Olga Acosta Price, Ph.D.
Associate Research Professor, Department of Prevention and Community Health
The George Washington University, School of Public Health and Health Services

The following personal financial relationships with commercial interests relevant to this presentation existed during the past 12 months:

No relationships to disclose

The Center for Health and Health Care in Schools
Understanding the Emotional/Behavioral Health Needs of Children and Youth

9th Annual DC Counselors Multicultural Competencies Training
May 14, 2010
Nationwide 56 million children attend school 7 hrs a day, 5 days a week, 9 months a year

Across US:
Public schools: 50 million
Private schools: 6 million

In DC:
71,280 students in public schools (both DCPS and charters)
The Changing Face of U.S. Schools

Sources: US Census Bureau, 2007 American Community Survey (ACS) and analyses by the Migration Policy Institute, MPI Data Hub: Migration Facts, Stats and Maps.
Foreign Born Population and Foreign Born as % of Total US Population, 1850 - 2007

Source: Migration Policy Institute, 2007
Ten Source Countries with the Largest Populations in the United States as Percentages of the Total Foreign-Born Population: 1960

- Canada: 10%
- United Kingdom: 9%
- Germany: 10%
- Poland: 8%
- Soviet Union: 7%
- Mexico: 6%
- Ireland: 3%
- Austria: 3%
- Hungary: 3%
- All other Countries: 28%
Ten Source Countries with Largest Populations in US as Percentages of Total Foreign-Born Population 2007

- Mexico: 31%
- All other countries: 42%
- Philippines: 4%
- India: 4%
- China*: 4%
- Dominican Republic: 2%
- Canada: 2%
- Cuba: 3%
- Korea: 3%
- El Salvador: 3%
- Vietnam: 3%
Challenges

• Pre-migration, migration, and post-migration exposure to traumatic events creates vulnerabilities

• Stigma related to seeking mental health care is a barrier in many ethnic communities

• Poverty rates are much higher for children in immigrant and refugee families than children in native-born families

• People with limited English proficiency (LEP) are less likely to seek care and receive needed services
Determinants of Health and Success

- Economic Factors
- Social Factors
- Neighborhood Factors
- Education and School Factors
- Family Factors
- Individual Factors
Economic Factors

In 2009 DC’s unemployment rate grew to 11% (US= 5.8%) 

Varies greatly by ward: 
• Ward 8 rate is 27% 
• Ward 7 rate is almost 19% 
• Ward 5 rate is 15% 
• Ward 3 rate is 3% 

1 in 3 children in DC lives in poverty 

DC Kids Count Data, 2009
Social Factors

More than half of all births in the District were to single mothers.

Mothers under the age of 20 accounted for slightly over 12% of births in the District.

Number of juvenile cases referred to Family Court has increased since 2002.

Almost 1600 substantiated cases of child abuse/neglect in 2008.

DC Kids Count Data, 2009
Neighborhood Factors

- Number of violent deaths have decreased but still account for 80% of all deaths for 15-19 year olds

- Number of violent deaths 15x greater for Black youth

DC Kids Count Data, 2009
Grandparents as Caregivers

40% of grandparents living with their grandchildren were responsible for their care, and 20% of these grandfamilies lived below the poverty level.
Individual Factors

Greater % of DC students than US students:

- Carried a weapon (21% vs. 18%)
- Were in a physical fight (43% vs. 35%)
- Avoided school because they felt unsafe (14% vs. 5%)
- Attempted suicide (12% vs. 7%)
- Had sex with 4+ persons (21% vs. 15%)

YRBS, 2007
At any one time, 17% of young people are estimated to have one or more MEB disorders.

The National Survey of Drug Use & Health, a SAMHSA household survey, found 8.8% (2005) and 7.9% (2006) of young people reported a major depressive episode in preceding 12 months.

Longitudinal studies indicated that between 37 and 39% of young people had received one or more diagnoses of MEB disorders.

Co-morbidity of disorders is described as 'widespread', with greater co-morbidity among disruptive behavior disorders, ADHD, and substance abuse disorders and among anxiety and depression.
In the US, 1 in 10 youth has a mental health problem that impairs them at home and/or school.
1 in 5 have a problem severe enough that treatment is indicated but..... 80% of them do not get professional help
Impact of Risk Factors on Health and Learning

- **Health status**: worse for those with lower income/ higher poverty level
- **Lost school days**: worse for those from single-parent families
- **Access to care**: worse for those who cannot afford care, are ethnic minorities, and/or speak another language

2007 National Health Interview Survey
Access to Quality Mental Health Services Remains a Problem

- Limited options for pediatric mental health providers in DC
- Lacking coordination between primary care providers and MH specialists
- Difficult to navigate cumbersome MH system
- Few providers who take Medicaid
- Education of importance of MH still needed

Chandra, et al., 2009
Why does your work matter?

- Unmet mental health needs among children and adults are substantial (Surgeon General’s Report on Mental Health)
- 50% of Americans will have a psychiatric disorder at some point in their lives
- 50% of psychiatric disorders exist by age 14 and 75% by age 24
The Role of Schools in Mental Health

- Schools function as the de facto mental health system for children & adolescents

- Of those children receiving mental health care, 70-80% receive that care in a school setting

- Schools are familiar places - receiving mental health care in schools reduces stigma

- Allows providers to address systemic, social, developmental, and clinical issues
The Public Health Pyramid

Levels and Types of Intervention

- Intervention/Indicated
- Prevention/Selective
- Promotion/Universal
Positive Outcomes Associated with SMH

- Improvements in emotional and behavioral functioning
- Improved educational outcomes:
  - Fewer disciplinary referrals
  - Better attendance
  - Higher graduation rates
  - Improved teacher retention
  - Enhanced academic performance
- Healthier school climate
- Improved access to quality care
Organizational Factors

- Strong leadership at all levels
- Infrastructure development
  - Information system & quality monitoring
  - Staff selection
  - Training/TA
  - Implementation of EBPs
- Reliable Funding
- Policies
  - Coordination
  - Staff requirements
  - Scope of services
Staying the Course……
but where’s the road?

- Overarching Framework
- Capacity Building
- Integration/Collaboration
- Partnership Development
- Engagement of Families