

EXPANDED SCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH STEERING TEAM REPORT

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REDUCING BARRIERS TO LEARNING CHARTING A COURSE TO EXPANSION AND INTEGRATION

Since our last report in March, 2009, the Expanded School Mental Health Steering Team:

- Helped to organize and participated in a two-day training for 40 school health leaders in West Virginia on “School Mental Health Capacity Building”. Nationally-recognized experts in the field of school mental health conducted the training as part of a CDC-funded project of the National Assembly on School Based Health Care. (See story below)
- Conducted training on ESMH for communities awarded planning grants through the Children's Division, WV Bureau Behavioral Health. Trainers included representatives from the WV Department of Education and Marshall University School Health Technical Assistance and Evaluation Center;
- Defined the vision and mission for ESMH in West Virginia; and
- Drafted a strategic plan and a work plan for 2009-10.

NASBHC EXPANDS SCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH CAPACITY IN WEST VIRGINIA

State and local school mental health (SMH) stakeholders from West Virginia came together on May 14 and 15 in Charleston to participate in a two-day School Mental Health Capacity Building Partnership pilot training. “The State of West Virginia has exhibited considerable commitment toward advancing a SMH agenda through its state-level leadership around SMH, strategic planning, extensive collaborations and partnerships, and involvement of diverse stakeholders, including SBHCs, family members, and youth” reports Laura Hurwitz, Director of School Mental Health at the National Assembly on School Based Health Care (NASBHC). Based on this impressive work and the content of their competitive application, West Virginia was selected from ten states to receive the pilot SMH Capacity Building Partnership training.



The pilot training was divided into four modules, each focusing on key areas of capacity building: fundamentals of SMH at the building level, marketing SMH to school administrators, quality assessment and improvement, and statewide planning. Trainers for the two days were:

- Laura Hurwitz, Director, School Mental Health, National Assembly on School Based Health Care, Washington, DC;
- Mark Weist, Director, Center for School Mental Health, University of Maryland;
- Sharon Hoover Stephan, Assistant Director, Center for School Mental Health, University of Maryland
- Veree Jenkins, Executive Director, Federation of Families, Palm Beach, FL

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- Jan Strozer, National Assembly on School Based Health Care
- Karen Weston, Center for Advancement of School Mental Health, University of Missouri;
- Carl Paternite, PhD, Center for School-Based Mental Health, Miami of Ohio University;

“This is exactly what we needed!” exclaimed one participant. “This training will kick-start our efforts in expanding our school mental health capacity and help grow our leadership group within the state.”

Melanie Purkey, Director of the WV Office of Healthy Schools, stated that the project will enhance efforts already underway between the Department of Education and the Children’s Division of the Bureau for Behavioral Health. “We are very excited to have been selected for this project and are looking forward to learning from the trainers and working with others in the state to address this very critical need. We know that for children to be successful in school, they must be emotionally healthy first.”

The School Mental Health Capacity Building Partnership is part of a national initiative made possible through a five year cooperative agreement between NASBHC and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Division of Adolescent and School Health (CDC-DASH). Additional support is provided by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

The mission of West Virginia’s Expanded School Mental Health Initiative is

TO DEVELOP AND STRENGTHEN POLICIES, PRACTICES AND SERVICES THAT PROMOTE LEARNING AND SOCIAL- EMOTIONAL WELL BEING FOR ALL OF WV’S YOUTH THROUGH A COLLABORATIVE PROCESS THAT ENGAGES SCHOOLS, FAMILIES, AND COMMUNITY- BASED AGENCIES

GRANTEES ANNOUNCED

In July, 2009 the Division of Children’s Mental Health Services in the Bureau for Behavioral Health awarded seven one-year grants to support planning and development of expanded school mental health models in ten counties.

The funds are for the purpose of planning, building alliances, and developing community strategies for comprehensive systems of learning supports in schools.

The ESMH Steering Team will assist in providing oversight, guidance, and technical assistance.

Grant recipients are:

- Pretera, Inc:
- Minnie Hamilton Health Center
- Westbrook Health Systems
- Youth Health Services
- Rainelle Medical Center
- Southern Highlands, Inc
- Ohio County Schools

The federal government should make preventing mental, emotional, and behavioral disorders and promoting mental health in young people a national priority, says a new report from the National Research Council and Institute of Medicine. These disorders are about as common as fractured limbs in children and adolescents. Collectively, they take a tremendous toll on the well-being of young people and their families, costing the U.S. an estimated \$247 billion annually. Research has shown that a number of programs are effective at preventing these problems and promoting mental health.... Programs that can be offered in family or educational settings show particular promise in promoting mental health and addressing major risk factors. ***Preventing Mental, Emotional, and Behavioral Disorders Among Young People: Progress and Possibilities:*** <http://www.nap.edu>

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