



Central East (HHS Region 3)

MHTTC

Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network

Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

School Mental Health Virtual Learning Series

November 2021-June 2022

Cultural Inclusiveness and Equity (CIE)
Module 4: Supporting Students Experiencing
Distress from a Cultural Inclusiveness & Equity
Lens

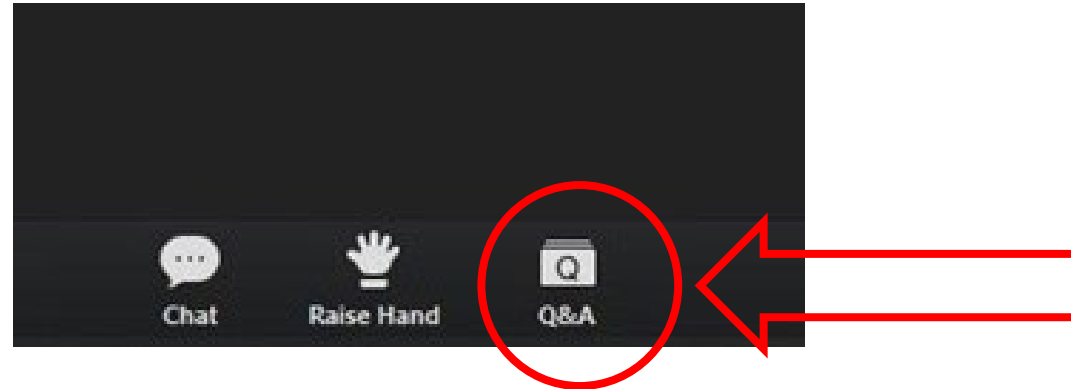
April 6, 2022



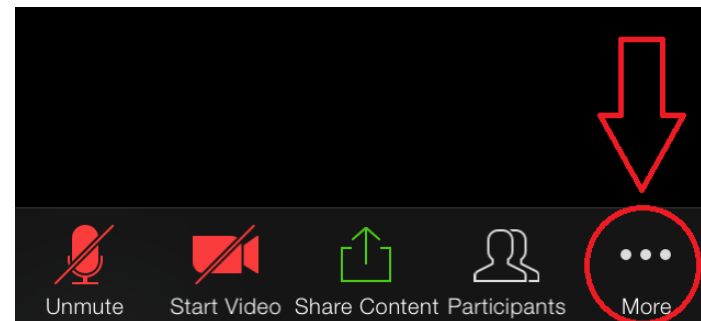
Technology Support

- Slides will be posted on the NCSMH website (www.schoolmentalhealth.org)
- Please type questions for the panelists into the Q&A box.
- Use chat box for sharing resources, comments, and responding to speaker

Web



Mobile App





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Tiffany Beason
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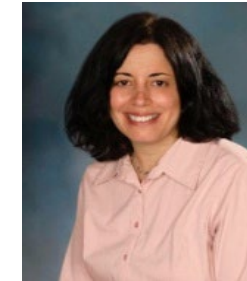
Lorraine Bernstein
Coordinator



Dana Cunningham
PGSMHI Director



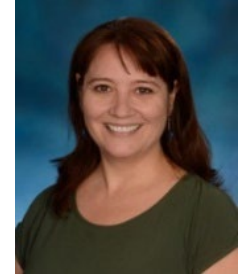
Sharon Hoover
NCSMH Co-Director



Nancy Lever
NCSMH Co-Director



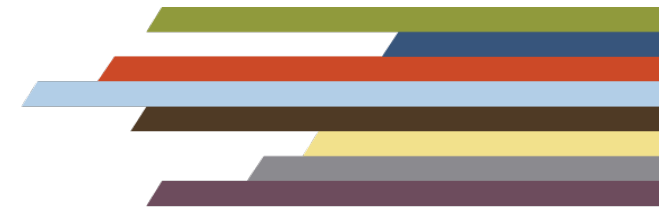
Perrin Robinson
Communications Manager



Kris Scardamalia
NCSMH Faculty

Changing Communities Through Change in Practice

THE DANYA INSTITUTE



Central East Geographical Area of Focus

HHS REGION 3

Delaware

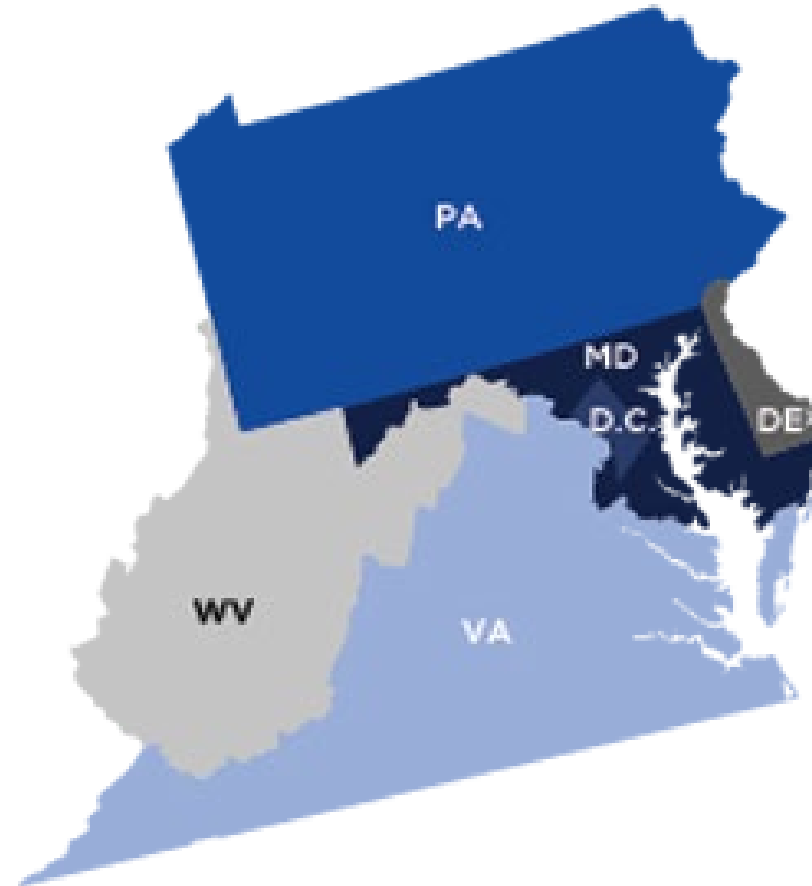
District of Columbia

Maryland

Pennsylvania

Virginia

West Virginia





What Does Central East MHTTC Do?

Actions

- **Accelerate** the adoption and implementation of evidence-based and promising treatment and recovery-oriented practices and services
- **Strengthen** the awareness, knowledge, and skills of the behavioral and mental health and prevention workforce, and other stakeholders, that address the needs of people with behavioral health disorders
- **Foster regional** and national alliances among culturally diverse practitioners, researchers, policy makers, funders, and the recovery community
- **Ensure** the availability and delivery of publicly available, free of charge, training and technical assistance to the behavioral and mental health field

National Center for School Mental Health

MISSION:

Strengthen policies and programs in school mental health to improve learning and promote success for America's youth

- Focus on advancing school mental health policy, research, practice, and training
- Shared family-schools-community mental health agenda

Directors: Drs. Nancy Lever & Sharon Hoover

Faculty: Tiffany Beason, Ph.D. Jill Bohnenkamp, Ph.D., Elizabeth Connors, Ph.D, Britt Patterson, Ph.D., Sam Reaves, Ph.D., Kris Scardamalia, Ph.D., Cindy Schaeffer, Ph.D.



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School Mental Health Webinar Series

Objectives

- Gain increased awareness of high quality, sustainable multi-tiered system of school mental health supports and services
- Support trauma-informed systems in schools
- Discover the impacts of social determinants of health on student academic and social-emotional-behavioral success
- Learn to provide more culturally responsive and equitable services and supports
- Hear perspectives on school mental health from school, district and state levels
- Obtain insight into how youth, families, schools and communities can best work together to address student mental health needs



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Upcoming Webinars (3:00-4:00 ET, 2:00-3:00 CT, 1:00-2:00 MT, 12:00-1:00 PT)

- May 4th - CARE Best Practices in SMH - Universal Health Promotion (Tier 1)
 - June 1st - CARE Best Practices in SMH: Early Intervention and Treatment in Schools (Tiers II and III)
-

Today's Presenters

Tiffany Beason, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor, National Center for School
Mental Health
Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
University of Maryland School of Medicine



Kris Scardamalia, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor, National Center for School
Mental Health
Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
University of Maryland School of Medicine



Our Learning Roadmap

Module 1 - Understanding How Social Injustices Impact Student Mental Health

Module 2 - Understanding How Educator Bias Impacts Student Mental Health

Module 3 - Engaging in Culturally Inclusive Action to Promote Student Mental Health

Module 4 - Supporting Students Experiencing Distress from a Cultural Inclusiveness & Equity Lens

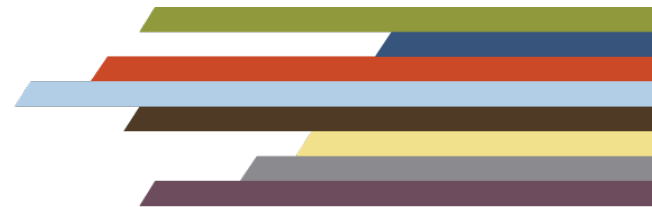
Module 4: Supporting Students Experiencing Distress from a Cultural Inclusiveness & Equity Lens

Upon completion of Module 4, the educator will be able to:

- Reflect on how student behavior is connected to their emotions and unmet needs
- Utilize a strengths-based approach to connecting families to culturally responsive mental health services
- Partner with clinicians to promote student wellness and equitable supports in the classroom

Know the prevalence of emotional distress in students

- Only 10-40% with these disorders receive any treatment
- Children from communities that are marginalized, are less likely to receive treatment.
- Lacking access to mental health care services is an equity issue



Identification

A mental health referral is warranted when a student displays emotional/behavioral patterns that impact learning and/or social-emotional functioning.



Look out for patterns of emotions/ behaviors that get in the way of:

- the student's ability to learn
- their relationships with others
- or the student's general ability to thrive and be well.

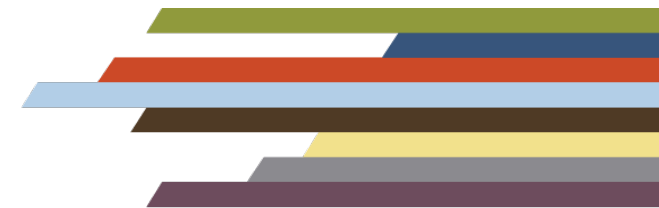
Patterns of Challenging Behaviors

- Mental health referrals are helpful for patterns of behaviors that we often respond to with disciplinary actions
- For instance, patterns of aggressive behaviors, like hitting, often reflect emotional distress
- Aggression can negatively impact relationships and they can get in the way of youth thriving.
- Thus, patterns of aggressive behaviors often warrant emotional check-ins

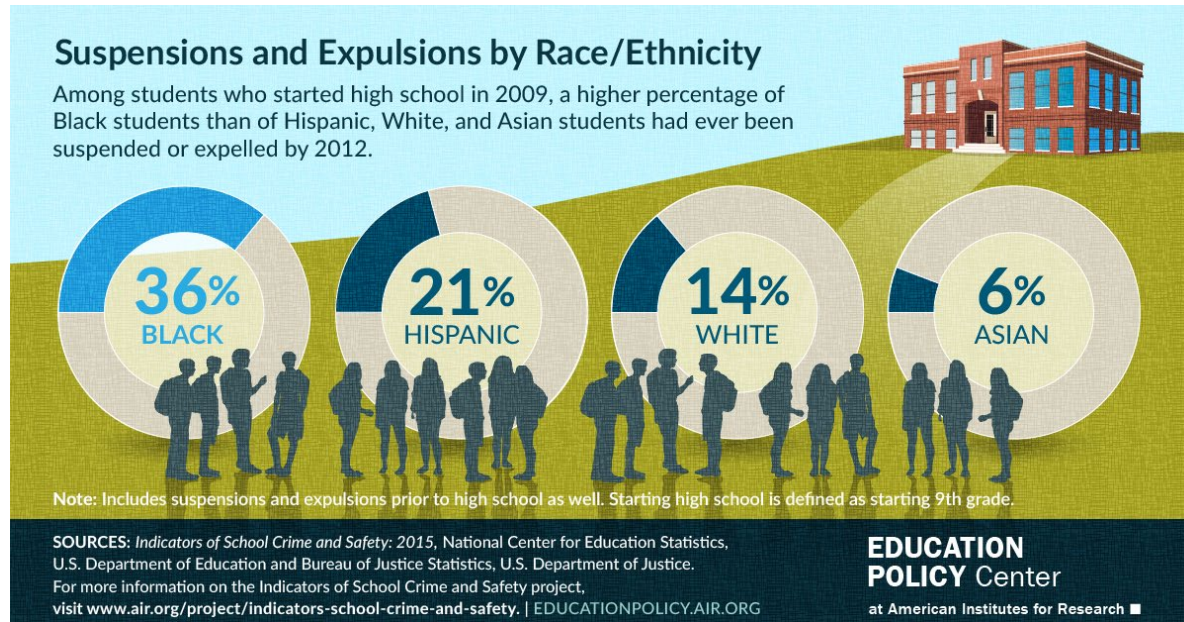


Be careful not to pathologize adaptive responses

Reactions to injustice	Culturally-appropriate behaviors
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Self-advocacy/resistance to inequitable rules• General speaking out against injustice• Calling-in educators or peers who engaged in insensitive act or language• Socially dis-engaging in response to un-affirming environment• Being on-edge or mistrustful in un-affirming environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Avoiding eye contact may be a sign of respect in some cultures• Using first language or using language that has important meaning within a specific culture• Preferences for movement/activity is common for boys• Seeking reassurance or attention from peers/educators may reflect collectivistic cultural orientation




School Disciplinary Disproportionalities




INFOGRAPHIC


Disparities in School Discipline

 Black students are 3-4 times more likely than their White peers to be expelled or face multiple suspensions from school.

Risk of Being Expelled

 Black White

Risk of Facing Multiple Suspensions



Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, Civil Rights Data Collection, 2009-10

American Institutes for Research | air.org

Image from: <https://www.air.org/resource/exclusionary-school-discipline>: Selected Reference: (Villodas, 2019)

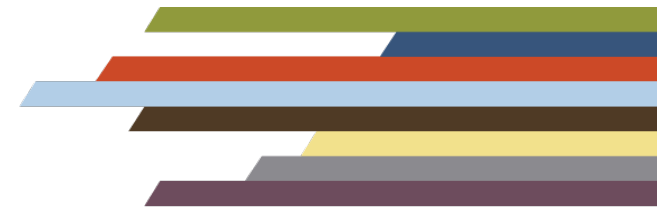
Changing Communities Through Change in Practice

Over-reliance of Disciplinary Responses

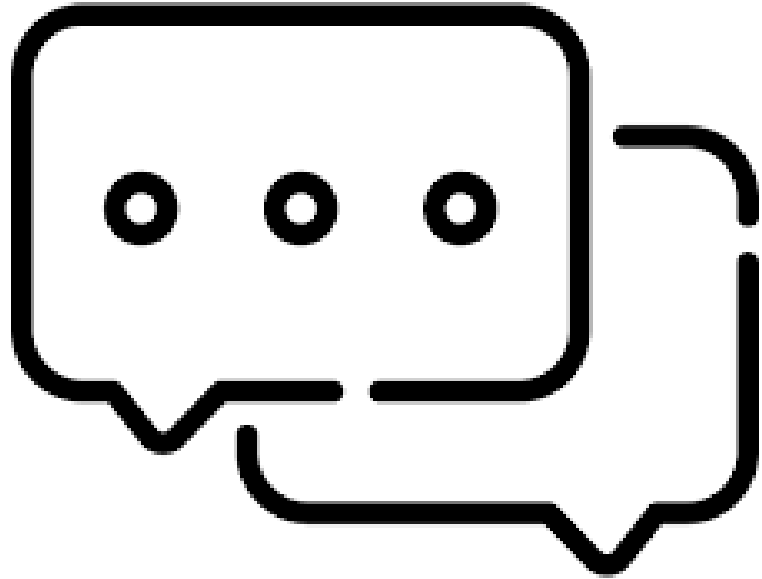
- Continued distress
- Internalizing negative self-messages (“I am bad”)
- Missed class time & opportunities to learn social-emotional skills
- Poorer grades
- Poorer relationships
- Increased unmonitored time outside of school
- Increased interactions with law enforcement



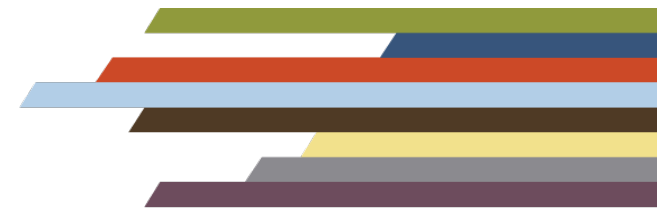
Crucial “fork in the road”: Compassionate Responding or Exclusionary Discipline



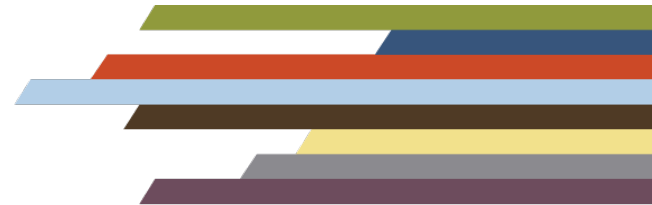
Reflection Question



What are some of the consequences of unmet student mental health needs or over-use of disciplinary actions that you have observed in your school or district?



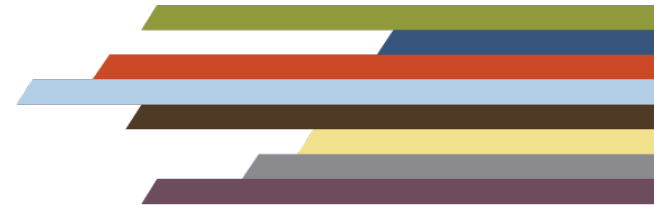
Best Practices for Supporting Students Experiencing Distress from a CIE Lens



Best Practices for Meeting Student Needs

Best practices for addressing student mental health concerns help ensure that BIPOC student needs are met.

- 1) Managing educator biases
- 2) Leaning into compassionate responding to student behaviors
- 2) Using a strengths-based approach to discussing student mental health needs
- 3) Connecting families to culturally responsive supports
- 4) and providing equitable supports in the classroom



Manage biases using self-reflection

“What are some behaviors that I tend to respond to with exclusionary discipline practices (i.e., office referrals)?”

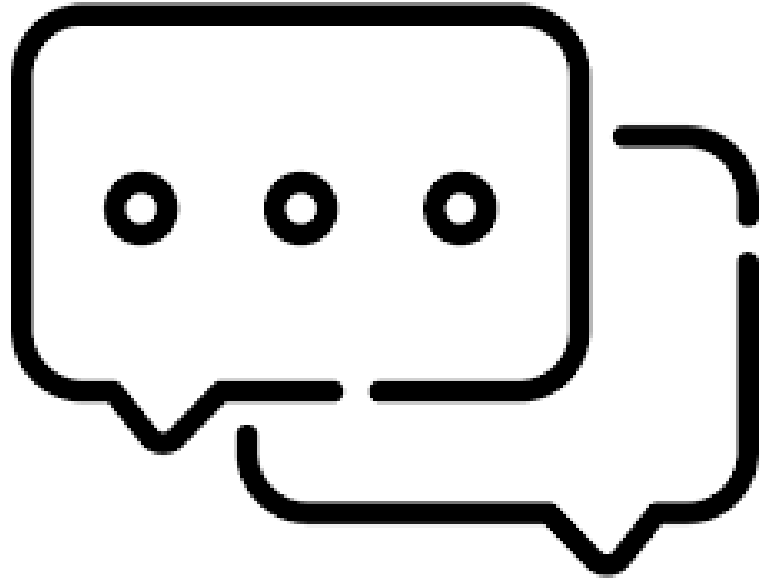
“What are patterns of behavior that may be getting in the way of student functioning that would warrant a mental health referral?”

“How might culture or identity relate to different student behaviors?”

“How might culture or identity be related to the behaviors I label as a mental health or disciplinary problem?”

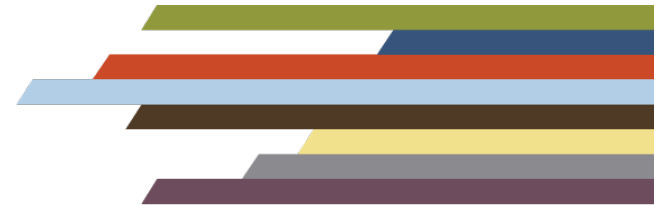
What can I do to help students get their mental health needs met?

Reflection Question



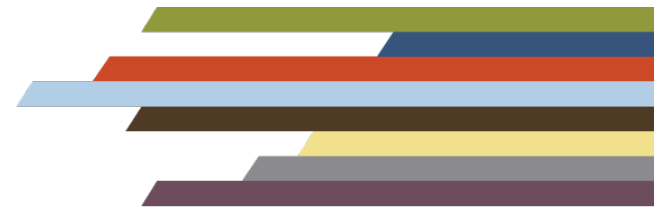
Think about your interpersonal strength/skills.

Name an interpersonal strength or skill that has helped you establish supportive relationships with students or otherwise foster safety and inclusion in your classroom?



Responding to students with compassion

- Youth experiencing significant emotional distress often display behaviors that impact their learning and/or social and emotional functioning.
- Sometimes educators respond with a disciplinary action when a mental health response is more appropriate.
- To better meet the needs of youth, carefully think through your responses to student behaviors and lean on responding with compassion.

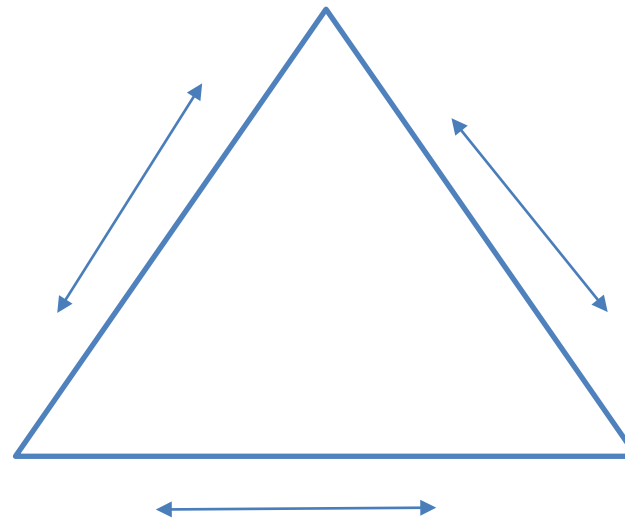


Cognitive Triangle: Behaviors are connected to our thoughts & emotions

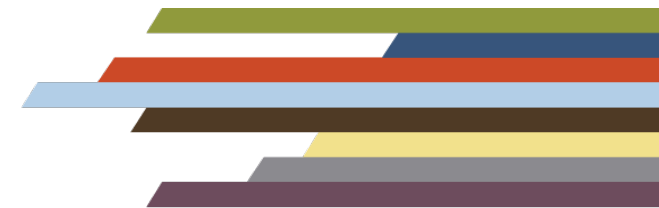
Example situation: child raises their hand to ask a question, but the teacher can't call on them right away.

THOUGHT: "My teacher is ignoring me. Nobody pays attention to me."

EMOTIONS:
impatience,
frustration, sadness



BEHAVIOR: child calls out and walks up to the teacher's desk



Examples of what behaviors could signify

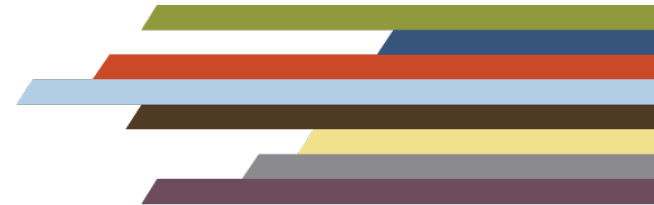
Verbal or behavioral disruptions: "I am anxious. I need adult support."

Property damage: "I feel rejected and unloved by my peers and teachers."

Tantrums or emotional outbursts: "I feel hopeless. I need help with feeling happy again."

Hitting, kicking or biting: "I feel unsafe. I'm worried something terrible is going to happen."

Making threatening statements: "I feel helpless. I need support with problem-solving."



Compassionate Responding

What is the behavior?

What feelings may the student be experiencing?

What do I assume is the cause of the behavior or emotional expression?

What might the child be trying to communicate with this behavior or emotional expression?

What potential need could be currently unmet for this student?

What can I do to help the child feel safe and supported right now?

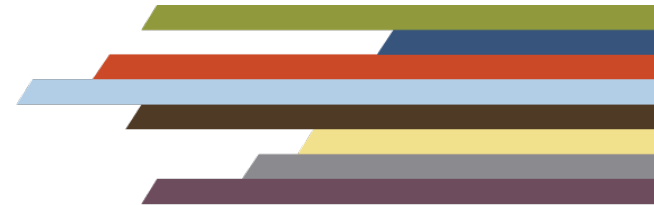
Resources for Classroom Behavior Management

[Restorative Practices Educator Toolkit](#)

This comprehensive toolkit includes a variety of resources for implementing restorative practices in schools. It includes some resources in both English and Spanish.

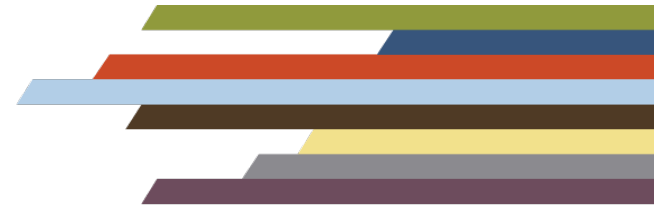
[Culturally Responsive Classroom Management](#)

This resource is a document that provides an overview of practical strategies for educators to implement culturally responsive strategies to manage a classroom.



Take a Strengths-Based Approach

- Lead with child/family strengths and skills
 - “Dante is a talented writer, he works really well in pairs, and loves to talk about football.”
- Present challenges as areas for growth:
 - “One area we would like to see Dante grow is staying on task during math lessons.”
- Mental health services as “additional supports” to help the child meet their goals:
 - “I would like to introduce you to our school counselor who might have some suggestions on how we can better support Dante with meeting his goals.”



Understand Barriers to Accessing Supports

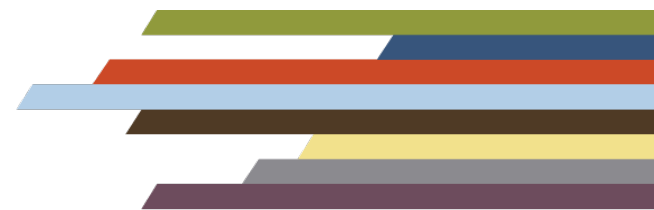
Mental health stigma

History of unethical practices in mental health care

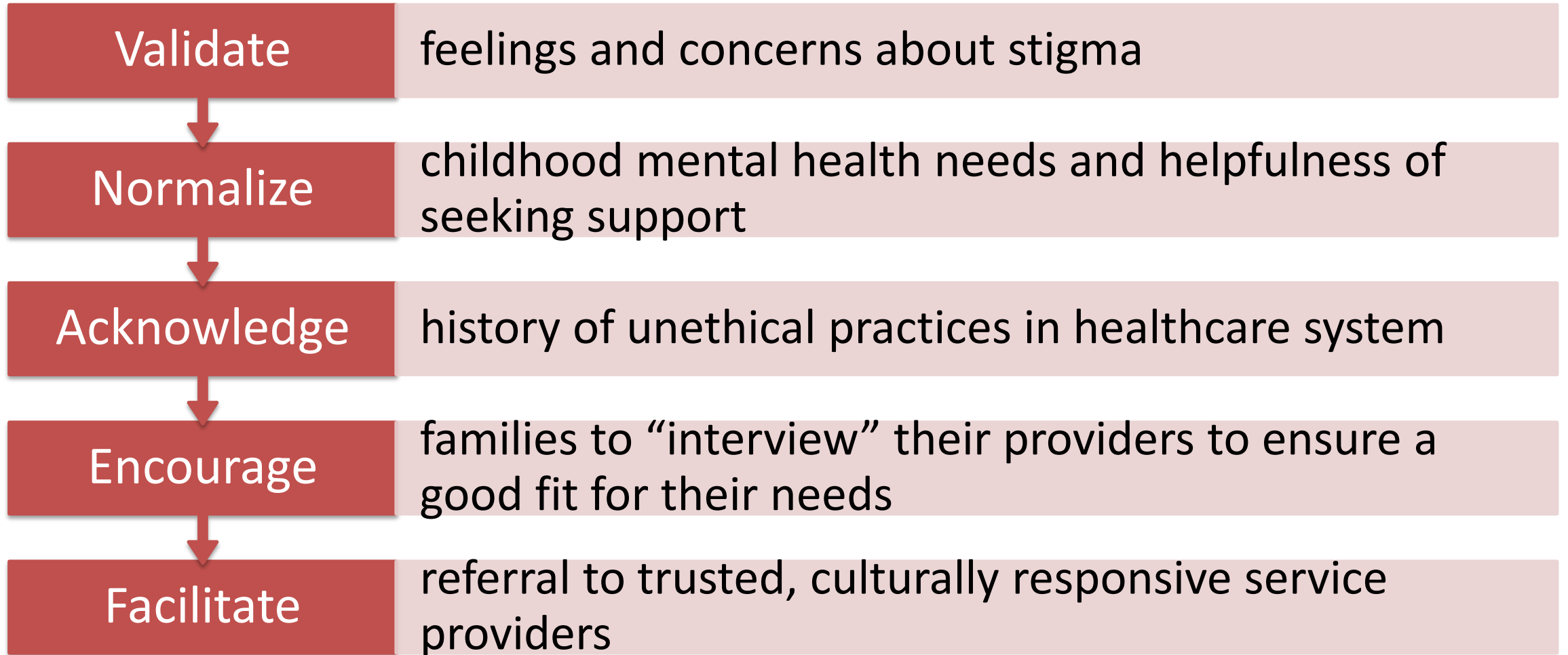
Mistrust of healthcare system

Preference for seeking support from religious/spiritual institutions

Lack of health insurance, reliable transportation, and finances to make appointments



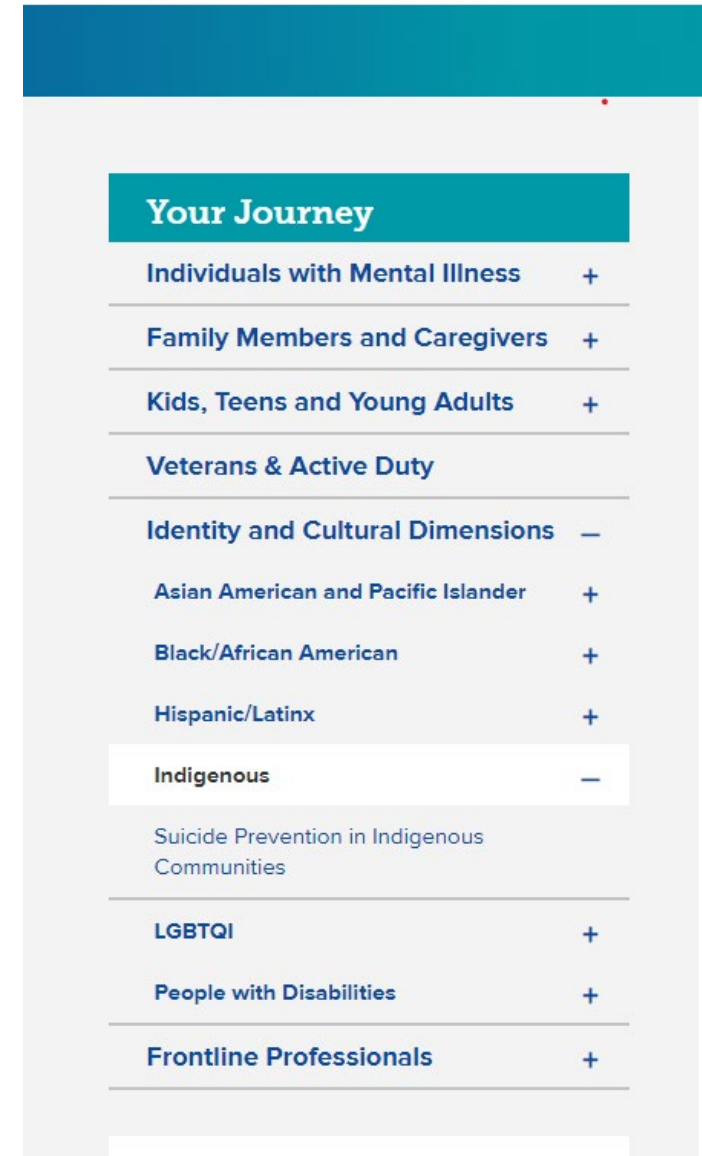
Problem-solve barriers to access



Resource

NAMI Identity and Cultural Dimensions

This resource provides information about mental health for different marginalized communities. It includes helpful strategies for families to identify culturally responsive mental health services.



From NAMI Resource



A BIPOC family seeking mental health supports can use these “interview” questions in their process of selecting a therapist:

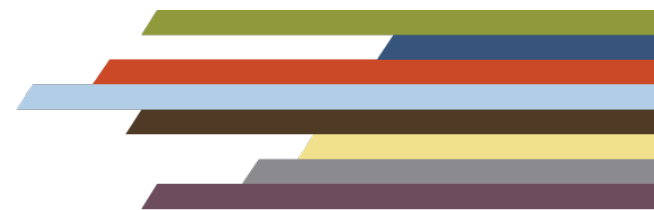
- Have you treated other [insert BIPOC identity] people or received training in cultural competence for BIPOC mental health?
- How do you see our cultural backgrounds influencing our communication and my treatment?
- What is your current understanding of differences in health outcomes for BIPOC patients?

From NAMI Resource



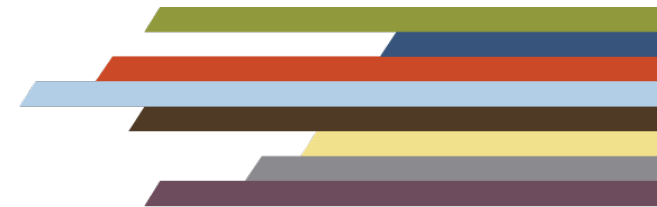
A family seeking LGBTQ+ affirming services can use these “interview” questions in their process of selecting a therapist:

- My child’s identity is [insert LGBTQ+ identity]. What experience do you have working with people with their identity?
- Do you have any specific training or certifications that relate to working with LGBTQI clients?

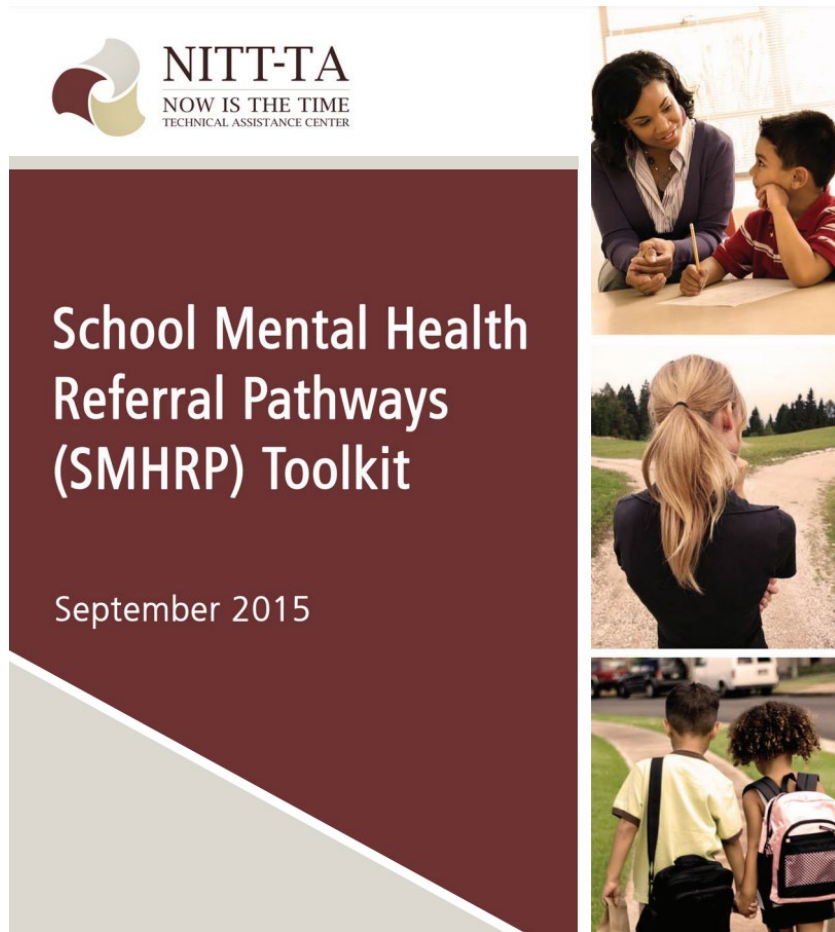


Partnering with Families to Support Student Mental Health

What can be done to help families address barriers after referrals are made?



Resource

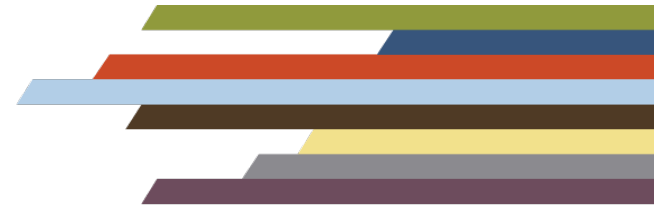


School Mental Health Referral Pathways Toolkit

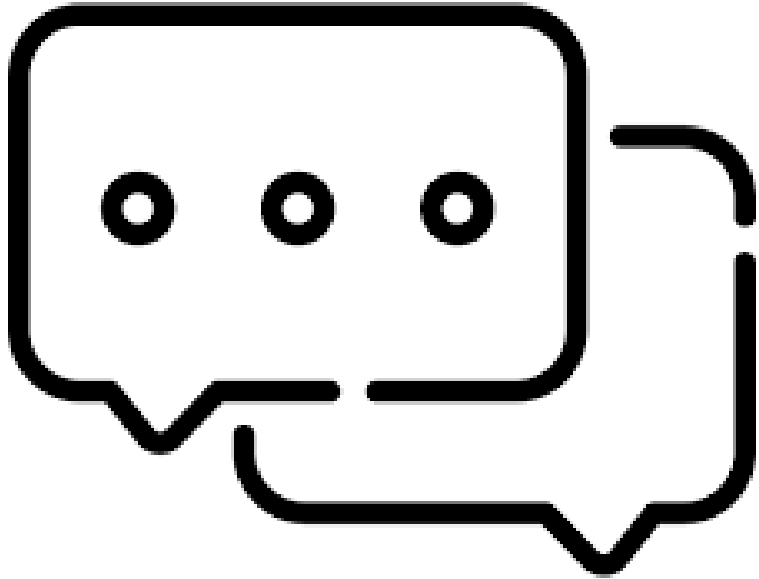
In this toolkit from SAMHSA, there are recommendations for schools to enact systems for referring students for mental health treatment. It includes a chapter on cultural and linguistic considerations for referring.

Provide Equitable Supports in the Classroom

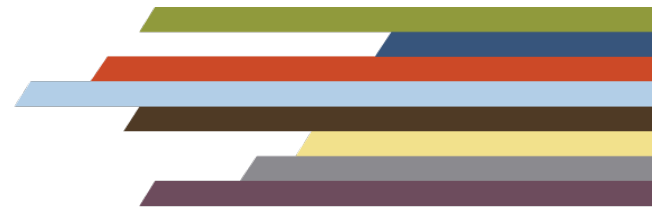
1. Form a collaborative team with the student & their family.
2. Meet as a team to establish a plan to support the student in your class.
3. Ensure equity of voice on the team.
4. Avoid labeling children by their diagnoses or problems. Rather, focus on setting positive behavioral goals.
5. Identify how educators will reinforce positive behaviors.
6. Ask how things are going and adapt the plan as needed, prioritizing youth & family voice.



Action Step



How do you intend to use your interpersonal strengths to foster compassionate responding to student behaviors?



Resource

TeacherWISE Wellbeing Course

TeacherWISE is a research-informed program that helps teachers and school staff manage five areas of well-being: Physical, Occupational, Intellectual, Social, and Emotional. The workbook is now available as an online program that you can complete at your own pace.



Training Coming Soon!



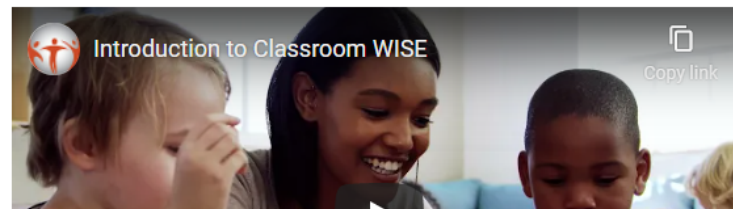
A training package on mental health literacy for teachers & school staff

Educators and school personnel play a vital role in promoting mental health and well-being and identifying and responding to emerging mental illness in children and adolescents. However, they often have not received the education, training, and/or ongoing support needed to respond in the classroom.

To address this need, the MHTTC Network, in partnership with the **National Center for School Mental Health** at the University of Maryland School of Medicine, has developed a **FREE** self-guided online course, video library + resource collection, and a website focused on educator mental health literacy. The 3-part training package, *Classroom WISE (Well-Being Information and Strategies for Educators)*, was informed by and co-developed with educators from across the nation.

These resources present concrete, universal approaches to promoting student mental health and creating safe and supportive classroom environments, describe student behaviors that may indicate a mental health concern, and provide specific skills and evidence-based strategies to engage and support students with mental health concerns. Catch a **SNEAK PEEK** below! Complete access to the training package is now available at www.classroomwise.org.

Note: We encourage you to share the information about Classroom WISE widely with your colleagues - a flyer to disseminate is available [here](#).



Changing Communities Through Change in Practice

Please Share Your Feedback!

Evaluation

Thank You