

SCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH SPOTLIGHT

Rural Community Collaboration



Trempealeau Valley



Blair-Taylor, Whitehall, and Independence Schools

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

As part of the Trempealeau Valley Consortium 2.0, the schools of Blair-Taylor, Independence, and Whitehall work together to provide services for students, and this includes for mental health needs. The goals of the program are to form closer working relationships with our community mental health providers, have a clearer threshold for making mental health referrals, better track our mental health needs, and work together with the consortium schools to better inform each district's staff of mental health needs.

The community providers we have worked with say they enjoy working with our district because we put mental health as a priority.

KEY CONTRIBUTORS

Mental Health Navigators

Student Services Teams

Community Mental
Health Partners



ENGAGING WITH FAMILIES

The schools have been able to partner with families more by engaging them in all parts of the mental health pathway. Parents have been provided with resources and a webpage for families about mental health from the consortium. This webpage includes videos about the services provided in the district, videos from community mental health providers, and information about self-care. Parents also come to student assistance team meetings where mental health is brought up as part of the whole child approach. Families are aware of the mental health screening and are informed when their children flag on the screener. Families are included in conversations when children are struggling and give consent for their children to be in groups. Parents fill out the paper work for the community providers.

UNIVERSAL APPROACHES

Each school district of the consortium engages in a mental health screener of students to determine if there are unmet needs of our students. Our schools also engage in social emotional learning for our students across the grade levels. All middle school and high school students are trained in suicide prevention, and the schools have been working on understanding trauma & helping staff put trauma sensitive practices into place.

IMPROVED REFERRAL PATHWAYS

We use screeners, student wellness check-ins, and teacher input for identifying students. The student services teams meet regularly to talk about students in need and plan for how to best support them. More students have been able to participate in groups provided through the schools. Our community mental health providers have been more integrated into the school community. We have engaged providers to meet with individual students, and their needs, and they have presented to some classes about strategies for self care. Our processes for community referrals have improved, and our tracking of students in services has also improved.

CELEBRATING OUTCOMES

Overall, we have served more students over the course of our mental health grant than when we started. Our numbers of providers able to see students has increased, as has the number of days providers are coming to the district. Students are more comfortable talking about their mental health or wellness needs, and staff are able to better make appropriate referrals. We have increased the number of groups that focus on wellness and mental health needs and increased the number of students seeing community mental health providers.



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