

# Incorporating Substance Use Treatment in Schools

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Introducing Behavioral Health Treatment Options to Schools

# Objectives

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- Discuss the need for offering substance use treatment options in Rhode Island schools, particularly Providence Public School District
- Provide a brief overview of the substance use treatment model Rhode Island chose for young adults ages 12-25 years of age
- Identify challenges with implementing the model within the schools
- Review lessons learned and next steps for us with this project



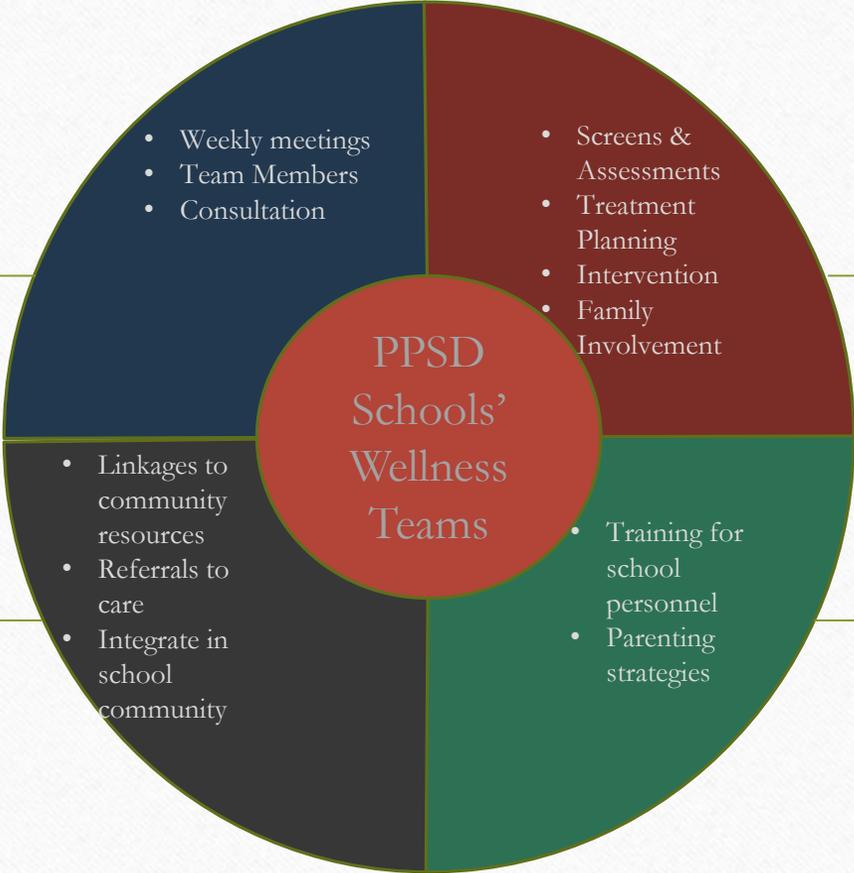
**Family Service**  
OF RHODE ISLAND

# Family Service of Rhode Island

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- Non-profit human services agency
- Serving the community for over 125 years
- Provide outpatient mental health, residential treatment, case management for underserved/low income individuals and families
- Programming for individuals from birth through adulthood
- Trauma-informed & evidence-based practices
- Committed to incorporating substance use work through the community health teams, primary care, pregnant and parenting mothers, residential programs, and general outpatient services, along with AIDS Project Rhode Island

PPSD  
Schools'  
Wellness  
Teams



Collaboration

- Weekly meetings
- Team Members
- Consultation

Clinical Care

- Screens & Assessments
- Treatment Planning
- Intervention
- Family Involvement

Community

- Linkages to community resources
- Referrals to care
- Integrate in school community

Sharing Expertise

- Training for school personnel
- Parenting strategies

# Providence Public Schools

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- Johns Hopkins Report:
  - Across all grade levels, 90% of students not proficient in Math and 86% not proficient in English Language Arts
  - Overburdened with multiple layers of governance and bureaucracy with no clear path to get anything done
  - Overwhelming number of students and teachers reported not feeling safe in their school, which correlates to high numbers of both student and teacher absenteeism
  - Teacher report they do not feel supported, given limited opportunities for professional development and have severe constraints regarding hiring and removing teachers
  - Principals have limited ability to create change within their schools and are often blamed for processes out of their control
  - Parents (majority Latino) report feeling demoralized due to little effort to incorporate them in the learning process
  - Buildings are crumbling

# What Rhode Island Youth are Facing



One in five middle school students have tried drinking alcohol.



While smoking cigarettes among high school students has declined, 4 in 10 students have used an e-cigarette.



12% of high schoolers and 4% middle schoolers used prescription drugs not prescribed to them



23% report current use of marijuana

# THE SEVEN CHALLENGES®

The Seven Challenges is a healthy decision making model designed for youth ages 12-25 years of age dealing with alcohol and other drug use.

- Not an abstinence model
- Flexibility with modality: individual, group, and home based

**1** We decided to open up and talk honestly about ourselves and about alcohol and other drugs.

**2** We looked at what we liked about alcohol and other drugs, and why we were using them.

**3** We looked at our use of alcohol and other drugs to see if it had caused harm, or could cause harm.

**4** We looked at our responsibility and the responsibility of others for our problems.

**5** We thought about where we seemed to be headed, where we wanted to go, and what we wanted to accomplish.

**6** We made thoughtful decisions about our lives and about our use of alcohol and other drugs.

**7** We followed through on our decisions about our lives and drug use. If we saw problems, we went back to earlier challenges and mastered them.

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## The Seven Challenges

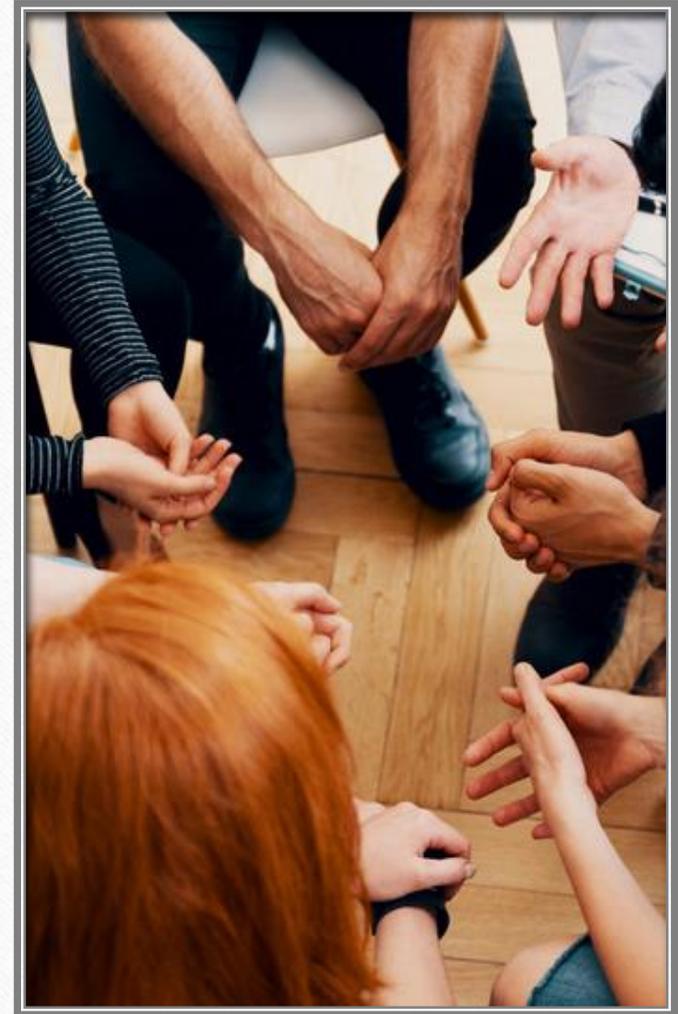
Challenging ourselves to make wise decisions about alcohol and other drugs

**7**  
CHALLENGES



# ACTIVITY

Putting it into  
practice



Experimental  
Use

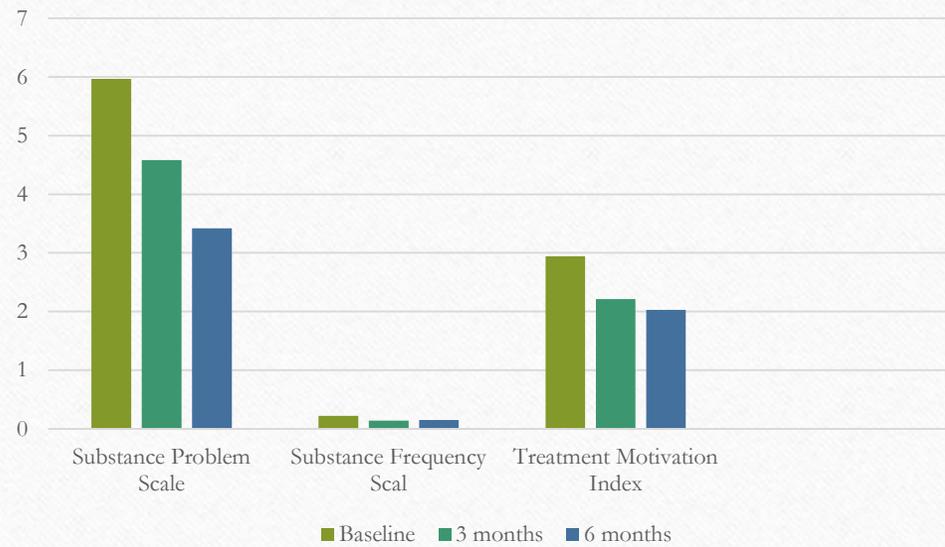
Regular Use

Harmful  
Abuse

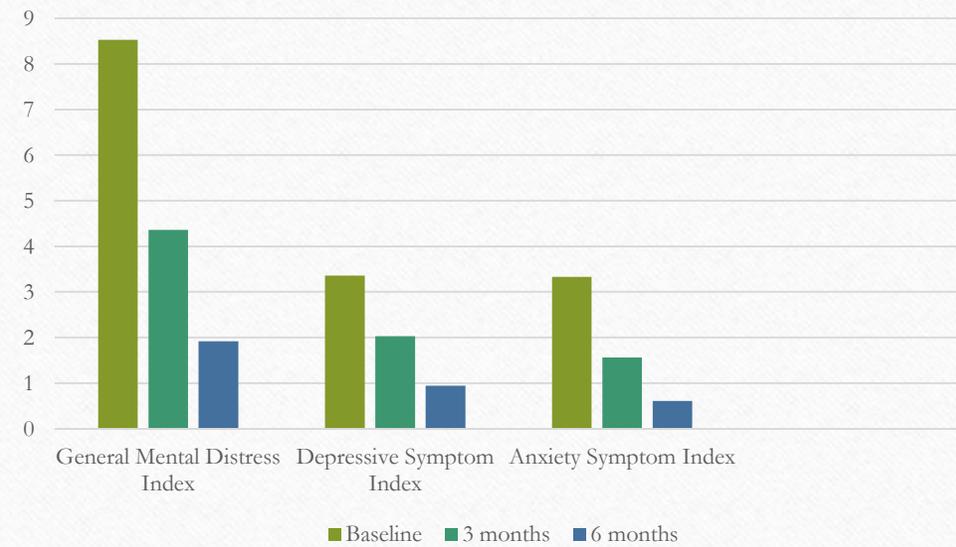
Drug  
Dependence

# Data

Substance Related and Treatment Motivation Changes from Baseline to 6 months Post Baseline



Mental Health Changes from Baseline to 6 Months Post Baseline



# Internal Data

## FSRI and CCAP combined 2018-2019

### Academic Year

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- 1 group, 7 participants
- 5 of 7 participants reported reduction or abstinence by end of the school year.
- All 7 reported a reduction in school incidences and 0 incidents involved substances
- FSRI has serviced 10 individual adolescents
  - 2 have completed the program reporting reduction in use, 1 is finishing up and has not used since January 2019
  - 1 transitioned to a new school and did not elect to be followed by a clinician
  - 3 did not engage in the program after initial referral
  - 3 are currently actively participating in the program at various stages

# Challenges vs. Benefits of Implementation in Schools

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## Challenges

- Buy in
- Confidentiality within school and with guardians
- Space
- Time – pulling students out of class
- Sustainable Funding
- Student Absenteeism
- Staff Retention

## Benefits

- Easy access for students
- Serve a lot of students in one place
- Peer community/ownership of issues
- Flexible model

“It makes me feel that someone else gets that it’s not easy  
to want to quit.”

“They (the facilitators) trust me.”

“I feel safe to say anything.”

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Moving in the Right Direction

# Lessons Learned and Next Steps

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- Simultaneously launching mental health services and substance use treatment within the schools has been difficult
- Widening the focus of advertising to include community recreation centers, YMCAs, libraries, police departments, family and drug courts, etc.
- Train more clinicians from various departments to have a wider reach
- Brief Challenges

# References

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- The Rhode Island State Health Improvement Plan. (2017, July 28). Retrieved October 29, 2019, from <http://www.eohhs.ri.gov/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/SIM/HFA04OpioidUseDisorders.pdf>.
- Sally J. Stevens, Robert Schwebel PhD & Bridget Ruiz (2007): Seven Challenges: An Effective Treatment for Adolescents with Co-Occurring Substance Abuse and Mental Health Problems, *Journal of Social Work Practice in the Addictions*, 7:3, 29-49
- Smith, D. C., Hall, J. A., Williams, J. K., & Gotman, N. (2010, February 18). Comparative Efficacy of Family and Group Treatment for Adolescent Substance Abuse. Retrieved from <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1080/10550490601006253>.