Building Statewide Capacity for Children’s Mental Health

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What is mental health?

- Reaching emotional milestones
- Learning healthy social skills
- Coping when there are problems
- Having resilience
- Being able to show empathy
What is a mental health disorder?

• Serious
• Ongoing
• Disruptive to daily life
• Biological, psychological, and environmental risk factors
Often they go untreated. But are treatable.
Symptoms by age 24
Symptoms by age 14
A comprehensive approach that includes key mental health components

Promotion of emotional well-being and connectedness

Identification of students at risk

Having timely resources and being prepared to respond
AG Coffman Announces Funding for First-of-its-Kind Pediatric Mental Health Initiative

DENVER, Colo. — Today, Colorado Attorney General Cynthia H. Coffman announced that her office will provide a $2.6 million grant to launch a transformational initiative that will increase access to mental health services and support for young people across Colorado. Attorney General Coffman’s Office was joined by Jeni Hausmann, President & CEO of Children’s Hospital Colorado, Andrew Romanoff, President and CEO of Mental Health Colorado, and young people from the community.

"Bold action is needed to save lives and get mental health treatment to Colorado’s children,” said Attorney General Coffman. “We have a crisis on our hands with more adolescents and teens taking their own lives, battling depression, and struggling with undiagnosed behavioral disorders. Teachers see it, parents suspect it, friends and classmates know it. It isn’t a lack of caring that’s at issue. It is an unconscionable lack of resources devoted to the mental health of children. We have to approach mental illness differently, collaboratively, and I challenge others to continue what we are starting today."

The grant will support Partners for Children’s Mental Health (PCMH), a Center of Excellence that brings together nonprofits, pediatric experts, government agencies and thought partners across the state who share a deep commitment and concern for the current pediatric mental health crisis in Colorado, where suicide is the leading cause of death for youth ages 10-24. PCMH, led by Children’s Hospital Colorado, will improve the delivery of care and engage with kids earlier to prevent mental health problems from escalating to emergencies.

The Attorney General’s Office has a longstanding commitment to mental health and runs the Safe2Tell program, an anonymous way for students, parents, school staff and community members to report concerns about their safety or the safety of others. Since 2011, suicide has been the No. 1 most reported concern to Safe2Tell.
3 components:
- Public engagement
- Implementation
- Expansion

2 years

178 school districts

1,888 schools

900,000 students
WHOLE SCHOOL, WHOLE COMMUNITY, WHOLE CHILD
FRAMEWORK

HEARING REAL STORIES
PUBLIC INPUT

UNDERSTANDING WHAT WORKS
RESEARCH
Top 10 school mental health practices

Best practices that positively impact students
Top 10 Practices

1. Mental health as part of overall health & wellness
2. Screening, identification, and referral systems
3. Social & emotional learning and resilience
4. Stigma reduction
5. Positive behavior interventions & supports
6. School-based health centers supporting mental health
7. Partnerships with mental health professionals
8. Teacher wellness programs and support
9. Trauma-informed practice
10. Suicide prevention initiatives
School Assessment Tool: A Checklist

After reading the What works? section of this toolkit, reach out to your school champion and/or school or district administrator to assess needs. For each of these best practices, determine with your team or among your core leadership (which may vary depending on how you are addressing mental health in your district or school) which score best matches to your progress in each of the 10 best practices and write this score next to each practice.

1—We are not implementing this
2—We are not formally implementing this, but have some related efforts
3—We have a plan in place to implement this, and have had some success
4—We have a plan in place to implement this and feel that it has been successful
5—We have policies in place to implement and evaluate this and it is sustainable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Score (1-5)</th>
<th>Best Practice</th>
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<td>A trauma-informed program or approach</td>
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<td>A suicide prevention program</td>
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In addition, ask the school officials:

1. What do you consider the biggest mental health or social emotional learning needs in your school district?

2. What kind of funding needs do you have?

3. What does your school/district need the most help with to improve or increase mental health services?
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