

School Mental Health in the Fox Cities



P.A.T.H.
**PROVIDING ACCESS TO
HEALING**

The Case for School-Based Mental Health



- ❖ Every five years the Fox Cities region conducts a comprehensive community assessment called the Life Study
- ❖ In 2006 access to mental health for children and their families was identified as a critical need in the Fox Cities

A Community Dialogue



- ❖ **United Way Fox Cities convened their community impact councils to recommend strategic directions to develop a socially innovative program to address the barriers to mental health care for youth and their families**

PATH - Providing Access to Healing



- ❖ **PATH was created in 2008 in response to the RFP issued by United Way Fox Cities calling for a program to address children's mental health.**
- ❖ **A consortium of agencies responded and began offering services in the fall of 2008**

Fox Cities School Mental Health Program/PATH



- ❖ **Following several community presentations, other districts expressed interest**
- ❖ **Services were expanded incrementally to nine other districts through 2012**

PATH Purpose and Goals



- ❖ **Improve access to MH services for children and youth and their families**
- ❖ **Improve symptoms and functioning and school outcomes for children experiencing mental health difficulties**
- ❖ **Integrate services and supports in schools by working to augment care offered through existing student support services and programs**

Community Partnerships



- ❖ **PATH community mental health partners operated licensed outpatient clinics in the region and had extensive experience with children's mental health**
- ❖ **Numerous meetings with School District personnel helped to craft an MOU**

Collaborative Planning



- ❖ **The consortium assigned personnel to schools on both a FT and PT basis**
- ❖ **Parent Engagement and Information sessions as well as community resource fairs helped to introduce the program to families within each district**

PATH Services Defined



- ❖ **PATH is an expanded school-based mental health program that involves a partnership with schools and community mental health organizations as guided by youth and their families .**

Practice framework



- ❖ On-site clinicians from three partner mental health agencies integrate their efforts with those of the school team.
- ❖ Clinicians work with the school and with parents to integrate treatment strategies into home and school environments.
- ❖ These services augment the work that is already taking place at the school and focuses on diagnosable mental health treatment for which parents give consent for care in the school setting

Best Practices



- ❖ PATH has drawn heavily on expanded school based mental health delivery models around the country for these services. There is sound data to support the work nationally and regionally.
- ❖ A statewide coalition to advance school-based mental health delivery systems has formed and is advocating for a statewide dialogue to advance best practices.
- ❖ PATH services are available to all students but specifically targets those for whom there are barriers to care.

Best Practices



- ❖ Promoting a better understanding of the importance of children's mental health as it is linked to school climate and academic achievement is a key objective
- ❖ The consortium of providers has followed guidelines as outlined by the appropriate regulatory bodies both for credentialing its staff and its delivery of care(DHS 35).

Best Practices



- ❖ Program offers a healthy balance offering clinical mental health services as well as ancillary supports.
- ❖ Productivity standards guide service delivery.
- ❖ Data collection is critical to the program and for cost benefit analysis updates.

Quality Outcomes



PATH measures:

- ❖ **Improved Mental Health**
- ❖ **Improved Academic Performance**
- ❖ **Improved School Behaviors**
- ❖ **Improved relationships with parents/family/friends and feeling better about life**

Quality Outcomes



- ❖ **Cost Benefit Analysis in 2012**
 - ❖ Demonstrated long term net benefits
- ❖ **PATH data on students showed reduced hospitalizations and treatment in emergency rooms for MH reasons**

Staffing



❖ Current staffing:

- ❖ 5.5 FTE's therapists offering 40 hours a week/220 hours of care of care in twenty three schools across ten districts
- ❖ Staff are licensed and experienced mental health professionals and appropriately supervised licensed professional therapists in training with experience in school settings

Financing



- ❖ **United Way Fox Cities**
- ❖ **Community Foundation for the Fox Cities**
- ❖ **Grants from private foundations and charitable trusts**
- ❖ **Third Party reimbursements from health plans and MA**

Evaluation and Outcomes



- ❖ **PATH has collected data and reported outcomes from the onset of the program**
- ❖ **Every attempt has been made to minimize the burden for each of the partners, and where possible, has been integrated with existing data available to stakeholders**

Future support and sustainability



- ❖ **Strong, effective partnerships must take place in order to leverage both the resources and professional expertise of the major systems that impact the lives of children and their families**

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