

IMPACT Executive Summary

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Healthy Students and Thriving Schools: A Comprehensive Approach for Addressing Students' Trauma and Mental Health Needs



This IMPACT describes a comprehensive framework to advance policy and strategic school district planning to more effectively address the mental health and trauma needs of students and promote student success. The framework outlined in the IMPACT is based on the Comprehensive School Mental Health Systems (CSMHS) approach developed by the Center for School Mental Health at the University of Maryland. CHDI expanded and applied this approach for use in Connecticut and other states by identifying existing trauma-informed strategies and collaborative partnerships within and across the behavioral health, education, and juvenile justice systems.

Visit www.chdi.org to download a copy of this report or to learn more about addressing mental health in schools.

CHDI partnered with the Center for School Mental Health at the University of Maryland to prepare this IMPACT. The report was authored by Sharon Hoover, Jeana Bracey, Nancy Lever, Jason Lang and Jeffrey Vanderploeg.



IMPACT Online



Schools are increasingly viewed as a critical setting for the delivery of mental health services. Many children's behavioral health needs are not identified and the majority of children with identified challenges do not receive services in traditional community-based settings. In fact, in a typical classroom of 25 students, approximately five will meet criteria for a mental health disorder but most of them are not receiving appropriate mental health treatment or support. Among those who do access care, approximately 70% receive services through their schools.

Integrating mental health services in school settings promotes significant benefits for both schools and students. School-based mental health services:

- increase access to a continuum of quality health care services and supports;
- reduce barriers to family and community engagement;
- improve students' social and academic outcomes;
- support healthy child development; and
- result in cost savings for school districts and communities.

A comprehensive and coordinated statewide approach to guide development, implementation, and sustainability of school-based mental health services provides needed support for districts interested in expanding their capacity to improve student outcomes.

The IMPACT provides a blueprint and resources to guide state policymakers and school district leaders, including:

- an overview of core components of the CSMHS model structured around family-school-community partnerships and the delivery of evidence-based mental health services within a multi-tiered system of supports;
- examples of best practice strategies to develop, implement, and sustain CSMHS;
- a model for a trauma-informed multi-tiered system of supports for school mental health;
- creative approaches to advance policy and funding structures to sustain CSMHS; and
- recommendations for state-level policymakers, districts, and schools to advance a comprehensive statewide system of school mental health to improve outcomes for all students.