



Holistic, innovative, culturally-rooted healthcare

Idea 23	Equal valuing of and access to mental/emotional health resources
Proposal 23c	Use paid time off policies as a vehicle to destigmatize and normalize mental health
Description	Use PTO policies as a vehicle to destigmatize and normalize mental health by addressing mental/emotional needs for time off. Design a model for schools and workplaces that draws upon (but expands/advances) the way PTO has been rolled out in workplaces. Shift the narrative that the purpose of health is for working and for capitalistic productivity (“If you take a day off, you must be sick!”).
How will the proposed action advance equitable health and well-being?	
Is there work we can build on?	Workplace initiatives like providing “free days” each month, no questions asked. Such initiatives intentionally do not tie these days to “mental health days” or “sick days” or even just general “PTO,” but instead allow for people to need time and space without explanation. - but tying instead to need for time, space Lyra Health offers mental healthcare for companies
Who would have to act? Who would be key partners?	Large corporations: The bigger the corporation, the more likely it is for an initiative like this to catch on. Getting a big player involved would help create buzz. (If big players are already doing this type of work, amplifying it or designing press/attention around it as part of an overarching campaign toward normalizing self-care and wellness) School systems Human resources, policy makers, and company culture setters
A few high-level action steps	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Institute mental health days at schools to help students take the time and space for self-care. Ideally these would remove the connection between feeling or being sick and taking time off to ensure that students can make decisions to take care of themselves and not just recover from something in particular. 2. Monitor & adapt for unintended consequences. (Sometimes, there are unwritten rules for using free days that can have adverse effects on employees)



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Other comments or guidance	
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