

Mental Health Intervention Team Grant



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Director of the Safe and Secure Schools Unit

What is the MHIT?

- Focuses on K-12 students and their families by identifying students, helping families navigate mental health services, and linking them to the already existing statewide behavioral health system and resources within the Mental Health Providers network.
- Focuses additional resources on foster students in need of Mental Health Services
 - Liaisons work closely with Foster Contractors
- Helps break down barriers in place for our youth to receive mental health services.



Monitoring

- Schools identify one or more ‘indicators of concern’, which impact school success, to track:
 - Academics
 - Attendance
 - Internalizing Behaviors
 - Externalizing Behaviors
- Liaisons are ‘the bridge’ – sharing educationally appropriate information with providers and classroom, helping families navigate waivers and paperwork, and scheduling services.
- Communication between the MH Professional and school is permitted through both an MOU and if the parent agrees, a release.



How it started

2018-2019

Legislators met with several districts and Community Mental Health Center (CMHC) leadership. The “Pilot” MHIT program and funding was approved for 9 districts and 5 CMHC partners:

Nine pilots: KCK, Topeka, Wichita, Parsons, Garden City,
Consortium of Abilene- Solomon- Herington – Chapman

Pilot CMHC: PACES, Family Service and Guidance Center, Labette County
Mental Health, COMPASS, and Central Kansas Mental Health

The program funded 45 Liaisons

The first year 212 Foster Students were served

Total Number of students receiving services: 1,708



Last School Year

2021-2022 School Year

Number of School districts: 55

Number of Liaisons: 126.6

Students in Foster Care Receiving Services: 693

Total Number of students receiving services: 5,117



Where we are going

2022-2023 School Year

- KSBOE recommended continuation and expansion
- Governor's Budget added additional \$3m which was adopted by Legislature
 - \$3m gives priority to new districts
 - And funds a 3rd party study to determine effective and recommendations
 - Report due to Legislature January 2023
- Applications were due June 10, 2022
- Board of Education Approval July 12-13



2022-2023 School Year

- Number of School Districts: 67
- Number of Liaisons: 150
- Several “Co-op Members” found a need to have a stand-alone program.
- Several calls from Superintendents saying that other Superintendents had told them they needed this program.
- New MHIT Liaison Coordinator Angie Brungardt.



Barriers Faced

- Hiring Social Workers from CMHC to take USD Liaison position.
- Staffing shortages/high turnover.
- Defining the liaison role/responsibility.
- Covid.
- One year guarantee for the Liaison position.



Success Stories

- One high school student has a history of behaviors, truancy, self-harm, and hospitalization. Over the past year, she has grown and blossomed into a confident young lady, attending school regularly and making good friends. She has become an advocate for herself and others, becoming a leader for other students who have struggled with similar issues.
- Another student needed extensive services and has now graduated from almost all services and will be graduating from high school. She also has a job, and an apartment lined up. She plans to continue therapy as an adult.



Success Stories

- We have several high school students that are dealing with high anxiety issues. Having an in-school therapist and case manager has dramatically improved students' ability to be successful in school. This improvement has been seen among their peers, teachers and how they handle conflict.
- Parents/Guardians continue to state they feel better supported and our elementary school has seen a more successful and positive parent/school relationship.



Success Stories

- Parents express true gratitude about not having to take off from work and have transportation costs in order for their child to receive mental health services. The parents also truly appreciate the communication from our new therapist.
- A major success is more students taking the initiative to ask for help at high school after seeing their peers benefiting from services.



Why this matters:

- From a high school student:
“My therapist saved my life.”





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