

Skills Training

As trained mental health professionals are not always available in schools, the health staff often become the frontline providers in the treatment of mental health problems in youth. Students with mental health problems often present or are referred to the health suite with somatic or behavioral complaints. Although it might be ideal to implement formal evidenced-based treatment protocols for some mental health problems, these are not always possible to use for reasons such as cost, time, or appropriate staff. There are, however, specific therapeutic skills fundamental to these evidenced-based treatments that can be utilized by health care staff, teachers, and parents to assist students in reducing their distress and/or to prevent the development of mental health problems.

- Many of these skills require little training to implement and can often be taught during one session, though additional meetings might be helpful to ensure continued use of skills.

Skills for Anxiety

- Deep Breathing
- Progressive Muscle Relaxation
- Mental Imagery/Visualization
- Cognitive Restructuring
- Systematic Desensitization
- General Stress Busters

Skills for Depression

- Cognitive Restructuring
- Thought Stopping
- Activity Scheduling
- Social Skills Training
- Problem Solving
- Relaxation Training

Skills for Disruptive Behavior Disorders

- Parenting training - Behavior Management
- School interventions - Classroom Management
- Child-focused treatments - Social Skills

Skills for Substance Abuse

- Classroom-based interventions
- Family involvement
- Refusal Skills
- Education about substances
- Self-esteem building skills