DMH School Mental Health Program

Early Intervention Services to reduce barriers to learning

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DMH School Mental Health Program

- Address mental health problems that become barriers to learning
- Address systemic and clinical issues
- Individualized program development
- Focus on prevention and early intervention
- Link to other providers
SCHOOL PARTNERS

- 11 Public Charter Schools
- 31 DC Public Schools
- 12 NEW Schools in 2005-2006 school year
- TOTAL = 42 Schools in School Year 06-07
Levels of Intervention

**Primary Prevention**: Intervention strategies for all students to PREVENT mental health, behavioral, and social issues before they occur. Services include school-wide interventions, classroom-based interventions, and mental health promotion activities for example, prevention of substance abuse, sexual abuse, and violence; anger management.

**Early Intervention Services**: These services are provided at the first occurrence of emotional, behavioral, or social concerns. Services include psycho-educational sessions, social skills, anger management, and various support groups.

**Treatment Services**: Treatment is provided for students with a variety of problems, including depression, substance abuse, disruptive behavior, anxiety, peer relational problems, grief and loss, trauma, and family issues. Services include individual, family, and group counseling.

**Crisis Services**: Interventions are provided for urgent situations and needs. Services include crisis debriefing, grief counseling, and psychiatric referrals.

**Parent/Family Support**: Educational, supportive, and treatment services are provided for families.
Advantages to School-Based Mental Health Programs

- Often first exposure to mental health system
- Reduce stigma
- Provide full range of preventive services
- See students in multiple settings and over longer periods of time
- Improve overall school climate
- Improved outreach to youth with “internalizing” problems
- Reduced inappropriate referrals to special education
School Climate/Systems Interventions

Primary Prevention/
Universal Interventions

Secondary Prevention/
Early-After-Onset

Clinical Services/
Tertiary Care

Coordination of Care

Crisis Response
Definition of “Early Intervention”

- Early intervention involves identification of warning signs for individuals at risk for mental health problems and intervening early against factors that put them at further risk for developing mental disorders.
- Early intervention can prevent problems from worsening.
Evidenced-Informed/Based Programs
Early Intervention

1. COLUMBIA TEEN SCREEN
2. LOVE AND LIVE: THE G-TREM MODEL
3. TAKING ACTION: STARK
   Cognitive Behavioral Depression Program
4. THREE DIMENSIONAL GRIEF
Evidence-Based or Data Driven Practices or Programs for use in the SMHP

SCREENING

- Columbia Teen Screen: A screening program developed by Columbia University. Its purpose is to identify and help youth who suffer from depression and other emotional problems.
LOVE AND LIFE

- It is an early intervention empowerment Program for Adolescent Girls and Young Women Ages 12-18 (G-TREM)
- Program conducted over 16 sessions
- It is for girls in grades 6-12
LOVE AND LIFE...

- Program is designed for girls and young women who are at risk of experiencing related trauma symptoms such as depression, anxiety, shame, relationship difficulties, anger/hostility, decreased academic performance and concentration, low self-esteem as a result of exposure to violence or abuse and to increase coping skills, decrease risk of victimization and inspire girls to grow into healthy confident women.
Content of sessions:

- 1. Introduction to the group
- 2. What it means to be female
- 3. Managing Emotional and Physical Boundaries in relationships
- 4. Self-esteem, self-soothing and self-care
- 5. Expressing feelings and developing Communication Skills
- 6. Dealing with peer pressure
- 7. When Girls get mad, mean and fight
- 8. Understanding emotional, physical and sexual abuse
LOVE AND LIFE...

- 9. Beginning to accurately assess responsibility for abuse
- 10. The development of intimacy and trust
- 11. How to negotiate relationships successfully
- 12. Working on relationships within your family
- 13. How to manage overwhelming feelings and self-destructive behaviors
- 14. Anger and Anger Management
- 15. Abuse and Drug and Alcohol Use
- 16. Hope, Accomplishments and Saying Good-Bye
Taking Action

- An 18-session program for the early intervention and prevention of pre-teen depression. The program can be delivered using either a group or individual format.
The Three Dimensional Grief

- Grief and loss groups for grieving students from Pre-K through 12 grade who have experienced the death of a loved one.
General Tips for running Early Intervention Programs

- Know your audience
- Know the available resources (I.e. colleagues, school staff) who can facilitate effective implementation of the program
- Take time to talk with teachers about the scope and importance of the program
- Realize that some programs need to be modified for population
- Seek buy-in from principal prior to implementing program
- Seek to bridge learning and communication and solicit parent support
- Observe and learn the children’s learning styles, patterns of responding to clinician and interacting with clinician through rapport building activities and exposure prior to implementing the program
Before you start:
Early Intervention Tips:
Immigrant Population

- Connect with them - take time to interact first informally to create safe interactions
- Be curious where they are coming from - do not assume you know their world view or that their world is the same.
- Put yourself in their shoes
- How do they vision their struggles?
- How do they get a sense of piece and comfort?
Tips

- World View
- Help them to see mental health as a healthy part of self
- Consider adjustments to constraints I.e. classroom when may have worked outside all day in home country.
Case Study—Early Intervention with Immigrant Population

- High School- NW D.C.
- Enrollment: 759 students
- % of Immigrant population: 596 LCD students or 79%
- Cultural Diversity: Hispanic, Chinese, African, Vietnamese

- 2 E.I. Groups:
  - Girl’s Empowerment Group
  - Grief and Loss Group
Contact Information

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