

# 2022 Annual Conference on Advancing School Mental Health

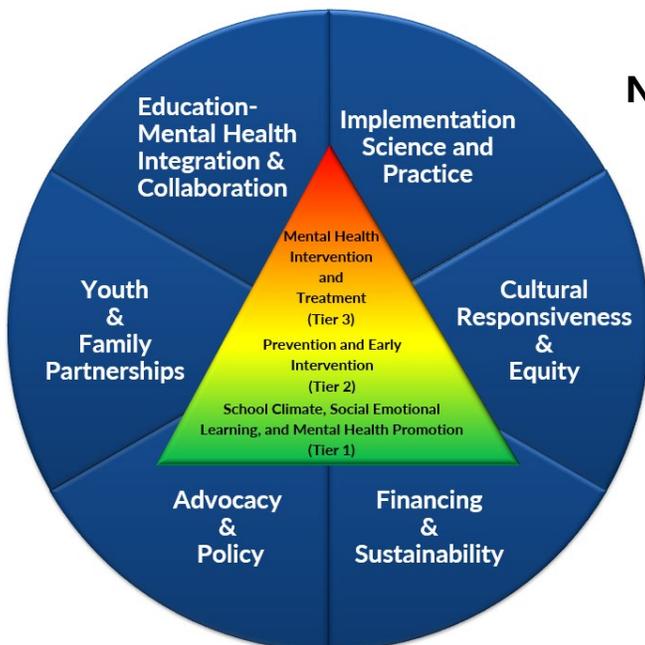
*Reflect, Recover, and Renew*

## On-Demand Conference Sessions



**October 17<sup>th</sup> – December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022**

*Hosted by the*  
**National Center for School Mental Health at the  
University of Maryland School of Medicine**





A special thank you to Te'a Brown, Claire Pfaffle, Kirstie Tomassetti, and our amazing group of interns who worked diligently and dedicated their skills to provide user-friendly showcases of pre-recorded, on-demand school mental health conference sessions!

## **SPECIALTY TRACKS**

### **1) School Climate and Universal Mental Health Promotion (Tier 1)**

This track focuses on mental health promotion services and supports (Tier 1), social emotional learning, and school climate. These include mental health-related activities, such as the promotion of positive social, emotional, and behavioral skills and wellness that are designed to meet the needs of all students, regardless of whether or not they are at risk for mental health problems. These activities can be implemented school-wide, at the grade level, and/or at the classroom level. This track also focuses on policies and practices to promote positive school climate by fostering safety; promoting a supportive academic, disciplinary, and physical environment; and encouraging and maintaining respectful, trusting, and caring relationships throughout the school community.

### **2) Prevention and Early Intervention (Tier 2)**

This track focuses on selective services and supports (Tier 2) to prevent mental health and substance use concerns for groups of students who have been systematically identified through referral, needs assessments and/or school teaming processes as being at risk for a given concern or problem. When student needs are identified and supported early on, problems can be eliminated or reduced, and student success is promoted. Sometimes these are referred to as mental health prevention or secondary prevention services.

### **3) Mental Health Intervention and Treatment (Tier 3)**

This track focuses on indicated and individualized services and supports (Tier 3) to address mental health and substance use concerns to meet the unique needs of each student who is displaying a particular concern and significant functional impairment. Sometimes these supports are referred to as mental health intervention, treatment, tertiary services, or intensive services.

**4) Implementation Science and Practice**

This track focuses on frameworks, strategies, and methods that support successful implementation of evidence-based services and supports in schools, especially as they relate to a multi-tiered system of student mental health supports and services (MTSS). Implementation frameworks, strategies, and methods can be applied to support the adoption, installation, ongoing implementation, and sustainability of practices in the “real world.” This includes the internal and external factors that influence the implementation of evidence-based school mental health services and supports.

**5) Education-Mental Health Integration and Collaboration**

This track focuses on the active exchange of ideas and collaborative engagement between school-employed and community-employed mental health providers, educators, and families. This track addresses how to develop and implement a culture of collaboration between mental health providers and educators to achieve shared outcomes for students and schools through research, policy, and practice. It includes content that equips and empowers educators in their roles as promoters of student mental health (e.g., educator training in mental health) and mental health staff to work effectively in schools.

**6) Youth and Family Partnerships**

This track focuses on youth- and family-centered principles with leadership from students and their family members. This track emphasizes a connection to meaningful youth and family partnership in all aspects (e.g., planning, development, implementation, evaluation, training) of comprehensive school mental health services and supports.

**7) Cultural Responsiveness and Equity**

This track focuses on practice, theory, and research specific to culturally diverse youth in schools. Specific issues such as stigma, cultural adaptations of evidence-based practices, reducing health disparities and disproportionality, meaningful family partnership, and cultural competence are considered in this track.

**8) Advocacy and Policy**

This track focuses on the development and advancement of school mental health legislation and policy at the school, district, state, and federal levels, including practical strategies and examples of success.

# School Climate and Mental Health Promotion (Tier 1)

[View Showcase for this Specialty Track](#) |

## **Using The Three Rs: Reflect, Recover, and Renew to Redefine School Nursing Practice: Students Still Facing Health Challenges**

*Cynthia Samuel, PhD RN, Irvington Board of Education, School Nurse*

This presentation discusses school nurses' constant role with students still struggling with mental health challenges from COVID-19. These behaviors lead to stressful environments at home, and in school leaving parents and teachers frustrated. Focus is on developing strategies for effective learning, health, and well-being. School Nurses are still collaborating with their districts, and community resources coordinating interventions to meet academic, health care, and cultural needs of students.

## **Trauma, Cortisol, and the Conflict Cycle in the Classroom**

*Steph Jensen, MS, Boys Town, Director*

Conflict in the classroom is inevitable, calming conflict is a skill. This session will focus on how to bring calm to conflict by understanding the role trauma and cortisol play in conflict and strategies to diffuse the effects in the classroom.

## **The Importance of Staff Wellness in a Comprehensive School Mental Health System**

*Michelle Gibeault, MA, Manchester School District, School Wellness Counselor*

This session will highlight several important considerations related to staff wellness initiatives in the design and implementation of a comprehensive school mental health system such as MTSS. Making staff wellness a Tier 1 priority has proven to positively impact the overall climate and culture, benefiting not only the staff community but also the students, families, and community. Mutually beneficial wellness practices and means to support and sustain these efforts will be discussed.

## **The Essential Role of School Mental Health Professionals during COVID-19 School Reopening**

*Tasha Childs, MSW LSW LMSW, University of South Carolina, PhD Candidate; Aidyn Iachini, PhD MSW LSW, University of South Carolina College of Social Work, Associate Professor/Interim Associate Dean for Research and Faculty*

This presentation will share findings from a qualitative study regarding school mental health professionals' experiences of delivering mental health services and supports during the first full school year of COVID-19 in one southeastern state. We will describe the types of mental health services and supports delivered across the multi-tiered system of supports to meet student and family needs, and perceived facilitators and barriers to delivering these supports within the context of COVID-19.

## **The Effects of Social Media on Student Mental Health: Risk Factors & Protective Measures**

*Sadie Hinkel, MA, The Kim Foundation, Outreach Coordinator*

When faced with isolation induced by the pandemic, America's youth turned to social media for support and entertainment. This presentation delves into the benefits and consequences that social media has had on youth mental health. In this session, we will examine the negative and positive effects of youth social media use, while explaining the risk factors and protective factors we can employ to encourage positive social media practices in our children and teens.

## **The COVID-19 Resiliency Classroom**

*Nicole Luther, MA, Children & Families First, ATR-BC, LPAT School Based Trauma Therapist; Leah Handwerk, MA, LCSW, School Based Trauma Therapist; Kiera McGillivray, MS, LMFT, CPO of School-Based Initiatives; Theresa Vial, MSW, School Based Trauma Therapist*

This presentation will explain how the School Based Trauma Program at Children & Families First developed the COVID-19 Resiliency Classroom using existing evidenced based interventions. An overview of the intervention's strengths and challenges will be discussed. Presenters will demonstrate how SEL and Tier 1 Interventions, such as the one described in this presentation, can benefit both students and teachers.

## **Supporting School-Based Understanding and Implementation of Trauma-Informed Services**

*Alice Mullin, BA, UCSB, Graduate Student; Karina Aragon, BA, UCSB, Graduate Student; Jill Sharkey, PhD, UCSB, Professor*

COVID-19 has demonstrated the importance of bolstering teachers and other school professionals with trauma-informed resources to implement proper supports for both their students and themselves. We conducted a needs assessment to determine what resources are currently available to and enjoyed by teachers, and what else teachers feel they need from their districts. Results inform what training and supports school psychologists can provide to help teachers better address and cope with trauma.

### **Social Emotional Learning Made Simple**

*Jaime Dombrowski, PhD, Florida Virtual School, Social Emotional Learning Specialist; Jose Rivera Navarro, EdS, Mental Health Counselor Manager*

In this presentation the five domains of social and emotional learning (SEL) will be explored in detail. Evidence based interventions for each domain will be given for both the face to face and virtual environment with variations of implementation for the classroom, grade, and school level along with action steps for implementation. Strategies to build strong relationships among peers, staff, and stakeholders will be explored. Last, suggestions for tier 2 and tier 3 supports will be provided.

### **SEL and Resilience Programming for All Youth in the Digital Media Age**

*Elizabeth Jensen, MA, Arizona State University, Student; Caroline Clauss-Ehlers, PhD, Long Island University, Professor*

Teachers and educators are in a prime position to observe behaviors which may be indicative of later at-risk affects. This presentation will include both resilience-based and social-emotional learning (SEL) interventions for students with a focus on middle school students. Effective prevention programming aimed at all youth within the school system entails resilience promotion and SEL techniques. A case example will be included that highlights the application of resilience and SEL strategies.

### **School Based Wellness Centers - A Districts Approach to Serving the Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs of Students.**

*Craig Gibbs, LCSW, Roseville Joint Union High School District, Wellness & Prevention Coordinator; Sabrina Vella, LCSW, Wellness and Prevention Coordinator*

The Roseville Joint Union High School District addresses student social, emotional and mental health through a comprehensive Wellness Center approach. Adhering to a Multi-Tiered System of Support framework we will share our program structure, funding sources, data points, and staffing model. As well as how we engage with teachers, special education, and administrators to serve students and families at all tiers.

### **Restorative Practices and Implementation: The Power of Prevention and Intervention**

*Cristin Martinez, Masters, Burrell Behavioral Health, Director of Professional Learning*

Restorative Practices carries multiple benefits for students, teachers, and school climate. Differing from punitive systems, restorative practices offer students an opportunity to build and restore relationships while fostering social-emotional learning. RP can offset the school-to-prison pipeline, which often occurs in systems with emphasis on zero tolerance policies. Participants will learn restorative dialogue and its benefits while considering ways to begin implementing RP in their schools.

### **Promoting Safe Supportive Learning Environments for Students of Diverse Gender Identities or Expressions**

*Amber Reid, MSW, Nevada Department of Education, Education Program Professional for Climate, Data, and Equity; Samantha Neiman, MA, American Institutes for Research, Principal Researcher*

This session will present an overview of integrated support provided to Nevada schools and students to promote safe supportive learning environments to all students, regardless of gender identity. We will also present findings from the Nevada School Climate survey that examine gender diverse students' perceptions of their school environment, including safety (physical and emotional), support from adults, and cultural and linguistic competence.

### **Promoting Regulation through Mindfulness**

*Lisa Vratny-Smith, MSW, Aurora Public Schools, Sustainable Wellness Coach*

Students across the country are struggling with cognitive, emotional, and physical regulation, which is key to their mental health as well as their social and academic success. In Aurora Public Schools, mental health providers serving as

Sustainable Wellness Coaches will share a range of interventions, they developed using the tools of mindfulness to support regulation, teaching staff to both practice mindfulness and lead it with their students.

### **Project AWARE: Improving Mental Health Practices Within School Districts**

*Amber Smith, Masters in Social Work, START Children's Center, Community Project Manager*

Project AWARE is a five-year federal SAMHSA Grant. The grant focuses on increasing awareness of mental health issues among school-aged youth, connect school-aged youth and their families to culturally appropriate mental health services and reduce barriers to service through community partnerships. This presentation will highlight how Rensselaer City School District has used Project AWARE funding to implement evidence-based Tier 1 programming and develop community partnerships.

### **Preventing Teen Suicide through Animation**

*Anne Brown, BS, The Cook Center for Human Connection, President and CEO*

Animation is a universal language. It can communicate complex ideas in stylized ways that cannot be replicated in real life. The award-winning "My Life is Worth Living" web series and accompanying curriculum explore issues of depression, abuse, homelessness, bullying, substance abuse, trauma, and gender identity through the stories of five relatable teen characters. Learn how you can utilize these free resources to start discussions and create connections to support youth mental health.

### **Practical Social-Emotional and Behavioral Interventions for the K-12 Classroom**

*Kristin Moore, PsyD, Diagnostic Center North, Clinical Psychologist; Tara Zomouse, MEd BCBA, Teacher Specialist*

Looking forward to the 2022-2023 school year with renewed hope, this presentation will help teachers recognize and support students who demonstrate typical distress and emotional overwhelm. The presenters, a clinical psychologist and a special education teacher, BCBA, will share insights about normal student difficulties, offering practical strategies for behaviors and social-emotional responses in K-12 classrooms.

### **How to Work with Kids in the Digital Age**

*Max Utterberg, MA, Oregon State University, LSC, LPCC*

Have you ever had a child come up to you and tell you that he is getting trolled on Reddit and you don't know what "trolling" or "Reddit" is? Today, the internet poses unique challenges for parents & educators, and it has never been more important that we talk to our kids about these topics. Participants will learn common internet knowledge, pitfalls students can encounter on the internet, and suggestions for practice. We will talk about what happens online because we know it doesn't stay there.

### **Equitable Trauma Sensitive Schools**

*Sara Daniel, MSW, Wellpoint Care Network, Vice President of Educational Services*

This workshop will help educational leaders to integrate equity and inclusion work into their trauma sensitive initiatives using the 7 Essential Ingredient Model framework. This integration is essential to eliminate a culture of siloed or competing initiatives. Tools will be shared to help educators explore how bias and structural process impacts teaching, learning, and classroom dynamics. This workshop advances a perspective of cultural humility to achieve culturally responsive practices.

### **Depression Education is Suicide Prevention: Skills-Based Programs for Grades 4-12**

*Peggy Kubert, LCSW, Erika's Lighthouse: A Beacon of Hope for Adolescent Depression, Senior Director of Education*

Effective depression education IS suicide prevention. Erika's Lighthouse will present it's free and flexible video-based classroom programs for grades 4-12. The programs take a hopeful, authentic and empowering approach for students to learn about taking care of their mental health and what to do if concerned about themselves or a friend. The programs are evidence-informed, data driven, and are flexible to adapt to the needs of a school or district. Attendees will receive access to programs.

### **Covid-19 Impact on School-Age Child Stress and Recovery**

*Lisa Wallace, DNP, Morehead State University, Assistant Professor of Nursing*

Over six billion children have tested positive for Covid-19. It is vital that health care professionals and families are aware of the potential negative impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on the school-age child's physical, mental health, and long-term development.

### **Building a Culture of Wellness: Practices that Help Us Recover and Flourish**

*Kara McCulloch, MS, William & Mary Training and Technical Assistance Center, Project Specialist; Anna Hebb, EdD MSW LCSW, Virginia Tiered Systems of Support, Lead Local Education Authority*

Taking time to reflect on the impact of the past two years provides space to recognize the importance of recovery and the need to develop action steps that bring hope and renewal. In this session, we provide tools to develop systems, practices, and skills to support a culture of wellness in addition to an overview of the Virginia Tiered Systems of Support trauma learning modules. The practices highlighted reduce anxiety, increase classroom community, and promote a culture of wellness for all.

### **Boosting Emotional Wellness and Trust Using Emotional Check-In Data**

*Eric Hunerdosse, MEd, Closegap, School and District Partnerships*

Integrating technology with social emotional wellness to create a system of support is seamless when using Closegap. Within this presentation, learn how to integrate this free emotional check-in platform within your school or district's MTSS system. Increase student voice, open up supportive dialogue, and reimagine emotional wellness in schools.

### **Behavior Goes Where Reinforcement Flows: Using Reinforcement at a System and Individual Level to Shape and Change Behavior**

*Brooke Wagner, BCBA, University of Nevada, Reno, Clinical Program Coordinator; Shari Daisy, Dr, Clinical Project Coordinator*

How is Tier I and reinforcement a prevention strategy? In this presentation participants will understand the critical components of a successful Tier I system, as well as a deeper look into reinforcement as a strategy within those critical components. Reinforcement, as a strategy, is powerful, accessible, and an easy way to shape and change behaviors; however, it is often misunderstood. This presentation looks at how to use reinforcement across the tiers of support.

### **Adapting PCIT Skills for Classroom Behavior Management**

*Emily Deming, MS, Youth Services Department, Doctoral Intern*

Misbehavior and noncompliance are common occurrences in school settings. Classroom management strategies are a constant source of frustration for teachers as they manage problem behavior. The concepts of Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT) can be adapted in a classroom to promote compliance. The implementation of PRIDE skills (praise, reflection, imitation, description, enthusiasm) promote stronger relationships and an increased "want" to be compliant.

### **A Campus of Perpetual Love: Fostering Stability & Confidence in a 100% At-risk Student Population**

*Miranda Dvorak, MEd, Crossroads Academy, UCISD, School Counselor; Hector Lopez, EdD, Principal*

At Crossroads Academy we explore available resources, shattering bounds of traditional educational models in order to meet student needs in our community. We connect the dots between our district's DAEP, teen parent program, and early childhood program. Each component connects to create our version of community schooling. We are scratching the surface of possibility in adolescent SEL in a 100% at-risk rural secondary school and seek to share and grow our concept of perpetual love in education.

### **When a Global Virus Meets Local Realities: Reflections on Evidence-Based Practices Essential to NC's COVID-19 Response**

*Heidi Austin, EdD MCHES CFLE, NC Department of Public Instruction, Project AWARE Director; Stephanie Ellis, EdD NCSP, Rockingham County Schools, Executive Director of Behavioral Health, Crisis Intervention, and Student Safety/Project AWARE/ACTIVATE Director; Ryan Etheridge, MSA, Cleveland County Schools; Project AWARE Director; Jeannie Kerr, MSW LCSW, Nash County Public Schools, Project AWARE Director; Rena Keith, M Ed NCSC, Sampson County Schools, Project AWARE Director; Tierra Bates, MS LCSW NCC, Cleveland County Schools, Project AWARE Coaching Coordinator/ School Based Mental Health Clinician*

Reflections on a variety of evidence-based practices essential to NC's COVID-19 response will be shared by the NC Project AWARE/ACTIVATE team. Self-care strategies to assist educators to survive, thrive, and renew during a public health crisis

will be highlighted. Additionally, strategies to empower adolescents with skills to recover and promote mental wellness along with adaptations to evidence-based practices during remote learning will be spotlighted during this conference session.

## Prevention and Early Intervention (Tier 2)

[View Showcase for this Specialty Track](#) |

### **The Experiences of School Teams Implementing Universal Mental Health Screening: Changing School Culture**

*Jennifer Betters-Bubon, PhD, University of Wisconsin Whitewater, Associate Professor & Program Coordinator; Emily Goodman-Scott, PhD, Old Dominion University, Associate Professor & Program Coordinator; Peg Donohue, PhD, Central Connecticut State University, Associate Professor*

Universal Mental Health Screening is a critical component of MTSS but how do teams work through the planning, implementation and follow up? This session will highlight recent qualitative research with school based mental health teams from around the country engaging in this important work. Presenters will discuss the UMHS shifted the culture of school to include a focus on prevention and wellness along with barriers faced by school teams.

### **Creating Connections NH: Promising Alternatives to Suspensions for Youth Substance Use**

*Heidi Cloutier, MSW, University of New Hampshire Institute on Disability, Co-Director of Training; JoAnne Malloy, PhD, University of New Hampshire Institute on Disability, Director, Children's System of Care Technical Assistance Center; Robert Faghan, MLADC, Live Free Recovery Consultants, Program Director/Owner*

This session will share interventions, outcomes, lesson learned, and systems developed that helped scale up supports for youth with problematic substance use in NH. Interventions include Alternative Peer Groups & the Seven Challenges, to help youth navigate the stressors of adolescence emphasizing peer connection, health/ wellness, and resilience building, in a fun & substance-free environment. Resources will be shared for others interested in providing supports to address youth substance use.

### **Aha! Creative Counseling Techniques for the Virtual Environment**

*Jaime Dombrowski, PhD, Florida Virtual School, SEL Specialist*

This presentation will focus on identifying effective Tier 2 strategies for mental health prevention and intervention. Strategies such as deep breathing, mindfulness, and mental health education will be explored as well as creative ways to implement these strategies in the virtual environment such as collaborative boards, virtual escape rooms, virtual counseling rooms, and use of pre-made instructional videos as well as action steps educators can take to implement these strategies.

## Mental Health Intervention and Treatment (Tier 3)

[View Showcase for this Specialty Track](#) |

### **The Therapeutic Inclusion Program**

*Michael Murray, MACP MEd, Educational Consultant/Private Practice, LMHC; Laura Balogh, MEd, Acton MA Public Schools, Special Education Teacher*

The therapeutic inclusion program is designed to facilitate inclusion for students with significant social/emotional/behavioral difficulties so they can receive the services they need in their home school communities. The presentation provides a model for components that take place within the program. The presentation includes philosophy and technique in supporting students with significant SEL/behavioral difficulties in the general education environment.

### **Key Components of the CSSRC Suicide Risk Assessment Toolkit**

*Ronald Lee, PsyD, Colorado Safe School Resource Center, School Outreach Consultant; Kati Garner, MEd, Regional Training Consultant*

The CSSRC Suicide Response Assessment Toolkit training provides you with the basic fundamentals of suicide prevention, intervention & postvention. It provides educators with the best practice strategies of assessment, level of risk determination, and safety planning for students who present with concerns of suicide. Presenters will draw from what experts know about effective suicide response practices, as well as drawing from their combined 35 years of experience in supporting public schools.

### **Identifying Mental Health Risk among Head Start Families and Applying the Effective Prevention and Intervention Programs**

*Kristopher Stevens, PhD, Pacific Clinics, Director of Data Analytics and Innovation; Virginia Hatch, MA, Psychology Intern*  
Properly identifying the risk levels of Head Start children and families as they enter programs could lead to the effective and efficient allocation of services that maximally benefit the families. This study examines how various sources of data available to Head Start programs can be used to build profiles of children and families who are at-risk for poor programmatic outcomes. The methods presented in this study apply to other educational settings and populations beyond Head Start.

### **From Science to Practice: Effective Interventions for Every Student**

*Teri Bourdeau, PhD, PracticeWise, LLC, Vice President, Training and Development*

This session provides an overview of resources in the Managing and Adapting Practice (MAP) system and the framework for how these tools are used together to design flexible, evidence-based, culturally sensitive, and trauma-informed treatments tailored to any student, family, or school setting.

### **Easy, Quick, and Free Access to Short-Term Counseling Services for School Age Youth**

*Peter Steinberg, LCSW, Healthy Minds Fairfax, Fairfax Department of Family Services, Program Manager; Hilda Calvo, Masters in Psychology, Management Analyst III; Tracy Davis, MS, Management Analyst III; Philethea Duckett, MS, Management Analyst III*

Healthy Minds Fairfax developed a free therapy service that is easy for families to access. Presenters will outline the model used to develop the program and how funding is obtained to pay for the service. Emphasis will be on how to measure the success of the program and the need for collaboration between the county staff and school system staff.

### **Culturally Adapting the CBITS Manual for the Richmond, Virginia Region**

*Chanda Bass, MSW, California Baptist University, Doctoral Student*

This presentation will discuss the cultural adaptations that will be made to the Cognitive Behavioral Intervention for Trauma in Schools (CBITS) treatment manual to reflect the cultural identities and experiences of students in the Richmond, Virginia region. A qualitative research approach that employs community-based participatory principles to gather data on the perspectives of community members will be discussed.

### **Aware, Calm and Attentive: Trauma Aware Approaches that Can Help Create a Healing, Captivating Learning Environment**

*Bettina Bernstein, DO, Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine, Clinical Assistant Professor; Ann Marie O'Reilly Gindhart, PhD, School District of Philadelphia, School Counselor*

This session will help you to 1) understand the factors that have contributed to your students and staff being adversely affected by environmental stressors, 2) identify when these stressors are most likely to impact your students and 3) how you can create a trauma aware, healing calm and captivating environment so your students and staff can avoid being stuck in a reoccurring cycle of stress, emotional dysregulation and negative experiences. This session will provide you the tools needed!

## **Implementation Science and Practice**

[View Showcase for this Specialty Track |](#)

**Virginia School Mental Health Providers Recruitment and Retention Project: Year 2**

*Kristinne Stone, Licensed Clinical Social Worker, Virginia Department of Education, School Mental Health Grant Project Manager*

Development of the Virginia Career and Learning Center: a single point of access tool to support the recruitment and retention of School-Based Mental Health Professionals: Year 2.

### **Understanding Cultural and Contextual Adaptations to School-Based Mental Health Interventions**

*Shannon Holmes, PhD, University of Missouri, Assistant Professor; Sarah Owens, PhD, Assistant Teaching Professor*

Contextual and cultural adaptations to school-based mental health interventions can benefit students. Although many frameworks exist to support making these adaptations a priori, there is a need to understand how practitioners make decisions to adapt an intervention in real-time. This presentation will describe the results of a phenomenological study designed to explore types of adaptations made by school-based practitioners and the process by which these adaptations are made.

### **Tier 1 for Educator Well-being: How the Adult Resilience Curriculum Can Transform “Self-care” Initiatives in Schools**

*Hannah West, PhD BCBA, Mid-America Mental Health Technology Transfer Center; Sunflower Pediatric Behavioral Health, Regional Trainer, Clinician; Erika Franta, PhD LP, Mid-America Mental Health Technology Transfer Center; Munroe Meyer Institute, University of Nebraska Medical Center, School Mental Health Program Director, Assistant Professor; Brittany Liebsack, PhD, Mid-America Mental Health Technology Transfer Center; Munroe Meyer Institute, University of Nebraska Medical Center, Faculty Trainer, Assistant Professor; Jessica Christensen, M Ed, Mid-America Mental Health Technology Transfer Center; Please Pass the Love, Regional Trainer, Director of Community Development and Training*

Teaching ranks as one of the most stressful occupations in the United States, especially in recent times. Fortunately, there are steps we can take to improve educator well-being. The Mid-America MHTTC utilizes the research-supported Adult Resilience Curriculum (ARC) to provide strategies at the individual- and systems-level that enhance educator well-being. Data and lessons learned from training-of-trainers series will be discussed.

### **The Role of Community-Sponsored School-Based Health Services as School Partners in Providing Trauma-Informed Care**

*Katherine Cushing, MPH, School-Based Health Alliance, Program Manager Quality, Research, & Evaluation; Anna Goddard, PhD APRN, Vice President of Quality, Research, & Evaluation; Paula Fields, MSN RN, Vice President of Programs & Technical Assistance*

Join us to enhance your knowledge around the nuts & bolts of adding community-sponsored school-based health care to your existing school health and behavioral health services. This session is an interactive hour aimed at learning about fostering trauma-informed care and partnering with the community to implement or strengthen community-sponsored school-based health services, which may lead to a school-based health center.

### **The Nebraska School Mental Health Project: Implementing and Supporting State-Wide School Mental Health Systems**

*Erika Franta, PhD, Mid-America MHTTC, Munroe-Meyer Institute, University of Nebraska Medical Center, Assistant Professor, School Mental Health Program Director; Amber Hartstock, MA, Nebraska Department of Education, State Coordinator for School Mental Health Efforts, Project AWARE Program Specialist III; Jennifer Farley, PhD, University of Nebraska Public Policy Center, Research Manager; Lindsey Duke, PhD, University of Nebraska Public Policy Center, Senior Research Specialist; Brandy Clarke, PhD, Mid-America MHTTC, Munroe-Meyer Institute, University of Nebraska Medical Center, Associate Professor, Associate Director of Program Growth and Sustainability, Program Director, Director of Equity*

In order to address the ever-growing wellbeing needs of students and educators in the state, the Nebraska Department of Education's (NDE) Office of Coordinated Student Support Services partnered with the Mid-America MHTTC to implement the Nebraska School Mental Health Project. The Project included funding, training, technical assistance to Educational Service Units across Nebraska in implementing Comprehensive School Mental Health Systems. Satisfaction and knowledge data from training and lesson.

### **District Level Systems Analysis: Utilizing Initiative Inventories to Increase Implementation of Evidence Based Practices**

*Kaci Fleetwood, MEd, University of Nevada, Reno, MTSS State Coordinator; Ashley Greenwald, PhD, Assistant Research Professor, PBIS Director*

This session will begin with an orientation to Implementation Science and the Interconnected Systems Framework. The majority of the session will focus on an exploration process to prepare for a successful installation of interventions. Key components that will be discussed include teaming, identifying priorities, leveraging existing data, and a detailed description of auditing district-level practices. Outcome data will be presented on fidelity, social validity, and aggregated initiatives.

### **Developing Mental Health MTSS: A Critical Analysis of the Process**

*Nicole Skaar, PhD, University of Northern Iowa, Associate Professor; Jennifer Ulie-Wells, EdD, Please Pass the Love, Director; Kerri Clopton, PhD, University of Northern Iowa, Associate Professor*

This presentation will introduce a revised framework for the development and implementation of school-based mental health MTSS that addresses the faulty assumptions of typical MTSS systems. The revised framework begins with establishing a) the foundational elements of MTSS, which include universal data collection, teaming, a structure for data-based decision-making, and cultural competency training for school staff and b) Tier III services for students with intense mental health needs.

### **Continuous Improvement of a Comprehensive School-Based Behavioral Health Initiative**

*Susan Tarasevich, EdD, Susan Tarasevich Learning, LLC, Educational Consultant; Carl Fertman, PhD, University of Pittsburgh School of Education, Associate Professor Emeritus; Kelly Hoffman, MS BLS, Propel Schools, PPIW Coordinator*

A strong commitment to continuous improvement elevates a large, urban charter school behavioral health system impacting program practices and strengthening school policies and initiatives to improve student service engagement and utilization across Tiers 1, 2 and 3. Improvements build and support students' social support particularly at Tier 3 necessitates understanding students' types and levels of contact across their kinship network and feelings of closeness with members within their network.

### **Applying Transdiagnostic Principles and Practices to Advance Multi-Tiered Systems of Mental Health Support**

*Brittany Zakszeski, PhD, Devereux Center for Effective Schools, Consulting and Research Psychologist; Barry McCurdy, PhD, Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine, Clinical Professor; Laura Rutherford, PhD, Devereux Center for Effective Schools, Consulting & Research Psychologist and Director of Internship Training Program*

This session will introduce the principles and applications of transdiagnostic theory in relation to mental health services within MTSS frameworks. Beginning with diagnostic and transdiagnostic theories of mental health needs, covering empirically supported approaches to intervention, and ending with a focus on usable transdiagnostic innovations, this session will equip participants with the foundational knowledge of both theory and applied research to analyze and plan support systems.

### **A Culture of Trauma Awareness: Moving from Knowledge to Action**

*Megan Ragan, MSW LSW, Centerstone, Assistant Coordinator, CT3 Grant; Kelsey Watterson, BA, Centerstone Research Institute, Evaluation Associate; Angela Quigley-Ragland, LCSW, Centerstone, Clinical Coordinator; Keely Lawrence, BS, Research Associate*

Creating a cultural shift in the workplace using the 4 C's of Trauma Sensitivity can lead to an increase in satisfaction and productivity and decrease burnout. Using foundational tools for a trauma-informed workplace, participants will work to identify organizational policies that are not trauma-informed and will develop a plan to discuss growth in their workplace.

## **Education-Mental Health Integration and Collaboration**

[View Showcase for this Specialty Track](#) |

**The Role of the Clinician within an Interconnected Systems Framework**

*Ami Flammini, MSW, Midwest PBIS, Technical Assistance and Training Director; Katie Pohlman, MWS, Technical Assistance & Training Director*

Identifying the importance of a single system of delivery so all youth's social-emotional, behavioral needs are the foundation of the evolution of the clinician's role. A clear understanding of why it is beneficial to move from a co-located model to an interconnected model, along with clearly defined roles, will be necessary for this continued evolution. In this session, we will compare and contrast a co-located delivery model and an interconnected model of delivery.

### **Strengthening Whole-School Healing Practices: Leverage School-Community Mental Health Partnerships to Train All School Staff**

*Lauren Smith, PhD, Creating Healing Interventions, Founder*

The scope of the current presentation is twofold: 1) addressing the mental health implications associated with the COVID-19 pandemic and other current events and its impact on everyone within the school building; 2) methods for building collaborative partnerships between school and community mental health providers to support trauma-informed training and education that will promote whole school wellness and healing.

### **School Mental Health Practitioners Leveraging Trauma Supports for Teachers and Students**

*Carrie Lorig, EdS, Georgia State University, Doctoral Student; Aleksandra Krupina, MEd, Georgia State University, Doctoral Student; Kris Varjas, PsyD, Georgia State University, Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Research*

Teachers' knowledge and experiences regarding students impacted by trauma and the availability of school-based resources related to trauma must be emphasized when considering trauma-informed care implementation. This presentation will discuss how school mental health practitioners can apply findings from this qualitative study to work with students, teachers, and administrators in order to build trauma-informed supports that are school-wide and effectively serve diverse school communities.

### **Saving Lives Through Effective Crisis Response, Planning and Prevention**

*Ang Johnson, MSW, Provo City School District, LCSW; Chris Bringham, MSW, Provo City School District, LCSW*

Crisis, especially as it relates to student suicides, is at the forefront of school mental health. Attendees will walk away from this presentation with applicable and specific tools and knowledge that will assist them in more effectively preventing and responding to crises in their schools.

### **Project TEDD: Training Educators about the Mental Health Needs of Students with Dual Diagnosis**

*Stephanie Barbre, PhD, Project TEDD- Texas Tech University, Project Manager; Chinomso Ihenagwam, MEd, Project TEDD- Texas Tech University, Research Assistant*

The mental health needs of youth with intellectual/developmental disabilities (IDD) often go unidentified and untreated due to a lack of awareness, training, and experience among caregivers and service providers. This presentation will discuss how one program is spreading awareness through outreach and engagement on best practices in working with students with dual diagnosis.

### **Practical Strategies for Supporting Student Mental Health & Resilience**

*Christian Moore, LCSW MSW, Founder of WhyTry Organization*

How do you help students bounce back from what they have been through? From trauma, isolation, and poverty to mental health challenges, our students have faced many obstacles over the last two years. Come see a formula to help you guide students move forward through the challenges that destroy motivation and make it difficult to find success.

### **Mental Health Literacy and the Practices for Novice Teachers During the Pandemic**

*Elizabeth Levine Brown, PhD, George Mason University, Associate Professor; Naomi Brown, MA, George Mason University, PhD Student; Audra Parker, PhD, George Mason University, Professor*

This presentation highlights research from a mixed methods study on K-12 novice teachers' mental health competency across one US state with preservice and in service certification requirements in mental health. Findings examine teachers' perceptions of mental health literacy, efficacy in navigating student mental health concerns and organizational climate and collaborations to understand teachers' mental health competency. Implications for research, practice and policy will be highlighted.

### **Maryland AWARE: A Holistic Perspective**

*Joanna Prout, PhD, University of Maryland School of Medicine, Research Manager; Robert Schmidt, EdD, Talbot County Public Schools, Mental Health Coordinator; Stellalee Coulbourne, MS, Caroline County Public Schools, Program Coordinator; Jahneen Keatz, MSW, Baltimore City Public School System, Grant Coordinator; Samantha Hartley, PhD, University of Maryland School of Medicine, Post-doctoral Fellow*

Maryland State Department of Education and three school districts will present an overview of Maryland Advancing Wellness and Resilience in Education (MD-AWARE), an effort to enhance school mental health through a multi-tiered system of support with an emphasis on providing culturally responsive and trauma-informed services. This presentation will examine how these unique sites adapted general principles into work that is tailored to fit the needs of their communities.

### **Intersecting Pre- and In-Service Training for Increasing Community-Based Providers' Intentions to use Evidence-Based Practice**

*Tristan Maesaka, MA, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, Department of Psychology, Graduate Student; Ayada Bonilla, MEd, Hawai'i Department of Education, Office of Student Support Services, School-Based Behavioral Health (SBBH) Educational Specialist; Brad Nakamura, PhD, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, Department of Psychology, University of Hawai'i, Center for Cognitive Behavior Therapy – Child Division, Professor*

We will be presenting on findings from a statewide project evaluating the effects of preservice education and other implementation characteristics on evidence-based practice delivery in the context of a cross-agency (i.e., Department of Education and Department of Health) modular-therapy therapist training effort.

### **Exploring Teacher Well-Being During the Pandemic Through Teacher Mental Health Competency**

*Naomi Brown, MA, George Mason University, PhD Student; Elizabeth Levine Brown, PhD, George Mason University, Associate Professor; Linda Galib, MPH, Loyola University, PhD Student; Kate Phillippo, PhD, Loyola University, Associate Professor; Audra Parker, PhD, George Mason University, Professor; Aidyn Iachini, PhD, University of South Carolina, Associate Professor*

This presentation will share findings from a national study on P-12 US teacher and student wellness during the pandemic. We will examine the relationship between teacher well-being, teacher competency, and teacher training as well as how teacher and school characteristics influence these relationships. Implications for research and practice regarding teachers' role in student wellness work, collaboration with school mental health personnel, and teacher well-being will be shared.

### **Educators' Mental Health Literacy**

*Candra Skrzypek, MSW, University at Buffalo, LMSW, PhD Student; Annahita Ball, PhD, University at Buffalo, Associate Professor*

Educators must have high mental health literacy (MHL) to address growing mental health concerns among students, yet there is a lack of consistent, validated tools to measure educators' MHL. This presentation shares the results of a study to develop a tool to measure the MHL of educators in a school context. The measure has demonstrated strong psychometric properties and is in the public domain. Suggestions for its use will also be discussed.

### **Creating a CREW to Reflect, Recover & Renew Through Teaming**

*Grace Shoessow, MS, Greene ESC, Mental Health Services, Director, IECMH and SEL&D*

In Ohio, a team of early childhood mental health consultants (ECMH-C) are using a dynamic teaming for ongoing process of reflecting, recovery, and renewal. This session explores how an ECMH Consultation CREW has navigated the pandemic by combining Reflective Supervision and Teaming in an innovative way that enhances workforce capacity, strengthens supports and builds resilient relationships. CREW is an acronym that describes the mission- to Connect and Reflect with Empathy and Wondering.

### **Community Collaboration: A Texas Case Study for School Mental Health Integration**

*Talli Goldman-Dolge, Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute, Senior Vice President; Tony Walker, PhD, Senior VP of Strategic Education Initiatives*

Because schools alone cannot meet all the student and staff mental health needs that exist, especially with the increased needs for mental health services related to the pandemic, the Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute has focused on deepening our work in community partnerships beginning in San Antonio, Texas. The San Antonio Mobile Mental Wellness Collaborative (SAMMWC or the "Collaborative") is the first collaborative of its kind in Texas to connect schools

with community providers to better deliver mental health and emotional wellness supports to students, families, and educators. To date SAMMWC is currently serving over 23,000 students in five districts in Bexar County, with plans to add more districts soon and begin to replicate this model across the state and the nation. The Collaborative includes five community mental health providers and is working to expand its list of partners. Services include consultations, case management, psychiatry, counseling (grief, trauma, etc.), drug and alcohol evaluation and counseling, screenings to identify ACES, trauma-informed assessments, and outreach and education for parents and families. The model is simple: 1) a dedicated collaborative lead manages student referrals from the school district; 2) the student is then scheduled for screening, 3) the student is referred to the appropriate partner, 4) a plan is developed and implemented, 5) progress and student outcomes are measured. Services can be provided on school district property or virtually to help eliminate the transportation barrier that often limits access to mental health services. In addition, services are typically offered during school hours, after school, evenings, weekends, and holidays because the partners recognize that mental health needs exist even when school is not in session. Another benefit of this model is that it reduces the logistical burden of school districts, greatly reducing the number of complex contracts and partner agreements down to one streamlined process that takes the heavy lift from school and district leaders. The collaborative care model takes a holistic approach by incorporating parents and guardians, teachers, administrative staff, and students into student wellness. The Collaborative also recognizes that prevention is key to improving mental health outcomes, recently developing a series of curriculum to provide no-cost education and training for mental health professionals, school employees, parents and caregivers, students, and the community. These trainings can be tailored to audiences and provided virtually or in-person. During the session, participants will learn the key elements of what makes this district-community provider model so successful and will leave the session with specific steps that schools and providers can take to replicate a similar model in their home communities.

### **Building Partnerships to Promote Whole School Approaches to Educator Wellness**

*Olga Acosta Price, PhD, George Washington University, Center for Health and Health Care in Schools, Associate Professor and Director; Mariola Rosser, EdD, Center for Health and Health Care in Schools, The George Washington University, Project Director; Jessica Duncan, MPH, Office of the State Superintendent of Education, School Behavioral Health Outreach Specialist; Alexandra Vann, MA, Child Behavior Specialist I Building Capacity, LLC, Child Behavior Specialist; Johanna Ulseth, MA, Briya Public Charter School, Family Engagement & Wellness Manager; Michelle Vinson, SEL and Equity Specialist, AppleTree Institute for Education Innovation*

This session will explore the Community of Practice approach to building relationships and supporting implementation of best practices in school behavioral health. This session will also describe unique issues that have impacted the delivery of school behavioral health services in DC schools during the COVID-19 pandemic and highlight comprehensive approaches to educator wellness.

### **A Statewide Community of Practice for Change: Leading by Convening to Advance School Mental Health in Iowa**

*Jennifer Ulie-Wells, PhD, Please Pass the Love, Executive Director; Carlos Rodriquez Rosa, MA, ISMHA & Workforce Development Coordinator; Gabby Guerra Ceron, BA, Director of Youth Engagement; Alex Rohn, LMHC MA, Director of Therapeutic Programs*

In 2019, PPTL launched a stakeholder group involving hundreds of critical persons including youth, parents, educators, administrators, state agencies, mental health professionals, and our national partners to develop a community of practice in Iowa. This presentation will discuss what led to the creation of this community of practice, how it was launched, alignment with the National Center for SMH Dialogue Guides, challenges, next steps, and how others can do the same in their states.

## **Youth and Family Partnerships in Mental Health**

[View Showcase for this Specialty Track](#) |

### **Words Matter: Impact of the Term "Seriously Emotionally Disturbed"**

*Jane Walker, MSW, FREDLA, Senior Advisor; Millie Sweeney, MS, Director, Learning and Workforce Development; Jane Walker, President, Board of Directors*

The term "Seriously Emotionally Disturbed" (SED) is widely regarded as stigmatizing and disrespectful to children and youth. The term was used in the first special education law in 1975 and has remained in federal law since then. Because of the terminology, IEP teams and families are reticent to identify children SED. This session will discuss the ramifications of SED terminology, actions participants can take in their states and ways to support families whose children may qualify for services.

### **Promoting Family Engagement Through a Trauma Informed Approach to Pandemic Recovery**

*Sonia Rodrigues, MA, Rutgers University Behavioral Health Care, Director Child & Adolescent Services; Suzi Miller, PsyD, Rutgers Health-University Behavioral Health Care, Program Manager; Alicia Lukachko, DrPH, Rutgers Health-University Behavioral Health Care, Senior Training and Consultation Specialist*

This presentation will explore different ways in which school or mental health personnel can work towards engaging families to best support students recovering from the pandemic utilizing a trauma-informed approach. Different strategies that were used in various school-based mental health settings to engage families will be discussed utilizing a trauma-informed lens, recognizing that everyone has been impacted by the pandemic.

### **Parents as a Protective Factor in Supporting Student Mental Wellness and the Prevention of Suicide**

*Michelle Bartsch, MS Education, Cook Center for Human Connection, Director, Programs and Partnerships; Anne Brown, BS Education, President and CEO; Nellene Stevens, MA MHR College Administration, Grants and Funding Consultant*

Parents can be a protective factor in halting the progression of suicidal ideation and helping youth develop resilience and mental wellness. Parenting styles will be explored and access to free resources that support parents and family mental wellness will be provided. Parents, mental health professionals, and educators are all encouraged to attend.

### **Levels of Family Engagement: Building Trusting Relationships between Clinicians, School Staff, and Parents**

*Linda Sheriff, MEd, Center for Health and Health Care in Schools, Deputy Director; Chioma Oruh, PhD, Chi BornFree, Founder*

Family engagement is a critical component to Washington DC's effort to implement comprehensive mental health system across all 239 public and public charter schools. In this session, we will describe the multiple tiers of family engagement that are the focus of our plan, share the tools and strategies we used, and showcase the relationship building journey of mental health practitioners and caregivers as they held authentic, trust-building conversations.

### **Engaging, Empowering, and Educating Families in Youth Mental Health**

*Katherine Conklin, MEd, Erika's Lighthouse, Director of School Culture; Shaton Berry, Nation PTA, Member Representative*

This workshop will examine the research behind youth mental health, family engagement in school communities, and the resources available via Erika's Lighthouse and the National PTA. Participants will learn about free resources that are available to families and educators in their communities.

## **Cultural Responsiveness and Equity**

[View Showcase for this Specialty Track |](#)

### **We Are Here: Behavioral Health Access Barriers & How to Help**

*Heidi Cloutier, MSW, University of New Hampshire Institute on Disability, Co-Director of Training; JoAnne Malloy, PhD, University of New Hampshire Institute on Disability, Director, Children's System of Care Technical Assistance Center and Research Associate Professor; Shirley Tomlinson, MA, Department of Health & Human Services NH, Office of Health Equity, Community Engagement & Outreach Specialist*

The NH Behavioral Health Equity Work Group (BHEWG) has been working to strengthen response capabilities and services to address related behavioral health disparities and advance health equity in underserved and disproportionately affected populations. This session will share the process used to develop the videos that highlight community successes, challenges and barriers to behavioral health, resources, lesson learned and implications for school behavioral health services.

### **Promoting Equity in School Mental Health**

*Andy Garbacz, PHD, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Associate Professor; Katie Eklund, PhD, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Associate Professor; Steve Kilgus, PhD, University of Wisconsin-Madison*

The purpose of this session is to describe a framework to promote equity in school mental health. A participatory process with family members, mental health professionals, educators, and researchers will be described that led to the development of the framework. Participants will learn about disparities in mental health outcomes and features of a framework that centers equity in school mental health. Implications for school mental health policy and practice will be described.

### **Examine Educator Readiness for a Culturally Responsive Pedagogical Training**

*Jerica Knox, PhD, North Carolina State University, PhD Candidate*

Trauma-informed school programs should include culturally responsive professional development for teachers. However, implementing such a training effectively requires conversations on race and racism—an experience in equity-based trainings that is often met with feelings of shame, blame, and guilt. This paper provides an understanding of readiness for equity-based training and how it plays a role in educators' ability to take from culturally responsive trainings.

### **Evaluating Professional Learning and Evidence-Informed Programming Aimed to Promote Positive Mental Health and Well-being**

*Alicia Lapointe, PhD Equity and Inclusive Education, Western University, Research Scientist*

This paper examines the training experiences of school staff in two different regions in Canada and explores its implications for the intervention planning and execution of a promising evidence-informed mental health and healthy relationship promotion intervention, The Healthy Relationships Program (HRP) for Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer/Questioning, Intersex, Asexual (2SLGBTQIA+) Youth.

### **Equitable School Environments: We Can't Get There Without Addressing Subtle Discrimination within Our Interventions & Systems**

*Chyna McCall, PhD, Missouri Prevention Science Institute, Senior Research Associate; Christa Copeland, PhD, Missouri Prevention Science Institute, Postdoctoral Fellow*

The conference session aims to support a practitioner's ability to effectively create equitable learning environments and positively impact student outcomes by addressing discrimination within the school setting through both intervention and systemic mitigation and prevention. Through guidance and planning, opportunities practitioners will learn how they can work with their teams and schools to create a continual commitment to reassessing structures, practices & curricula, & make needed changes.

### **Coping through Comics**

*Shirley Capa Perez, MSW, ANDRUS, Supervising Clinician-Bilingual; Carlos Quispe, MS, ANDRUS, Bilingual Clinician*

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the Coping Through Comics group provided the space for adolescents to process their experiences and develop a sense of community during an isolating time. The Coping through Comics (Pt 1 & Pt 2) groups use art, music, and videos to help clients learn safe ways of coping through these challenging times. Topics have included transgenerational trauma, depression, adverse childhood experiences, Gender identity and expectations, and LGBTQ+ issues.

### **Black Early Childhood Educators Impacting Social Emotional Learning**

*Glenn Albright, PhD, Baruch College, City of University of New York, Associate Professor; Nikita Khalid, MS, The Graduate Center, Doctoral Student*

The prevalence of mental health disorders exacerbated by COVID-19 impacts children in early education programs, increasing risks for behavioral problems. To support students of color we need to teach early childhood educators social emotional learning (SEL) skills and for more educators of color to be represented in the education system. This presentation overviews how virtual role-play experiences are effectively teaching SEL skills and to work collaboratively with caregivers to promote SEL.

## **Advocacy and Policy**

[View Showcase for this Specialty Track |](#)

## **Reviewing the Landscape of School-Based Mental Health Practitioners: A Tool Bag of Resources for Educational Leaders**

*Andy Frey, PhD, University of Louisville, Professor; Kathryn Tillett, MSW, Kentucky Department of Education, Project Director; McNally Shawn, MSW, University of South Carolina, Student; Sherika Smith, MSW, Fayette County Public Schools, Social Work, Mental Health, and ESS Coordinator*

Hiring unprepared individuals may pose concerns including suboptimal outcomes and increased costs. The diversity of qualified SMH professionals makes it difficult to make informed hiring, contracting, and role assignment decisions. We will review the domains and disciplines that provide SMH services and offer resources for educational leaders and SMHP advocates to support hiring processes across professional domains and help to strengthen the cohesive system of SMH.

## **Policy to Implementation: Reflections on NC's School-Based Mental Health Policy for Student Mental Health and Well-Being**

*Heidi Austin, EdD MCHES CFLE, NC Department of Public Instruction, NC Project AWARE/ACTIVATE Director; Pachovia Lovette, MSW, NC Department of Public Instruction, School Social Work Consultant; Emily Bland, BS, Beaufort County Schools, Project AWARE/ACTIVATE Evaluation and Coaching Coordinator; Ashley Padgett, MSA, Beaufort County Schools, Project AWARE/ACTIVATE Director*

The NC State Board of Education adopted a School Mental Health Policy in November 2020 which requires all K-12 Public School Units to implement a school-based mental health plan that includes a mental health training program and suicide risk referral protocol. This session will highlight how NC has utilized the School Mental Health Policy as a lever for health equity by promoting equitable access to high quality and well-coordinated mental health and substance abuse services for students.