

Removing Barriers:

Unique collaboration formed to assist students in achieving mental wellness

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CRISIS - Fargo Area 9th -12th graders student population

- 25.4 % of students felt so sad or hopeless everyday for two weeks or more in a row that they stopped doing some usual activities during the last 12 months.
- 16.1% of students seriously considered attempting suicide during the last 12 months.
- 11.5% of students actually attempted suicide one or more times during the past 12 months.

2013 North Dakota Youth Risk Behavior Survey 9th-12th graders

Dr. Flowers, Superintendent of West Fargo North Dakota Public Schools....

"There isn't a morning I don't wake up in awe of the responsibility we have as a community to help each student succeed. Unfortunately there is not a week that goes by that I do not have to sign paperwork for one or more students in crisis to be in treatment. Though they may receive some instruction while in treatment, their mental and emotional health needs become paramount, and learning must take a back seat. The sooner we can get them appropriate help, perhaps before the crisis is so severe, the sooner learning and being a child can be a priority for them again.

We are grateful for partners in the community who can help children and families, because the schools cannot do it alone.

We need help. Our children and families need help. Student Wellness Facilitators in our schools would help us connect children in need to the services they require more quickly, which in some cases we know is a matter of life and death."

Imagine Thriving

History & Background

- ▶ Grassroots effort to remove barriers to students mental well-being with a focus on prevention and early intervention led by an advocate, school, mental health and non profit professionals
- ▶ Identified barriers to care:
 - Lack of access to care
 - Financial barriers
 - Lack of understanding/awareness of students mental health issue
 - STIGMA
- ▶ Non profit founded in February 2013

THREE PRONGED APPROACH

▶ Connector - STUDENT WELLNESS FACILITATOR

- Getting kids out the door to care

▶ Financial support - ACCESS TO CARE FUND

- Defraying the cost of care

▶ Education - IMAGINE THRIVING

- Create student and parent awareness and understanding
- Erase the Stigma

Collaboration, Collaboration and Collaboration

▶ District & non-profit collaboration

- SWF salary funded by GMWI
- SWF is school employee with benefits

▶ Community collaboration

- GMWI is funded primarily by business & individual donors

▶ Three School district collaboration

- Districts work collaboratively with other partner districts

▶ Provider collaboration

Student Wellness Facilitator Role

- ▶ What we do:
 - ▶ FPS referral sources
 - ▶ Meet w/student & parent
 - ▶ Make a plan
 - ▶ Make community referrals
 - ▶ Coordinate therapy appointments
 - ▶ Attend appts, other various mtgs
 - ▶ Report pertinent info back to school
 - ▶ Follow up w/student, family, & provider

Referral Form

Danger to Self

- Statements of intent of harm self
- Plan of action to harm self
- Gestures e.g., cutting, taking pills
- Depressed demeanor and affect match statements
- None or N/A

Danger to Others

- Statements of intent to harm others
- Plan of action to harm others
- Gestures e.g., physically aggressive, assaultive behavior
- Demeanor and affect match statements
- None or N/A

Attention Difficulties

- Careless mistakes, problems with organization
- Difficulty completing tasks, avoidance of tasks at hand
- Fidgety, easily distracted, forgetful
- Appears driven, on the go, restless
- None or N/A

Mood

- Depressed or sad mood, irritable mood e.g., "mood swings"
- anhedonia e.g., loss of interest, social withdrawal, boredom
- Physical changes e.g., sleep difficulty, fatigued, change of appetite
- Cognitive changes e.g., feelings of worthlessness, distorted thinking, distractible
- None or N/A

Anxiety/Worry

- Persistent worry and anxiety
- Avoidance of uncomfortable, undesirable settings
- Obsessive or compulsive actions (may appear uncontrollable)
- Panic attacks e.g., sudden onset of fear, heart palpitations, chest pain, difficulty breathing, fear of losing control
- School refusal
- None or N/A

Behavior Issues

- Argues, angry, oppositional, defiant, bullying peers
- Lies, cons, blames others for own behavior
- Physically aggressive toward people and/or animals
- Deliberately damaging property e.g., fire setting
- Repeated involuntary movements, grimacing, or vocalizations
- None or N/A

Other

- Chemical use e.g., alcohol and illegal substances
- Academic issues
- Attendance issues/frequent complaints of illness
- Family instability, e.g., homeless, divorce, custody issues, financial
- Legal involvement
- Traumatic event
- None or N/A

Student Wellness Facilitator Fargo District Coverage

- ▶ Elementary (K-5)
 - ▶ 13 Schools
 - ▶ 5300 Students
- ▶ Middle (6-8)
 - ▶ 3 Schools
 - ▶ 2500 Students
- ▶ High (9-12)
 - ▶ 4 Schools
 - ▶ 3400 Students
- ▶ Approximately 11,200 total students
- ▶ Two SWF

Student Wellness Facilitator Moorhead District Coverage

- ▶ Middle (6-8)
 - ▶ 1 School
 - ▶ 1300 Students
- ▶ High (9-12)
 - ▶ 1 School
 - ▶ 1600 Students
- ▶ Approximately 6000 students in entire district
- ▶ One SWF

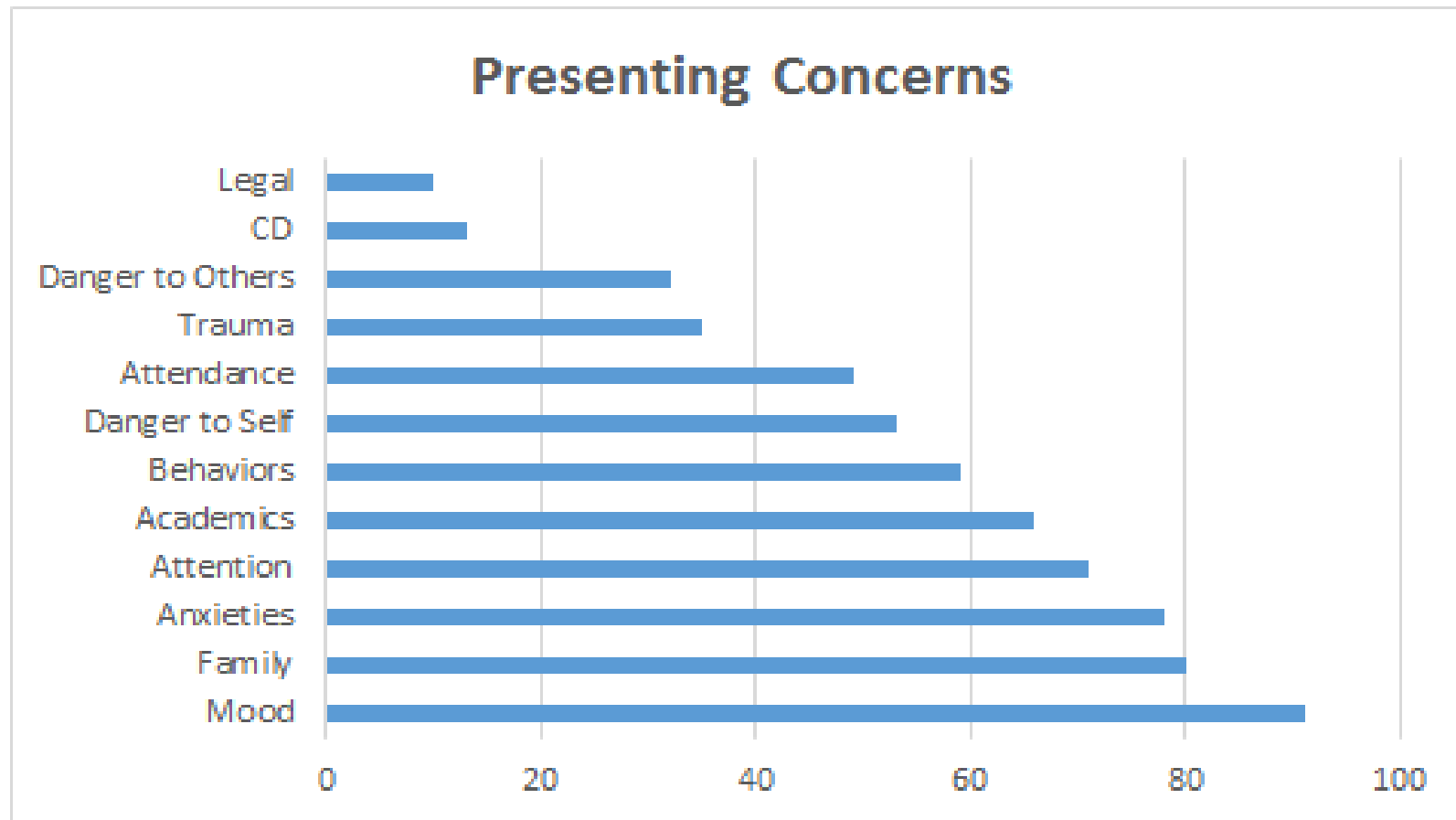
Access to Care Fund

- ▶ Prescriptions
- ▶ Initial and/or follow up appts i.e. therapy appts, medication management, psychological testing
- ▶ Transportation
- ▶ Wellness activities
- ▶ Access appointments

Student Wellness Facilitators Community Connections

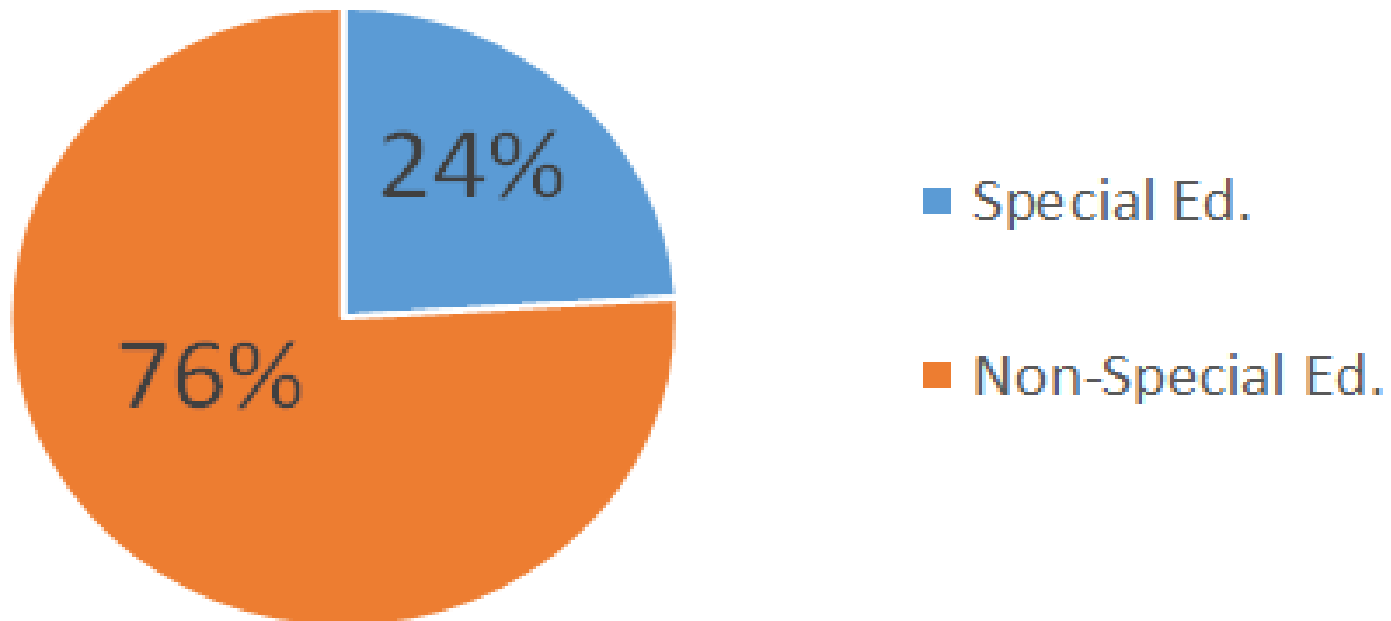
- ▶ Therapists - Individual & Family
- ▶ Medication Management - Medical doctors, Physician assistants, Nurse practitioners, Certified nurse specialists
- ▶ County Social Services & Juvenile Court
- ▶ Local psychiatric hospitals
- ▶ Local residential treatment centers

Student Wellness Facilitators Stats 2014-15



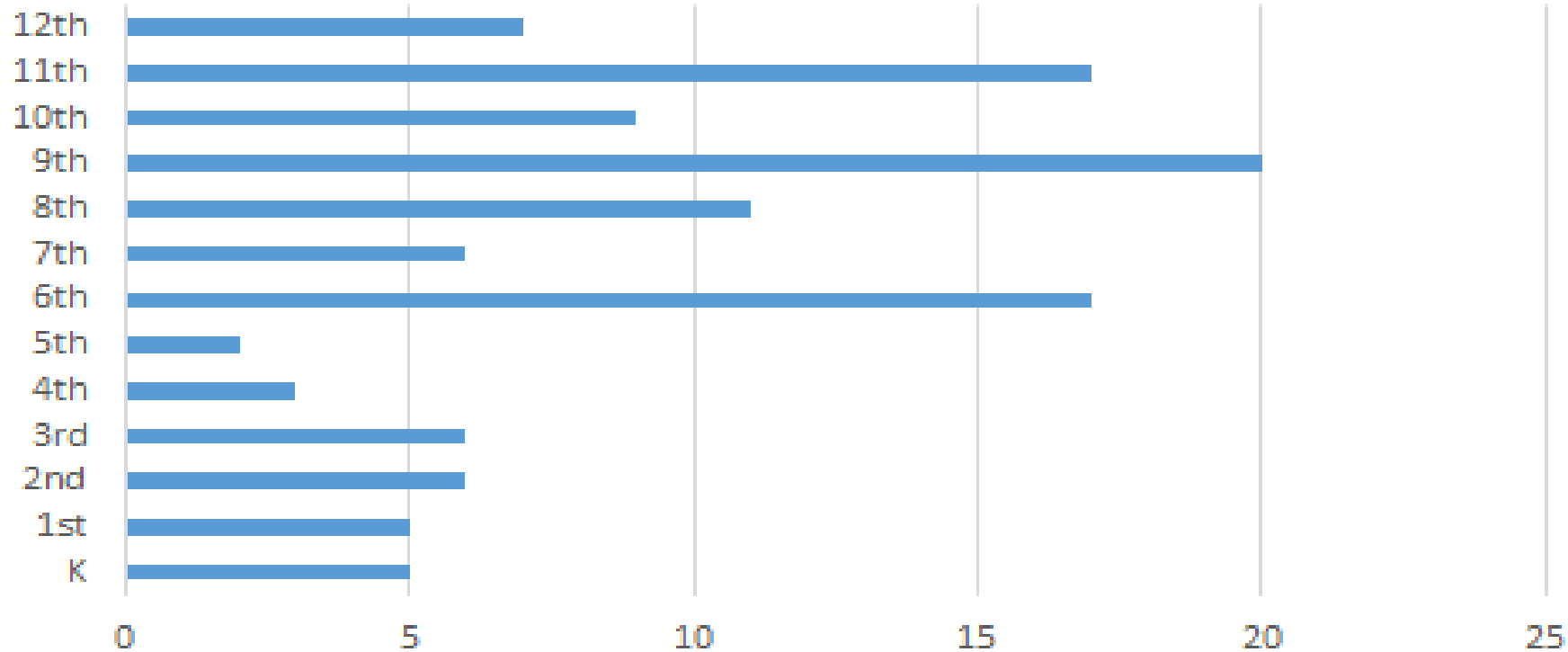
Student Wellness Facilitators Stats 2014-15

Special Education vs. Non-Special Education



Student Wellness Facilitators Stats 2014-15

Referrals by Grade



Student Wellness Facilitators Implementation Challenges

- ▶ Role definition
 - ▶ Where do SWFs fit in the “big picture?”
 - ▶ How do SWF differ from other helping professionals?
- ▶ Setting boundaries with other district employees
- ▶ District employee but funded by Imagine Thriving
- ▶ Turf issues/territorial

Student Wellness Facilitators Building a Shared Agenda

- ▶ Relationship building
- ▶ Promoting role
- ▶ Started working with students & went well - referral sources then 'got it'

Successes

- ▶ North Dakota Council of Educational Leaders
Proposed amendment to model program in 4 pilot regions across the state
- ▶ No child connected to SWF has gone without care because of a financial need
- ▶ Student Board members testified in front of ND Legislature
- ▶ School and community culture is changing because of outreach & education

Successes

- ▶ Request for SWF from hundreds of miles away
- ▶ Requests for student board presentations from hundreds miles of way
- ▶ Two years of funding from Bremer Foundation
- ▶ SWF included in district strategic plan

Video

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Questions? Comments?

Contact

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