A Collaborative Approach to Student Mental Health
Today’s Purpose

Provide:
- Provide information regarding student mental health

Define:
- Define the role of the School Social Worker, the School Psychologist, and the School Counselor

Outline:
- Outline how the three disciplines work collaboratively

Describe:
- Describe the importance of mental health interventions in the schools
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The Michigan School-Based Mental Health Providers (S-BMHP) collaboration seeks to identify and address systemic issues regarding student mental health. Through research, evidence-based practices, and community partner development, the Michigan Association of School Psychologists (MASP), The Michigan Association of School Social Workers (MASSW), and the Michigan School Counselor Association (MSCA) have committed to work jointly on improving the mental health of all students.
Why Mental Health in School Matters

Research indicates between 18-20 percent of students have mental health issues significant enough to cause impairment to major life functions (Dore, 2005), yet only 1 in 5 receives the necessary services (Kaffengerber, Seligman, 2007).

Furthermore, certain students, including students with disabilities, students of color, and students from low income families, are at greater risk for mental health challenges, but are even less likely to receive the appropriate services (Vera, Buhin, & Shin, 2006).

Students with untreated mental health issues may develop more significant problems which can greatly impact their educational experience and result in poor educational outcomes and possibly dropping out of school (Erford, Newsome, & Rock, 2007).
Why Mental Health in School Matters (pre-pandemic)

CDC’s Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance Data Summary & Trends Report: 2009-2019

- More than 1 in 3 high school students had experienced persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness in 2019, a 40 percent increase since 2009.
- In 2019, approximately 1 in 6 youth reported making a suicide plan in the past year, a 44% increase since 2009.

Youth are almost as likely to receive mental health services in an education setting as they are to receive treatment from a specialty mental health provider — in 2019, 15% of adolescents aged 12-17 reported receiving mental health services at school, compared to 17% who saw a specialty provider. (SAMHSA, 2019)

By 2016, one in six U.S. youth aged 6-17 experience a mental health disorder each year. Yet, about half of youth with mental health conditions received any kind of treatment over the course of a year. (Whitney & Peterson, 2018)
COVID-19 Impact Considerations on Mental Health

Students:

- As a result of the pandemic, the American Academy of Pediatrics declared children and adolescent mental health as a national emergency (2021)
- Many have experienced grief, loss, isolation, and complex trauma; students have increased stressors and anxiety pertaining to physical and psychological safety

Adults:

- Over 75% of adults report increased stress levels during COVID-19 (APA Stress in America Survey, 2021) (Families, caretakers, staff, administrators…)
- Staff and administrative mental health needs have increased
  - Burnout and Stress are at an all time high among educators (APA, 2022)
  - Increase risk of suicidality– difficult to meet needs and demands of all with staffing shortages and safety concerns (NPR, 2022)
### Treatment of Mental Health Conditions (NASP, 2019)

| 20% of students have been diagnosed with a mental health condition, but **only 1 in 5** students who have mental health difficulties are receiving treatment | **Schools are optimal locations** for students to receive counseling and support for mental health difficulties since children spend 7 hours a day in this location | School based mental health providers work in a **collaborative manner with teachers, parents, and students** to provide optimal services for children | School based mental health providers have **unique knowledge of school systems** and are trained to collaborate with other professionals in the school setting |
“When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, ‘Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping.’”

-Mr. Rogers
The Role of School Counselors, School Psychologists, and School Social Workers

- Conduct assessments, counseling, and other mental health and academic services
- Work with children individually and in groups
- Collaborate with parents, teachers, and administrators
- Help schools, families, and communities provide successful outcomes for ALL students
## School Counselors, School Psychologists, and School Social Workers

Promote Positive Behavior and Mental Health & Wellness

- Improve students' communication and social skills
- Assess student emotional and behavioral needs
- Provide individual and group counseling
- Promote problem solving, anger management, and conflict resolution
- Reinforce positive coping skills and resilience
- Promote positive peer relationships and social problem solving
- Make referrals to and help coordinate community services provided in schools
School Counselors, School Psychologists, and School Social Workers Create Safe, Positive School Climates

- Conduct suicide and threat assessments to ensure student safety
- School Counselors, School Psychologists, and School Social Workers Create Safe, Positive School Climates
- Prevent bullying and other forms of violence
- Support social-emotional learning
- Assess school climate and improve school connectedness
- Implement and promote positive discipline and restorative justice
- Implement school-wide positive behavioral supports
- Identify at risk students and school vulnerabilities
- Provide crisis prevention and intervention services
- Conduct suicide and threat assessments to ensure student safety
Promote student motivation and engagement

Conduct psychological and academic assessments

Individualize instruction and interventions

Improve student and classroom behavior

Monitor student progress

Reduce inappropriate referrals to special education

Collect and interpret student and classroom data

School Counselors, School Psychologists, and School Social Workers Promote Academic Achievement
School Counselors, School Psychologists, and School Social Workers Support Diverse Learners

- Assess diverse learning needs
- Provide culturally responsive services to students and families from diverse backgrounds
- Plan appropriate Individualized Education Programs for students with disabilities
- Modify and adapt curricula and instruction
- Adjust classroom facilities and routines to improve student engagement and learning
- Monitor and effectively communicate with parents about student progress
School Mental Health Professionals

School-employed mental health professionals focus on how a student’s behavior impacts their ability to learn and be successful in school.

Community-employed mental health professionals in schools focus on a student’s global mental health and how it impacts family, community, work and school.

Community-employed mental health providers vary in their level of experience and training related to schools

School mental health services should provide seamless, coordinated support
School Counselors, School Psychologists, and School Social Workers Conduct Interventions

We engage in the following interventions at the school level:

- Promoting Social Emotional Learning
- Connecting families with community resources
- Counseling
- Signs of Suicide training
- Academic interventions and behavior plans
- Threat assessment
- Collaborating with outside providers
- Suicide assessment
| Help families understand their child’s learning and mental health needs | Assist in navigating special education processes | Connect families with community service providers when necessary |
| Help effectively engage families with teachers and other school staff | Enhance staff understanding and responsiveness to diverse cultures and backgrounds | Help students transition between school and community learning environments, such as residential treatment or juvenile justice programs |
School Counselors, School Psychologists, and School Social Workers Provide Crisis Response Services

Lead, participate, and inform crisis response teams to provide emotional support after a myriad of crises:

- Suicide of students
- Death of teachers, staff members, and students
- Natural disasters and pandemics
- Car accidents with student deaths or severe injuries
- Counseling and support during and after crises
Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)

School-Based Mental Health Professionals work within an MTSS Framework

Rooted in supporting whole child (behavioral, social-emotional, and academic)
Providing Comprehensive & Integrated Mental Health Services in Michigan’s Schools

**School mental health professional and community providers**

**Intensive School Interventions**
- Community Support
- IEPs, behavior plans, progress monitoring
- Individual Interventions

**Targeted Interventions**
- Assessments, academic supports, individual and small group interventions
- Strategies for parents and teachers

**School-Based Prevention & Universal Interventions**
- Positive school climate and sense of belonging
- School emotional learning
- School-wide Positive Behavioral Supports
- Bullying prevention programs

**Students with severe/chronic problems**

**At-risk students**

**All students**

School mental health professionals
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>School Counselor</strong></th>
<th><strong>School Psychologist</strong></th>
<th><strong>School Social Worker</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Master’s degree</td>
<td>Specialist Degree</td>
<td>Master of Social Work (MSW) degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum 600 hours internship</td>
<td>600 hour practicum in school psychology + 1,200 hour internship</td>
<td>500 hour internship with children or youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 semester credit hours or 150 SCECHs or 150 hours of DPPD</td>
<td>6 semester credit hours or 150 SCECHs or 150 hours of DPPD</td>
<td>45 hours of board approved continuing education</td>
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School Social Work
NATIONAL PRACTICE MODEL

- Home-School-Community System Linkages
- Data-Based Decision-Making
- Educational Rights and Advocacy
- Ethical Guidelines and Educational Policy

- Provide Scientifically Supported Education, Behavior, and Mental Health Services
  - Implement multi-tiered programs and practices
  - Monitor progress
  - Evaluate effectiveness

- Promote School Climate and Culture Conducive to Learning
  - Facilitate student, family, and community engagement
  - Enhance capacity of school personnel
  - Promote effective policies and procedures

- Maximize School-Based and Community Resources
  - Promote a continuum of services
  - Mobilize resources and promote assets
  - Provide innovative leadership, interdisciplinary collaboration, systems coordination, and professional consultation

Improving Academic and Behavioral Outcomes
School Social Work Association of America®
National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) Practice Model

NASP Practice Model (2020)
## Barriers to Intervention

Limited access to school mental health staff

| 1.7 million students are in schools with police but no counselors | 3 million students are in schools with police but no nurses | 6 million students are in schools with police but no school psychologists | 10 million students are in schools with police but no social workers | 14 million students are in schools with police but no counselors, nurses, school psychologists, or social workers |
## Barriers to Intervention

Professional to student ratios

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Recommended</th>
<th>Actual</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School Counselors</td>
<td>250:1</td>
<td>693:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Psychologists</td>
<td>500:1</td>
<td>1,521:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Social Workers</td>
<td>250:1</td>
<td>1,051:1</td>
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How do we increase mental health supports?

Recruitment and Retention of qualified professionals to work within school environments

Recruitment Need: Funding and Supportive cultures/climates

Retention Need: Support staff mental health needs as well; build resiliency for ALL