BRYT AND SCHOOL-BASED BRIDGE PROGRAMS:
Presentation to 23rd Annual Conference on Advancing School Mental Health

October 11, 2018
Introductions
BRYT and Bridge Programs: A Growing Network and Movement

*2004:* First Transition Program at Brookline High

*2010:* Replication begins; 1st Teens in Transition Symposium;

*2013:* Formal program evaluation initiated

*2015:* Strategic plan completed; Evaluation completed

*2016:* BRYT team expanded; Systematized key program elements; Expanded TA; Public awareness campaign

*2018 and beyond:* Expansion to middle and elementary schools; Program improvement

Begin planning for multi-state network

- **8** school programs in MA
- **18** school programs in MA
- **40** school programs in MA
- **50** programs in MA
- **100+** programs in MA
- **89** school programs in MA
- **125** school programs in MA
- **200** programs in MA
- **2004**: First Transition Program at Brookline High
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Begin planning for multi-state network
Public schools have become the de facto safety net provider for students with mental health disorders.

- Lack of Hospital Care
- Lack of Aftercare Resources
- Inadequate Insurance Coverage
- Lack of Outpatient Mental Health Treatment
- Limitations of Special Education Funding
- DCF Policies
- Fragmented Service Systems

Public Secondary Schools
Sam is a 12th grader with a history of Crohn’s Disease. Although he’s had absences over the past two years, Sam has been able to successfully re-enter school after each flare up with the support of his guidance counselor, teachers and school nurse.

When he returned to school this fall, he told his guidance counselor he’d been depressed all summer. He had another flare-up in mid-September, and then, two weeks ago, failed an exam in calculus, one of his favorite subjects.

After Sam revealed to his counselor he was feeling pretty hopeless and actually thinking about suicide, he was hospitalized in a psychiatric unit. Yesterday, Sam’s mother called the school nurse to let her know Sam will be returning to school on Monday.
1. In order for Sam to be successful (from both an academic and a social-emotional standpoint) in returning to school and completing the year on track for graduation, what supports are he and his family likely to need?

2. If Sam were just returning to your school now, what would be his likely experience, and how does that experience compare to the supports you just described?
Secondary students need support after missing extensive amounts of school/class due to a variety of causes.

Number vary, but of every 100 students in a given year, about ten student will have prolonged absences:

- psychiatric and/or medical crises (3 to 4 students)
- untreated mental health challenges (3 to 4 students)
- long-term suspension (1 or 2 students)
- parenting leave (1 student)
- life circumstances (1 student)
Presenting Problems among Students in Transition Programs in BRYT Evaluation Study

- Mood disorder: 55%
- Anxiety disorder: 39%
- Concussion: 17%
- Other medical disorder: 10%
- Substance abuse: 7%
- Eating disorder: 6%
- Other psychiatric disorder: 4%
- Autism spectrum disorder: 3%
- Infectious disease: 2%
- Psychotic disorder: 1%
- Cancer: 1%
Bridge* programs employ a customized transition planning and support process.

Planning, support and engagement with the student, family, school staff, and providers extend from the return to school through the student’s transition out of the program (8-12 wks).

*`Bridge’ is the generic term for programs following the BRYT model; BRYT is an acronym for “Bridge for Resilient Youth in Transition”.
The “4 S’s” of the BRYT Model

Students
Space
Services
Staffing
Space: BRYT programs are located in a dedicated classroom in the school

- Fully accessible - near an exit
- Open during full school day
- Both work space and informal seating
- Private meeting space
The customized case plan for each student addresses:

- Academic Support
- Clinical Support
- Family Support
- Care Coordination
Staffing

Typically comprised of:
- Program Leader/Clinician (Social Worker/Counselor/Psychologist)
- Academic Coordinator (Teacher or Classroom Aide/Tutor)

Different schools use different staffing patterns.
BRYT embraces the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) framework

**Core:** What all students need and receive in order to be successful

**Tier I**
- All students

**Tier II**
- ~15-20%
  - Supplemental Supports *(Core + More): What some students need and receive in order to be successful*

**Tier III**
- ~5-10%
  - Intensive Supports *(Core + More + More): What a few seriously struggling students need*
Too often mental health supports are not fully integrated into a school’s MTSS map.
We propose a comprehensive and integrated multi-tiered system of supports

TIER 3 = INTENSIVE
Academic, SEL & Mental Health supports

TIER 2 = SUPPLEMENTAL
Academic, SEL & Mental Health supports

TIER 1 = CORE
Academic, SEL & Mental Health supports
Length of Program Enrollment (median stay - 10 weeks)

- 4 Weeks or Less: 19%
- 5-8 Weeks: 25%
- 9-12 Weeks: 20%
- 13-16 Weeks: 13%
- 17-20 Weeks: 7%
- 21-24 Weeks: 5%
- More than 24 Weeks: 12%
As a student progresses through BRYT, the amount of time spent in the regular classroom increases.
BRYT Evaluation Study 2013-2016

Data gathered on 375 students in eight schools with transition programs modeled on BRYT

Study includes demographic and clinical characteristics, length of stay, and student outcomes

Journal article with formal findings published in 2017 in Psychology in the Schools

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Average School Attendance Rates, Before and After Program Admittance
Changes in Well-Being Over Time

CAFAS Scores Among Participants with a Mental Health Diagnosis

Lower scores indicate better functioning; all differences are statistically significant.
Outcomes

85% of participants graduate or are on-track to graduate by the end of the year
BRYT Notes - 2018 research findings on BRYT’s impact on school culture

- Reduces stigma & facilitates inclusion
- Creates collaborative networks
- Provides scalable & actionable frameworks
- Drives innovation & flexibility

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What happened with Sam?
BRYT offers three kinds of support to schools during the planning phase:

1. Mapping pre-existing tiered supports
2. "Year Zero" data collection
3. Developing a comprehensive program plan
BRYT supports programs after start-up

**Technical Assistance**
- Intensity of support determined by school
- Grounded in program self-assessment rubric
- Can focus on any aspect of program development and/or student support

**Online Resources**
- BRYT Portal:
  - FERPA- and HIPPA-compliant student-level database
  - Comprehensive online resource library/toolkit

**Robust professional development**
- Annual symposium
- Quarterly regional PD sessions
- Special topic PD sessions
- Monthly online group consultation

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What ended in 1896?

1895
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