Research on Promoting School Safety by Addressing School Mental Health

School Responder Model & AMHT-SRO

2019 Annual Conference on Advancing School Mental Health
November 8, 2019
NCYOJ’s NIJ School Safety Study

• To examine the effects of the School Responder Model (SRM) and Adolescent Mental Health Training – School Resource Officers (AMHT-SRO), both independently and collectively, on key outcome measures

• To measure any differences in outcomes due to local variations in resources

Acknowledgements
Assessing a School, Justice and Behavioral Health Collaborative Approach to Improving School Safety

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Partners
LSU Health New Orleans
Addressing the School Safety Challenge

Presenting Challenge

• Identifying youth with behavioral health needs.

• Developing appropriate responses to address need in the school setting.
School Responder Models
Typical Response Models

Traditional School-Justice Pathway

- School Infraction
- Out of School Suspension
- Arrest
- Entry into the Juvenile Justice System
A School Responder Model is a behavioral health response:

- School Infraction
- School Discipline Based on Graduated Response/Restorative Justice Model
- Responder Completes Behavioral Health Screening
- Clinical Assessment for Youth Who Flag on Screening
- Treatment Plan and Connection to Behavioral Health Services
SRM: Four Key Activities

- Form a Cross-Systems Collaborative Team
- Engage Families and Youth
- Implement a Behavioral Health Response
- Create Formal Structures
What We Know...

Connecticut
- 34% reduction in court referrals
- Connected 47% more students to behavioral health services
- 4300+ teachers and staff have been trained to recognize trauma and mental health concerns

Nevada
- 100% of students are screened
- 15% reduction in referrals to probation

Schenectady High School, New York
- 70% reduction in superintendent hearings in 2017-2018 when compared to the previous year

ReNew Accelerated High School, Louisiana
- 49% decrease in suspensions in the 2018-2019 school year when compared to the previous year
Adolescent Mental Health Training for School Resource Officers & Educators
AMHT-SRO

Overview

• 1.5 day training
• Audience: School resource officers and security, administrators and educators
• Focus on skill-building

Topics Covered

• Adolescent development
• Child trauma, historical trauma and intergenerational trauma, and the family experience
• Signs and symptoms of behavioral health conditions, neurodevelopmental disorders, and suicide
• Crisis intervention and de-escalation
• Roles and responsibilities
• Establishing community partnerships
Intervention Groups – 16 Sites

- **Group A:**
  - SRM & AMHT-SRO (4 high schools)

- **Group B:**
  - SRM Only (4 high schools)

- **Group C:**
  - AMHT-SRO Only (4 high schools)

- **Group D:**
  - Controls (4 high schools)
Data and Methods

- Quasi-experimental design and a convergent parallel mixed method approach to data collection and analysis (data collection ongoing)

- **Quantitative**: youth-level administrative data from the schools, behavioral health providers, and law enforcement, as well as school-level surveys on climate and culture

- **Qualitative**: interviews, focus groups, and observations with system professionals
Overview of Data Collection

Quantitative Data Constructs
Youth-Level:
• Demographics
• Academic & Disciplinary Records
• Juvenile Justice System Involvement
• Behavioral Health Utilization

Organizational-Level:
• High Schools: Climate and culture.
• NCYOJ Intervention Implementation Team: Quality of intervention services (e.g. satisfaction and knowledge gained).

Community-Level:
• Measures of human, social and financial capital.

Organizational-Level:
• High Schools, Law Enforcement and Mental Health Agencies:
  • Climate, culture and attitudes regarding discipline and mental health.
  • Readiness for and managing change.
  • Organizational resources.
• NCYOJ Intervention Implementation Team: Quality of intervention services provided.

Cross-Organizational Level:
• High Schools-Law Enforcement Agencies-Mental Health Agencies: Collaborative structures and practices.

Sources of Quantitative Data
• Administrative data from high schools, and state-level agencies for justice and health.
• School climate survey administered to school leadership, faculty and staff members.
• Satisfaction surveys and questionnaires completed by those in participating organizations.
• Community data from the American Community Survey (ACS).

Sources of Qualitative Data
• Individual interviews with school and agency administrators/leaders, educators, law enforcement officers, mental health practitioners and student support staff in schools.
• Group interviews with educators, student support staff, and mental health practitioners.
• School policies and procedures.
Challenges

- Staff Turnover
- Transforming Culture
- Integrating into Existing Efforts
- Family Engagement

*I’m at ground zero.*
– SRM Implementation Site Staff

Students participate in a restorative justice circle. (Cliff Grassmick/Digital First Media/Boulder Daily Camera via Getty Images) | www.the74million.org
Challenges

- Existing Policies
- Few Community Champions
- Securing Buy-In
- Creating a Permanent Structure

"If the hearing officer decides to expel, that’s just what it is."
– SRM Implementation Site Staff

School staff participate in the NCY0J Family Engagement Seminar
Lessons Learned

1. Construct Interdisciplinary Intermediary Team
2. Incorporate Peer-to-Peer Learning Opportunities
3. Mentor a Community-Based Intermediary Group
Questions and Discussion

Thank you!
Contact Us

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