BALANCING PHYSICAL &
PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY IN SCHOOLS

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Learning Objectives

Participants will…

1. Be able to state three strategies for ensuring physical safety in the school setting as well as 3 strategies for promoting psychological safety.
2. Be able to identify how to advocate for effective school safety policies that consider the unique needs of student and educator safety in the educational environment.
3. Learn how school-employed mental health professionals can work alongside school resource officers and school administrators to improve school safety and school climate outcomes.

Five elements of Comprehensive School Safety

1. Implement school policies that consider physical and psychological safety
2. Develop safe and supportive schools
3. Implementation of Multi Tiered Systems of Support
4. Increase access to mental and behavioral health services in schools
5. Review and revise current policies and legislation – be an advocate for change!

#1. Implement School Policies that Consider the Physical and Psychological Safety

Crisis Prevention

Balancing Physical and Psychological Safety

Balancing Physical and Psychological Safety

*Physical **and** psychological safety are critical!*

Physical Safety
- Focused on the physical structures of the school environment

Psychological Safety
- Focused on the emotional and behavioral well-being of students and staff

Source: Reeves, Nickerson, & Jimerson (2006).

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

- *Natural Access Control*
  - Double entryway doors
  - Only one access point inside of a building
  - Clearly marked entrances with visitor guidelines
  - Visitor control procedures
  - Properly locked doors inside of building
  - Doorways eliminated from restrooms

Source: Crowe (2000), Crowe & Zahm (1994)

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

- *Natural Surveillance*
  - Clear line of sight to outside of the building
  - Cameras
  - Proper lighting inside and outside
  - Clearly marked visitor parking close to front entrance
  - Student supervision
    - Line of sight maintained to students walking in the hallway
    - Students not allowed in the hallway without staff supervision
    - Teachers monitoring class changes in the hallway

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

Natural Surveillance Examples

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

- *Territoriality*
  - Murals demonstrating a positive learning environment and diversity of students and learning
  - Clear boundaries between school and community property
  - Large signs illustrating building locations and building names clearly marked
  - Frequently emptied trash receptacles and clean bathrooms
  - School grounds kept in good condition
  - Hallways and classrooms kept clean

Sources: Crowe (2000); Crowe & Zahm (1994).

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

Territoriality Example

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

Do these demonstrate:
- A. Natural surveillance
- B. Natural access control
- C. Territoriality
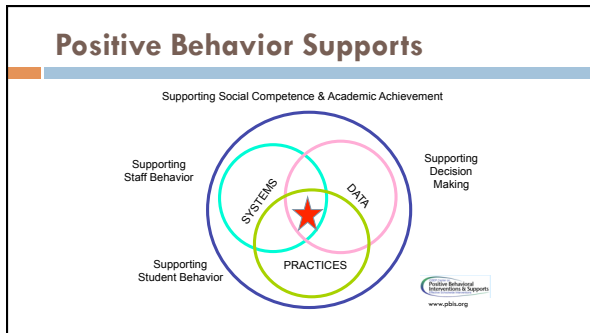
Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

Does this demonstrate:
A. Natural surveillance
B. Natural access control
C. Territoriality

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

Does this demonstrate:
A. Natural surveillance
B. Natural access control
C. Territoriality

Psychological Safety

Positive Behavior Supports

Supporting Social Competence & Academic Achievement

Supporting Staff Behavior

Supporting Decision Making

Supporting Student Behavior

SYSTEMS

DATA

PRACTICES

www.pbis.org

Social–Emotional Learning

- A proactive educational model intended to create a safe environment and foster academic success
- Promotes young people's academic success, health, and well-being while preventing a variety of problems such as alcohol and drug abuse, violence, truancy, and bullying

Source: Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (2010).

School Connectedness

□ Connectedness and school climate are related to school achievement.

"The amount of connectedness experienced by the average student appears to consistently contribute to his or her likelihood of aggression and victimization despite variations of school climate."

□ Source: Wilson (2004

Internal Resiliency

☐ Within-child factors allow for competence despite exposure to stressors.

Question: What are some examples of what you or your schools do to foster internal resiliency in children?

Sources: Brock (2002); Smith Harvey (2007).

External Resiliency

☐ Contextual factors allow children to achieve competence despite exposure to stressors.

Question: What are some examples of what you or your schools do to foster external resiliency for children?

Sources: Brock (2002); Smith-Harvey (2007).

Selecting Prevention Programs

- Identify the need (based on needs assessment).
- Compile a list of relevant research-based programs.
- Identify programs that are a good match for the specific population (e.g., age, cultural background, needs, funds).
- Ensure that the school/district devotes the time and resources needed to implement the program with fidelity.

Sources: Reeves, Kanan, & Plog (2010); Small, Cooney, Eastman, & O'Connor (2007).

Strategies/Programs to Improve Climate, Safety, and Resilience

- School-wide positive behavior interventions
- Disciplinary policy/procedures
- Violence prevention programs
  - Threat assessment services
  - Conflict resolution programs
  - Anger management programs
- Suicide prevention programs
  - Suicide assessment services

- Bullying prevention programs
  - Cyberbullying and cyberthreats
  - Physical and verbal
  - Relational
- Tolerance programs
- Gang prevention and resistance programs
- School mental health services

Mitigation of Risk

- Students and staff need to be informed of what to do if they detect a risk.
- In particular, schools should be equipped to conduct
  - Suicide risk assessments.
 - Threat assessments.

Collaboration

"Schools have the important responsibility of formulating a collaborative plan that creates an appropriate climate, an explicit structure and clear procedures for effective multiagency partnerships."

Source: U.S. Department of Education Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools (2008).

Collaboration

Community Resources

Local
Emergency Agencies

School Resources

National Assistance
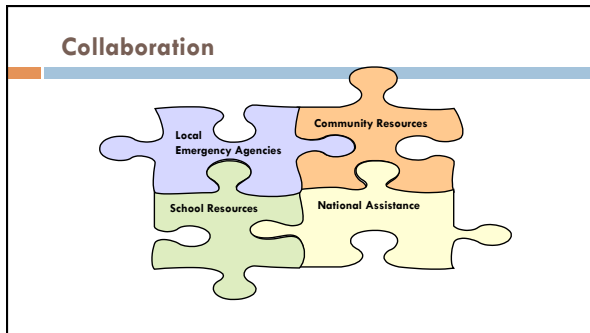
Psychological Safety

Does this demonstrate:
A. Positive behavior supports
B. Student resiliency
C. School connectedness
D. Collaboration

Psychological Safety

Do these demonstrate:
A. Positive behavior supports
B. Student resiliency
C. School connectedness
D. All of the above

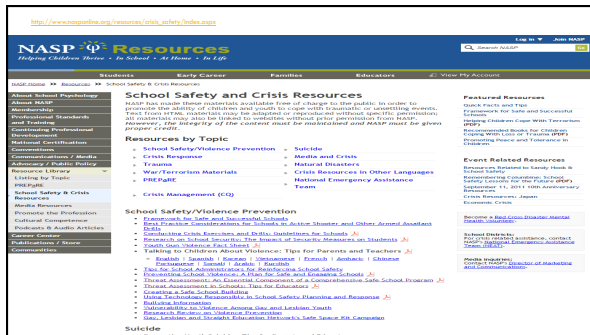THE WASHINGTON SCHOOL
CODE OF CONDUCT

WE ARE THE MIGHTY
WOLVERINES!

Be Respectful   SUCCESS!
Be Responsible
Be a Problem Solver

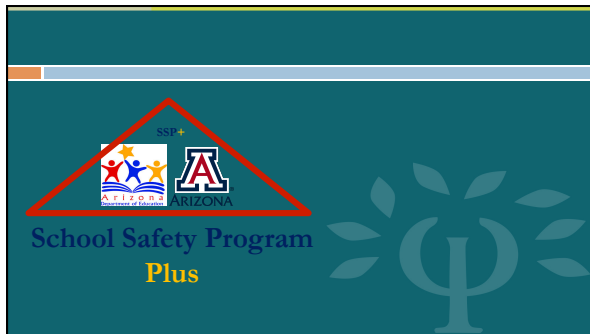| Physical Safety	Psychological Safety
Secure doors	Trusting and Respectful Relationships
Check in/out system	Access to school employed mental health professionals
Lighted hallways	Continuum of support services
Monitoring of School Grounds	Mental Health First Aid
Properly designed playgrounds and sports fields	Positive Discipline
Adult supervision in high traffic areas	Anti-bullying initiatives
School Resource Officer**	Confidential Reporting System
Threat Assessment Procedures	Threat Assessment Procedures

#2. Develop Safe and Supportive Schools
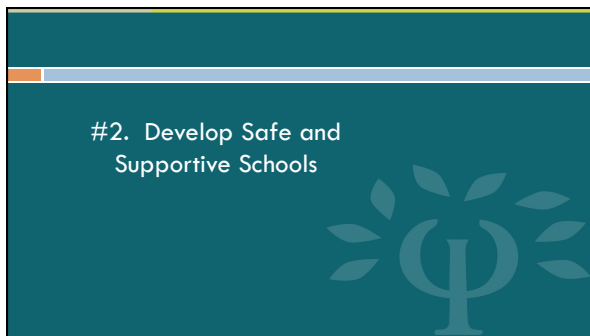
A Framework for Safe and Successful Schools

- Integrate learning supports, instruction, and school leadership
- Implement MTSS
- Improve access to mental health support
- Integrate school climate and school safety efforts
- Balance physical and psychological safety
- Employ effective discipline practices
- Consider the unique context of each school environment

SRO Influence on School Climate & School Safety

- NIJ 3-year grant
- Investigate effectiveness of enhanced training protocol
- 48 schools in Arizona across 3 conditions
- Multidisciplinary Team
  - School Resource Officer (SRO)
  - School Administrator
  - School mental health professional
- Outcomes
  - School climate
  - Student perceptions of physical & psychological safety
  - Rates of bullying/victimization
  - Disciplinary referrals
  - Attendance concerns

Research Questions

1. How do SROs affect school climate and other important outcomes?
2. Which specific activities conducted by SROs are related to the various outcome measures?
3. What individual characteristics of SROs (e.g., years of experience, educational background) are associated with the best outcomes?
4. What type of training is associated with the best outcomes? How big of a difference is there?
5. Do findings vary by sub-populations of students such as those from racial/ethnic minority backgrounds, students with disabilities, English Language Learners, immigrant or refugee students?

School Team Data
(Eklund, Bosworth, & Meyer, in preparation)

Experience with Crisis Events
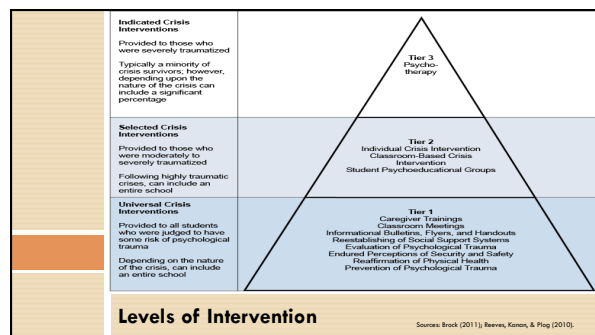- SRO's: Student physical assault, weapons
- MH: Suicide attempt, student/faculty death
- Admin: Weapons, drugs, student/faculty death

Perceptions of Programming
- PBIS and SEL
- School Crisis Response Plans, Teams, and Drills

#3 Implement Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)

Levels of Intervention

Indicated Crisis Interventions

Provided to those who were severely traumatized

Typically a minority of crisis survivors; however, depending upon the nature of the crisis can include a significant percentage

Selected Crisis Interventions

Provided to those who were moderately to severely traumatized

Following highly traumatic crises, can include an entire school

Universal Crisis Interventions

Provided to all students who were judged to have some risk of psychological trauma

Depending on the nature of the crisis, can include an entire school

Tier 3
Psycho-therapy

Tier 2
Individual Crisis Intervention
Classroom-Based Crisis Intervention
Student Psychoeducational Groups

Tier 1
Caregiver Trainings
Classroom Meetings
Informational Bulletins, Flyers, and Handouts
Reestablishing of Social Support Systems
Evaluation of Psychological Trauma
Endured Perceptions of Security and Safety
Reaffirmation of Physical Health
Prevention of Psychological Trauma

Sources: Brock (2011); Reeves, Kanan, & Plog (2010).

#4 Increase Access to Mental and Behavioral Health Services in Schools

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School Mental Health Professionals:
Well Positioned to Address Mental Health

1. Only 20 percent of children with mental disorders receive mental health services

2. However, of those who do receive care 70 to 80% receive this care in a school setting

3. Not surprisingly, given these statistics, the most common entry point to mental health services is the school
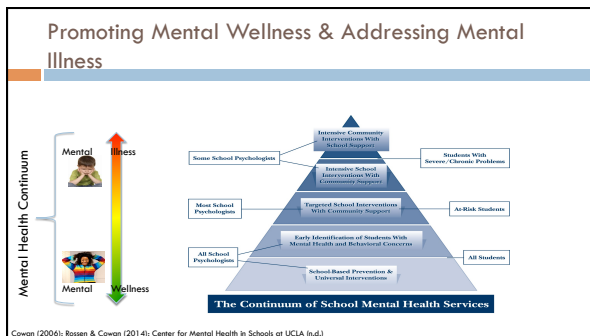
U.S. Public Health Service (2000); Rones & Hoagwood (2000)

School Mental Health Professionals:
Well Positioned to Address Mental Health

Further supporting this assertion, are the facts that

1. 88.7% of our nation's youth attend a public school.
2. Youth are 21 times more likely to visit a school-based health clinic for their mental health care than they are a community based clinic
3. Half of all life time cases of mental illness have their onset by age 14 years

Kessler et al. (2005); Juszczak, Melinkovich, & Kaplan (2003); U.S. Department of Education (2009)

Promoting Mental Wellness & Addressing Mental Illness

The Continuum of School Mental Health Services

Cowan (2006); Rossen & Cowan (2014); Center for Mental Health in Schools at UCLA (n.d.)

Promoting Mental Wellness

Universal Wellness promotion

- Positive Behavioral Supports
- Social and Emotional Learning
  - Improves social relationships
  - Increases attachment to school and motivation to learn
  - Reduces anti-social, violent, and drug-using behaviors

2013 CASEL GUIDE
Effective Social and Emotional Learning Programs

Horner et al. (2002); CASEL (n.d.); CASEL (2012)

Addressing Mental Illness

Universal Screening

- School-based mental health screening needs to be as institutionalized as is school-based vision and hearing screening.
  - *The key step in reform is to move school-based psychological services from the back of the service delivery system, in which only students at the highest level of risk receive services, to the front of service delivery through the use of universal, proactive screening.* (p. 174)

Dowdy (2010)

Addressing Mental Illness

Targeted Prevention and Intervention

- Screening results suggesting mental health problems in 1st grade predict poor academic achievement 3 years later.
- Students with mental health risk have lower achievement when compared to students without such risk.
  - *Unlike poverty, parental education and preexisting academic ability—the other major predictors of academic success in this study—mental health is a risk factor that may yield to intervention* (p. 409).

See Kamphaus et al. (2014) for a current discussion of behavioral and emotional risk screening
Guzman et al. (2011)

Addressing Mental Illness

Individual Intervention

- *Overall, the meta-analyses reviewed here have demonstrated that an array of treatments for a variety of psychological concerns are beneficial for children and adolescents.* (p. 1095)

- *As all children are required to attend school, and are consequently provided adequate transportation, the school building becomes an ideal environment for the assessment and provision of therapeutic services, often eliminating the transportation, insurance, and social stigma barriers. Although the demands on professionals within the school system are extraordinary … , time spent providing psychotherapy to students would be well spent.* (p. 1095)

Zerkelback & Reese (2010)

#5 Review and revise current policies and legislation-

Be an Advocate for Change!

NASP Congressional Briefing 2013:
Rethinking School Safety: Schools and Communities Working Together

- Preventative measures
- Identify warning signs
- Access to mental health
- Overcome stigma
- Resilience Factors

Nelba Marquez-Greene

How can I or my state association be an effective advocate?

1. **Educate others about national, state & local priorities**
   - Promote expanded role for school mental health professionals
   - Promote advocacy and public policy updates in state newsletters
   - Social media

2. **Strengthen your grassroots advocacy network**
   - Create/enhance GPR/Legislative committees for your organization
   - Develop methods for rapid communication
   - Set a State Advocacy Plan and ADVOCATE!

NASP ESEA Priorities

- Explicit definition of 'school psychologist'
- Authorization of the Elementary and Secondary School Counseling Program
- Authorization of Project SERV
- Allowable use of funds to:
  - Implement MTSS to address the needs of the whole child
  - Increase comprehensive school based mental health services
  - Create trauma-informed schools
  - Improve school climate and school safety
  - Provide high quality professional development for *all* staff
- Assurance that all students will be held to high standards and high expectations
- Accountability systems that:
  - Include school climate and other socio-emotional indicators
  - Use multiple measures of meaningful data to inform instruction and school improvement

How can I or my State Association be an Effective Advocate?

3. Participate in Promotional Activities and Events
- National School Psychology Awareness Week
- Resolutions on important topics
- Public awareness campaigns

4. Build Relationships
- Coalition partners (organizations)
- Local/State Education Agency leaders
- Building level principals
- District/County Safety Teams
- Psychology Licensing Boards

Advocacy at the Local Level

Demonstrating Value through Action

Direct Advocacy

You have to identify the most important:

- Why
- What
- WOW!

...factors.

Why does this matter to them?

How can I or my State Association be an Effective Advocate?

5. Build your Advocacy Capacity

- Participate in the 2015 GWU/NASP PPI
- Hold a state training for your board on advocacy
- Sponsor advocacy sessions and activities at your state convention
- Encourage other professionals to participate in advocacy sessions and activities at conferences and annual conventions
- Develop a State Advocacy Plan
- Nominate outstanding advocates (external stakeholders and school psychologists) for awards

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"If you are not at the table,

you are on the menu…"

Questions?
Thoughts?

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