with the counsellors and support staff you have.

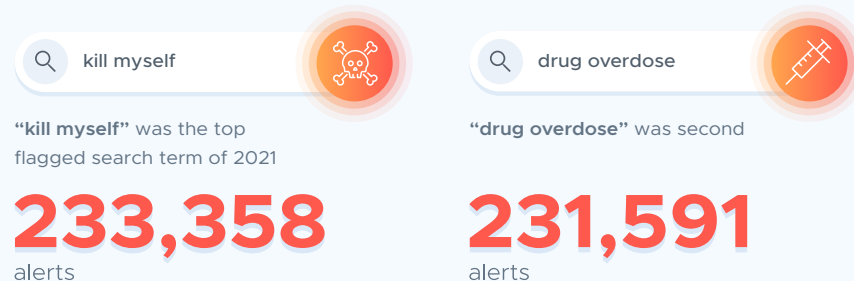
Student wellness monitoring can reveal much about your students' mental health

Kids turn to the Internet for all kinds of information. While they may not always tell the adults in their lives how they're really feeling, they never lie to Google.

Here's what real-life data gathered by Securly from more than 15,000 schools reveals about the terms students searched online in 2021 and the alarming growth in flagged alerts and at-risk students.

Flagged terms

Based on alerts sent by Securly to current customers



Increase in Alerts by Category

Per 10k Students



Number of students identified at 'Increased Risk' during 2021





Three reasons why wellness monitoring software is a critical tool for student services teams

Student wellness is foundational to student success. If a student's mental health issues go unnoticed and untreated, they will ultimately become barriers to learning and could produce much worse outcomes, including:

Truancy

Social isolation

Bullying

School violence

Drug and alcohol abuse

Self-harm

Suicide

Student wellness monitoring software helps resource-strained student services teams improve student outcomes by providing awareness of student mental health issues that can otherwise go unnoticed.

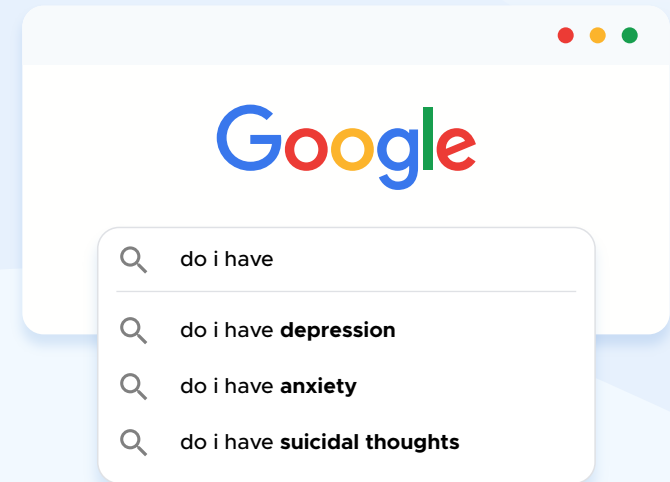
1

It can be hard to detect the hidden signs of self-harm, suicide, depression, violence and bullying

If you could help a struggling student, you would. But the reality is that many students are suffering in silence. They may never come forward about what they're going through, whether that's issues at home, bullying, depression or thoughts of self-harm. It's disheartening to know that you know you can help these students - but you can't address what you can't see.

Wellness monitoring software detects signs of self-harm, suicide, depression, violence and bullying. Relying on web filtering technology, the software looks for signs of trouble by scanning web search queries, emails, documents saved on Google Drive or OneDrive, and social media posts.

The software alerts you to students who are searching harmful or concerning content and are showing potential signs of distress in their online activities. You're able to assess the situation and intervene if appropriate. It could mean catching a student early in a depressive episode rather than after the student has attempted self-harm or worse.



Kids may not tell the whole truth to their teachers and parents.

But they never lie to Google.

2

Intervening quickly is difficult when you can't identify at-risk and vulnerable students

We know that early detection can make all of the difference in a child's life. If you can intervene earlier, you have the opportunity to help a struggling student before they spiral downward to a point where they feel helpless or hopeless.

When you can address student wellness proactively, you can ward off issues when they're still treatable. But when you're responsible for the health and wellness of hundreds of students, how can you possibly know how each one is doing?

You know with student wellness monitoring. With the help of a wellness monitoring solution, you're able to quickly pinpoint students who are showing signs of trouble. You can track students' wellness levels over time to see if they're trending positively or negatively. With the ability to easily identify downward trends at a glance, you can intervene where and when you're needed most — even with limited resources.

“

“Having DSL teams for all 36 of our schools, they were able to process and create meaningful reports and able to see the specific information about the students in each case. This was a massive change from having absolutely no visibility.”

Daniel Smart

Technical Service Delivery Manager,
Greenwood Academies Trust

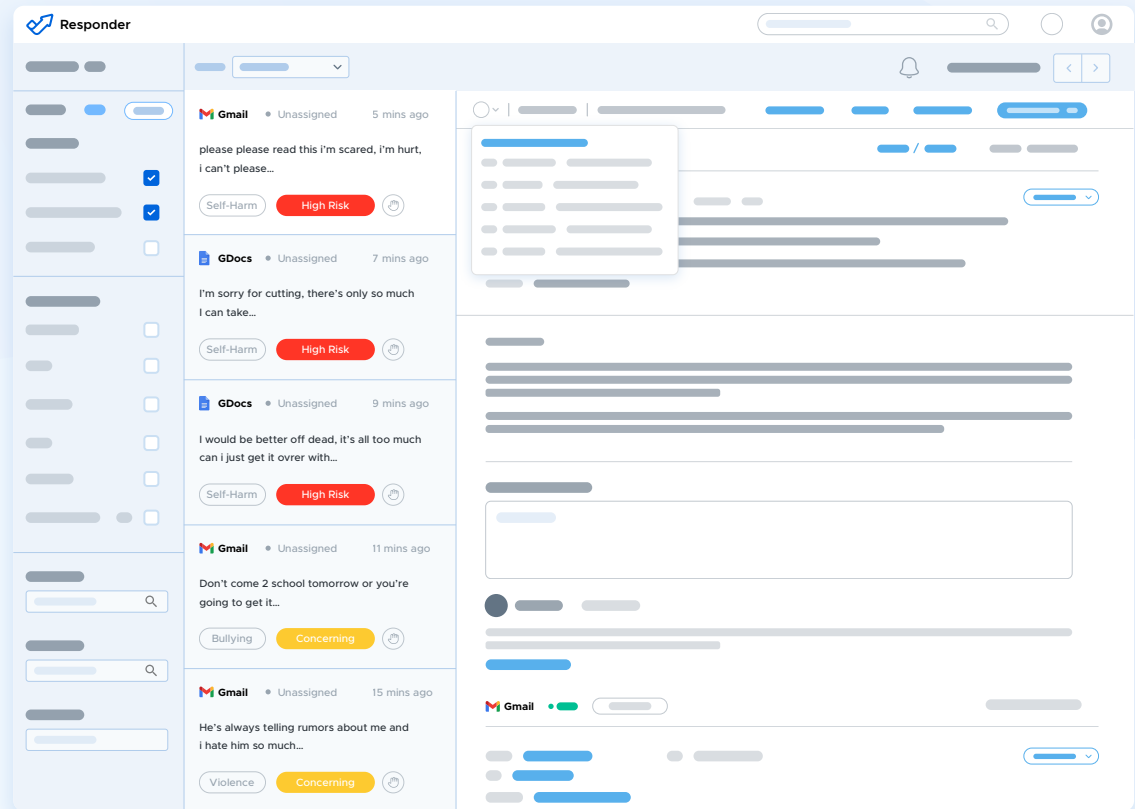
Once you know which students need support, you need effective and efficient case management

Your ability to identify the students most in need of support is essential. But once you've identified them, you also need to ensure they've been assigned and are being monitored and managed to successful resolution.

A student wellness monitoring solution that provides comprehensive case management tools lets you centralise and streamline caseload management. You're able to assign flagged alerts to the appropriate school counsellor or support staff so they can track the alert to resolution.

Wellness monitoring with case management capabilities also provides detailed case records. You're able to easily stay on top of cases and help your staff monitor in-progress cases to completion. These records can prove invaluable. They also serve as real-world case studies for staff training and CPD.

Imagine knowing how your students are really doing and being able to quickly identify those who are vulnerable. With wellness monitoring you can. You're able to see the warning signs that a student is struggling so you can intervene and offer support — before the worst happens.



What to look for in a wellness monitoring solution

Now that you know how wellness monitoring solutions work and why they're necessary, you're ready to look at solutions. Here are the questions you need to ask vendors to ensure you choose the right wellness monitoring solution for your needs.



1. Is the solution backed by AI?

There are two reasons for seeking out an AI-based solution:

- **Speed:** AI is able to perform more actions than any team of human beings ever could. AI is able to scan millions of Google Workspace and Microsoft 365 activities at any given moment, providing more real-time safety monitoring and analysis than is humanly possible.
- **Privacy:** Because AI is performing the scanning, your students' private data, personal details and images are not being seen by any human being. Look for a solution from a company that takes data privacy and security seriously.

2. Does the solution offer comprehensive scanning of students' online activities?

When shopping for a wellness monitoring solution, keep in mind that it is not as simple as a web filter that blocks inappropriate content. The monitoring your school needs performs at all levels of your students' online experience, including:

• Email

It should be able to detect concerning activities like:

- A confession to a friend about wanting to die
- Threats to a person or persons
- Bullying by an individual or group
- Potential cries for help

• Documents and files stored on Google Drive or OneDrive

It should be able to scan documents to identify:

- Suicide notes
- Detailed plans of violence
- Group bullying
- Writing indicative of worsening suicidal ideation
- Images (nudity, pornography)

• Search terms

It needs to be able to detect searches for information related to:

- Self-harm (e.g., What is cutting)
- Suicide (e.g., How to hang myself)
- Drug abuse (e.g., Where to buy Fentanyl)
- Eating disorders (e.g., How to lose 30lbs fast)
- Violence (e.g., How to build a pipe bomb)

• Social Media

It should be able to detect signs of concerning or harmful behavior on social media platforms, including:

- Instagram
- Facebook
- Quora
- Twitter
- Tumblr
- Pinterest

Gmail • Unassigned 5 mins ago
please please read this i'm scared, i'm hurt, i can't please...
Self-Harm High Risk

GDocs • Unassigned 7 mins ago
I'm sorry for cutting, there's only so much I can take...
Self-Harm High Risk

GDocs • Unassigned 9 mins ago
I would be better off dead, it's all too much can i just get it over with...
Self-Harm High Risk

Gmail • Unassigned 11 mins ago
Don't come 2 school tomorrow or you're going to get it...
Bullying Concerning

Gmail • Unassigned 15 mins ago
He's always telling rumors about me and i hate him so much...
Violence Concerning

All Clear
Concerning
High Risk
Critical

3. How does the solution ensure reliable results and minimise false positives?

Not all solutions are created equal. AI systems that have had more time and data to train their models will perform better than newer, untested solutions. Look at how long the company behind the solution has been around, and how long they've been using AI. The longer, the better. Also, be sure to ask the vendor about their reliability and accuracy rates.

4. Does the solution rely on multiple AI technologies?

With a large amount of data being fed into any wellness monitoring solution, different AI techniques need to be used to accurately evaluate different types of data. While keyword analysis can be useful for search queries, more advanced techniques like sentiment analysis and natural language processing (NLP) are better for longer text like documents or emails.

5. Does the solution provide context consideration?

Context is key, especially when analysing student wellness. A solution that can compare each student's past data against their current activities will help you identify emerging behavioral trends. AI systems that factor the context of activities into their evaluation will always perform better.

6. Does the solution provide a holistic view of individual student wellness?

Student wellness is never as simple as a single flagged activity or a single bad day. Comprehensive systems take into consideration both the context of a string of activities, as well as the student's activity history in order to assess a student's current wellness level. They also make it easy for busy staff to quickly identify students who are at-risk and may need immediate intervention.

7. Does the solution offer quarantine and recall features?

When students share emails containing violence or bullying, or files containing nudity, it's not enough to simply detect this activity. Comprehensive solutions should provide you with the ability to recall emails from recipient inboxes when an email is flagged and to quarantine images that contain nudity.

8. Does the solution allow delegation of alerts?

Some schools prefer to have sensitive alerts and quarantined material sent to administrators in different locations in the district to better respect student privacy. You want to make sure you have the flexibility to send alerts to whoever is the best to address them in your school or trust.

9. Does the solution provide nudity detection? And how are reviews conducted?

Whether inadvertently or intentionally, students may upload inappropriate images of themselves to their school accounts. AI systems can flag images for nudity extremely accurately and, once detected, quarantine them for review. In addition to quarantining nude images, ensuring that any flagged images are only reviewed by AI and not by outside human analysts ensures student safety and privacy. Any system relying on third-party human analysis introduces privacy concerns and presents the risk of these flagged images being leaked to the dark web.

10. How does the solution integrate with web filtering?

Often, wellness monitoring software gains added benefits when paired with a web filter from the same vendor. These benefits include allowing for better visibility into what activities students are taking before and after flagged activities, and being able to then access that data from a single interface.

11. Does the solution provide intervention tools to support student wellness?

When a student is displaying concerning activity, the ability to assess the severity of the situation and alerting the appropriate school staff is critical. However, there's more that can be done, no matter the severity of the situation. When this activity is detected, automatically presenting the student with mental health resources and the ability to reach out to a school counselor for help can save lives.

12. Does the solution provide the ability to proactively prevent bullying?

With AI powered detection, it is possible for student wellness solutions to determine if a student is composing a message that contains malicious language. These systems can proactively intervene before the student hits send, and let them reconsider their actions.

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“Securly flagged several searches by a student. This student had no [documented] issues of any sort with depression, but she was searching about suicide. Within moments of her counselor being alerted, the parents were notified, and the student was given help. The response was quick, and I believe it literally saved this student.”

Andrea Circle

Technical Support, Tecumseh Local Schools

Follow these 5 steps to choose the best wellness monitoring solution for you

With clarity about your student wellness objectives and the software requirements to meet them, you're ready to survey the field of potential vendors. This simple five-step process can help to inform your evaluation and the final decision-making process.

Step 1

Identify vendors for consideration

Begin the evaluation process by researching student wellness monitoring software solutions. In order to not get immediately overwhelmed with options, you'll want to establish criteria to help you sift through the options. If you limit your search to vendors that only serve schools, you'll have greater assurance that the software will provide the specific features and integration compatibility you need. Reading reviews and reviewing the vendors' websites for customer testimonials and case studies can also help you identify the best vendors for your needs.

Step 2

Evaluate a shortlist of vendors

Once you've identified your top three to five vendors, prepare a requirements document. You can reference the checklist in step 4 to help you develop this. Then ask each vendor to respond to your requirements in a proposal and provide any relevant support materials to substantiate the benefits and features of their solution and their ability to meet your needs. Also, provide them with a clear deadline to respond in order to keep your process moving.

Step 3

Test drive the solution

Take a good look under the bonnet of each software solution that you're evaluating. Vendors should offer a free trial or demo to allow you to experience the software for yourself. This is a great opportunity to thoroughly test features so you have a clear understanding of the pros and cons of each solution. And be sure to ask plenty of questions. A trial or demo is a perfect time to voice any concerns so you can feel confident you've chosen the best software for your needs, as well as a vendor that you enjoy working with and can rely on.

A test drive is also a great time to involve a member of your school or trust's IT department - someone who might be more familiar with the technical specifications and inner workings and who can ask questions from an IT perspective.

Step 4

Rate each vendor

Once you've evaluated vendors thoroughly, you may find it helpful to use a rating system to make your final decision. Using your requirements checklist, add a column for each vendor. Then rate each one on their ability to meet each requirement, using a simple point-based approach as follows:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 0 = does not meet requirement | 2 = somewhat supports requirement |
| 1 = limited support for requirement | 3 = meets or exceeds requirement |

You'll find a ready-made form you can use to rate vendors on the page that follows.

Step 5


Finalise your decision

For each vendor, assign the appropriate number of points for each requirement, then tally up their scores. This provides a quantitative and objective way of exploring your options to arrive at the best fit for your trust or school. Once you've identified the best solution, work with your chosen vendor to finalise the details and contract.

Wellness monitoring requirements list and vendor ratings

Use this list of requirements, adding your own if needed, to evaluate vendors. Rate each vendor as follows:

- 0** = does not meet requirement
- 1** = limited support for requirement
- 2** = somewhat supports requirement
- 3** = meets or exceeds requirement

Requirements	 securly	Vendor 2	Vendor 3
AI supported solution			
Advanced AI technologies (sentiment analysis, NLP)			
Scanning of web searches, sites and social posts			
Scanning of documents, drives and email			
Low false positive rate			
Context consideration			
AI-powered nudity flagging with privacy protection			
Quarantine and recall for nudity			
Alert delegation			
Web filter integration			
Holistic view of individual student wellness			
Proactive wellness intervention tools			
Proactive bullying intervention tools			
Case management			
High customer satisfaction ratings			
Human-supported analysis			
TOTAL			

Make the commitment to student wellness

To ensure your students' wellness and success, you need to be able to know how they're really doing mentally and emotionally. When you're able to rely on a wellness monitoring solution designed specifically for schools, you're able to:

- Know who's at risk of self-harm, suicide, depression, violence and bullying
- Proactively support vulnerable and at-risk students
- Gain a clear picture of each student's current wellness level
- Intervene quickly when wellness levels drop
- Use your student services resources most effectively
- Improve student outcomes across your school or trust

Use the guidelines in this guide to confidently move forward and make the best student wellness monitoring software decision for your school or trust.



Ready to get started?

With Securly Aware, you can identify the students who are most at-risk and intervene before the worst happens. You don't need to worry about your students' wellness when you can know for sure with Securly Aware.

[Get the brief](#)

[Request a demo](#)

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“Our school district was able to save the life of one of our students after hours. The alert email from Securly Aware showed the flagged search a student had just made on how to commit suicide. The appropriate school personnel were contacted, and they intervened to extend help to the student and their family that same evening. Having such a wonderful tool truly is a lifesaver!”

Denise DeJuliannie

Eden Valley-Watkins ISD 463



always connected.
always protected.

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