

# Research on Promoting School Safety by Addressing School Mental Health School Responder Model & AMHT-SRO

2019 Annual Conference on Advancing School Mental Health

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**NCYOJ**

Research. Policy. Practice.

National Center for Youth  
Opportunity and Justice

# NCYOJ's NIJ School Safety Study

- To examine the effects of the School Responder Model (SRM) and Adolescent Mental Health Training – School Resource Officers (AMHT-SRO), both independently and collectively, on key outcome measures
- To measure any differences in outcomes due to local variations in resources

## **Acknowledgements**

### **Assessing a School, Justice and Behavioral Health Collaborative Approach to Improving School Safety**

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#### **Partners**

**LSU Health**  
NEW ORLEANS

**CHDI**  
Child Health and  
Development Institute

# Addressing the School Safety Challenge

## Presenting Challenge

- Identifying youth with behavioral health needs.
- Developing appropriate responses to address need in the school setting.

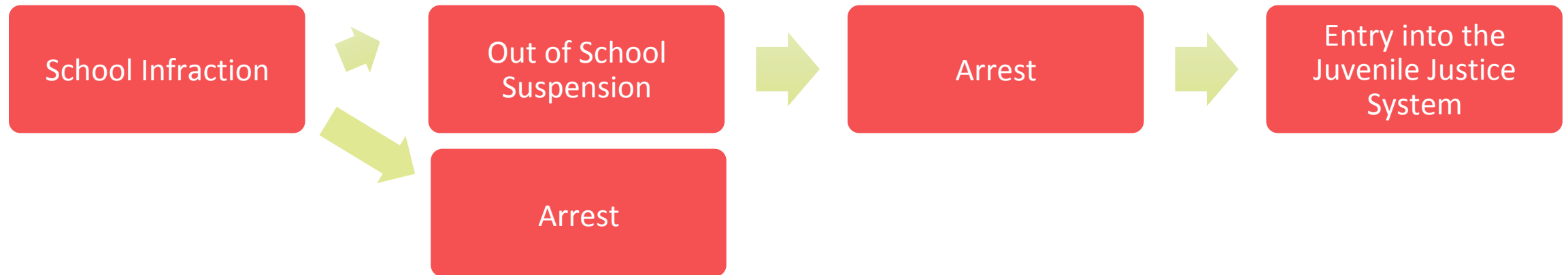


# School Responder Models

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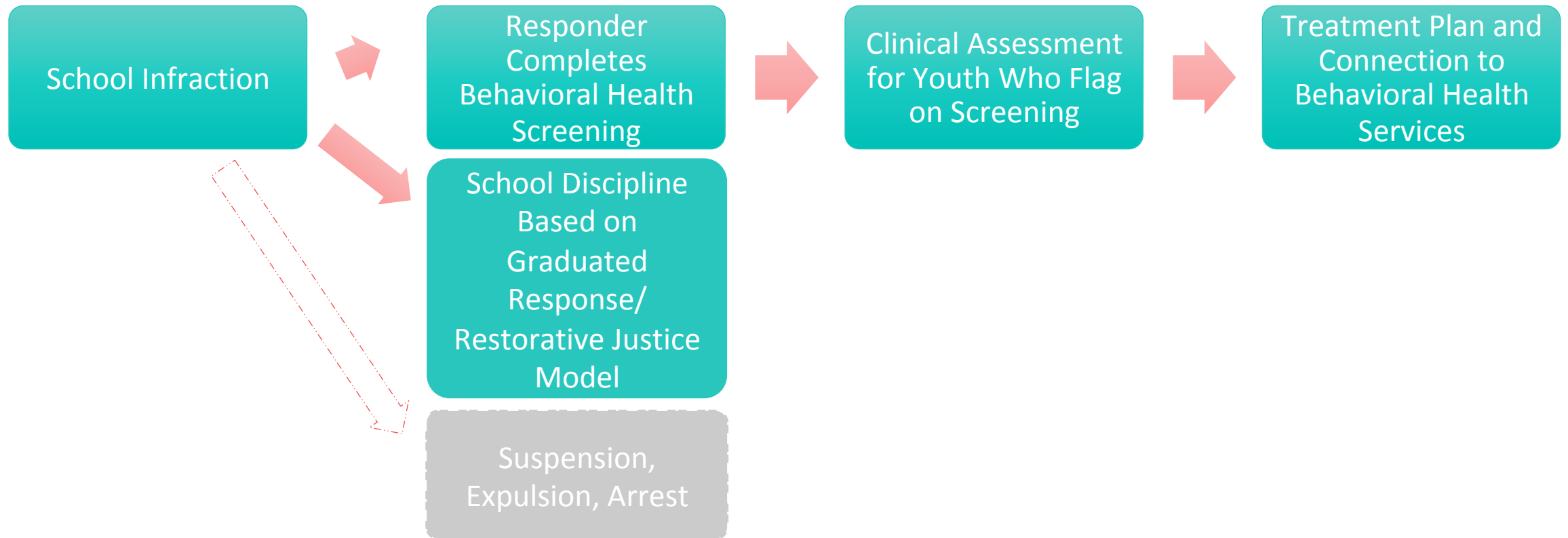
# Typical Response Models

## ▶ Traditional School-Justice Pathway



# Alternative Response Model

➤ A School Responder Model is a behavioral health response



# SRM: Four Key Activities



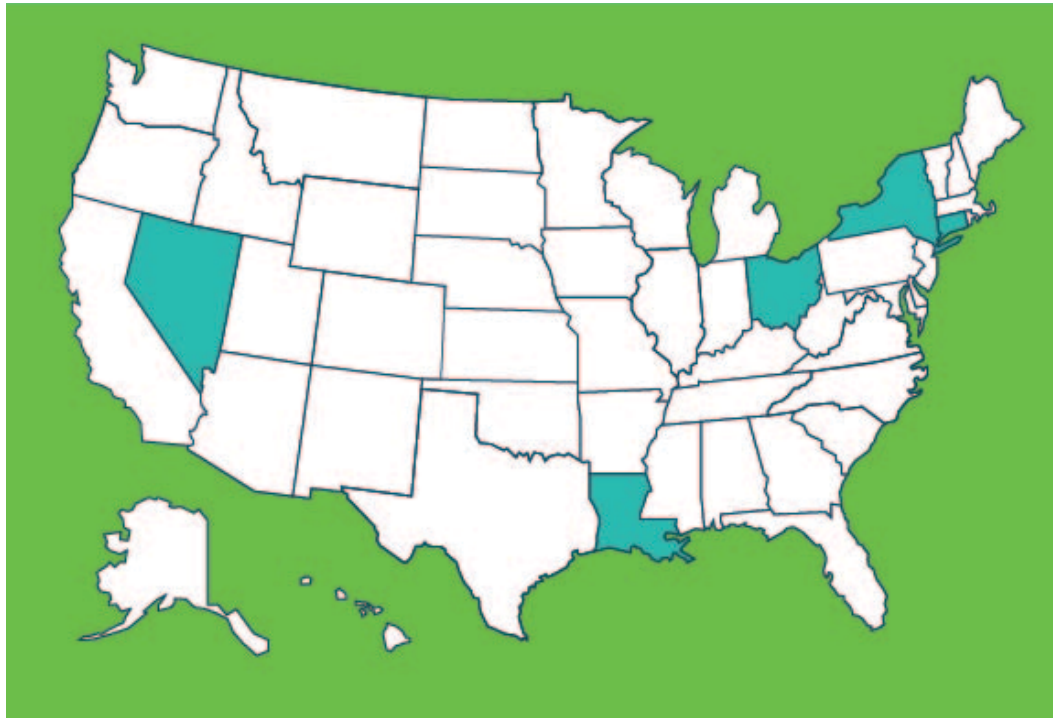
Form a Cross-  
Systems  
Collaborative  
Team

Engage  
Families and  
Youth

Implement a  
Behavioral  
Health  
Response

Create Formal  
Structures

# What We Know...



## Connecticut

- 34% reduction in court referrals
- Connected 47% more students to behavioral health services
- 4300+ teachers and staff have been trained to recognize trauma and mental health concerns

## Nevada

- 100% of students are screened
- 15% reduction in referrals to probation

## Schenectady High School, New York

- 70% reduction in superintendent hearings in 2017-2018 when compared to the previous year

## ReNew Accelerated High School, Louisiana

- 49% decrease in suspensions in the 2018-2019 school year when compared to the previous year



# Adolescent Mental Health Training for School Resource Officers & Educators

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# AMHT-SRO

## Overview

- 1.5 day training
- Audience: School resource officers and security, administrators and educators
- Focus on skill-building



## Topics Covered

- Adolescent development
- Child trauma, historical trauma and intergenerational trauma, and the family experience
- Signs and symptoms of behavioral health conditions, neurodevelopmental disorders, and suicide
- Crisis intervention and de-escalation
- Roles and responsibilities
- Establishing community partnerships


# Intervention Groups – 16 Sites

- ▶ Group A:
  - SRM & AMHT-SRO (4 high schools)
- ▶ Group B:
  - SRM Only (4 high schools)
- ▶ Group C:
  - AMHT-SRO Only (4 high schools)
- ▶ Group D:
  - Controls (4 high schools)



# Data and Methods



- ▶ Quasi-experimental design and a convergent parallel mixed method approach to data collection and analysis (data collection ongoing)
  - ▶ **Quantitative:** youth-level administrative data from the schools, behavioral health providers, and law enforcement, as well as school-level surveys on climate and culture
  - ▶ **Qualitative:** interviews, focus groups, and observations with system professionals
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# Overview of Data Collection

## Quantitative Data Constructs

### Youth-Level:

- Demographics
- Academic & Disciplinary Records
- Juvenile Justice System Involvement
- Behavioral Health Utilization

### Organizational-Level:

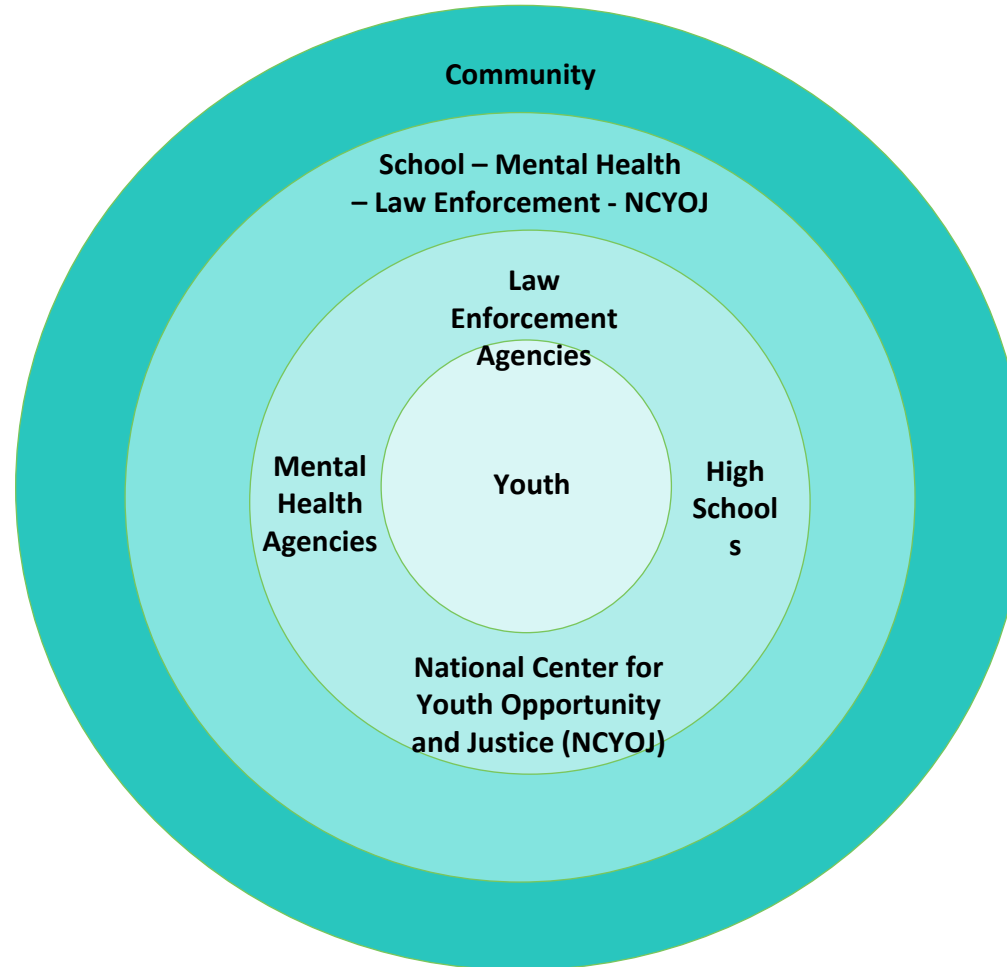
- *High Schools*: Climate and culture.
- *NCYOJ Intervention Implementation Team*: Quality of intervention services (e.g. satisfaction and knowledge gained).

### Community-Level:

- Measures of human, social and financial capital.

## Sources of Quantitative Data

- Administrative data from high schools, and state-level agencies for justice and health.
- School climate survey administered to school leadership, faculty and staff members.
- Satisfaction surveys and questionnaires completed by those in participating organizations.
- Community data from the American Community Survey (ACS).



## Qualitative Data Constructs

### Organizational-Level:

- *High Schools, Law Enforcement and Mental Health Agencies*:
  - Climate, culture and attitudes regarding discipline and mental health.
  - Readiness for and managing change.
  - Organizational resources.
- *NCYOJ Intervention Implementation Team*: Quality of intervention services provided.

### Cross-Organizational Level:

- *High Schools-Law Enforcement Agencies- Mental Health Agencies*: Collaborative structures and practices.

## Sources of Qualitative Data

- Individual interviews with school and agency administrators/leaders, educators, law enforcement officers, mental health practitioners and student support staff in schools.
- Group interviews with educators, student support staff, and mental health practitioners.
- School policies and procedures.

# Challenges

- Staff Turnover
- Transforming Culture
- Integrating into Existing Efforts
- Family Engagement

*I'm at ground zero.*

– SRM Implementation Site Staff



Students participate in a restorative justice circle. (Cliff Grassmick/Digital First Media/Boulder Daily Camera via Getty Images) | [www.the74million.org](http://www.the74million.org)

# Challenges


- Existing Policies
- Few Community Champions
- Securing Buy-In
- Creating a Permanent Structure

*If the hearing officer decides to expel, that's just what it is.*  
– SRM Implementation Site Staff



School staff participate in the NCYOOJ Family Engagement Seminar

# Lessons Learned



Construct Interdisciplinary Intermediary Team

Incorporate Peer-to-Peer Learning Opportunities

Mentor a Community-Based Intermediary Group



# Questions and Discussion

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Thank you!

# Contact Us

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