

The School-Based Diversion Initiative (SBDI)

A Restorative Approach to Addressing Student Behavior

What is SBDI?

A model that helps schools implement more equitable and restorative practices to better **support student behavioral health** needs and **reduce exclusionary discipline**. Goals:

- **REDUCE** the number of youth who are suspended or arrested in school
- **BUILD** knowledge and skills among school staff to recognize and manage behavioral health crises in schools
- **LINK** youth at risk for juvenile justice involvement to appropriate community-based services and supports

Proven Outcomes

Since 2009, **82 Connecticut schools** across **29 participating districts** have seen these meaningful results:



28%

decrease in court referrals

22%

increase in mobile crisis referrals

6%

decrease in OSS

School Highlight

Following two years of SBDI implementation, court referrals at New Britain High School decreased from **73** in 22-23 to **just 16** in 24-25!

What Do Schools Get?

- **Funding** from CT State Department of Education to support implementation
- CHDI Project Coordinator assigned to support implementation of SBDI
- **No-cost professional development** for staff on trauma-informed behavioral health topics and Restorative Practices
- **Individualized technical assistance** provided by Restorative Practices Trainers
- Strengthened connections to community based services
- Discipline policy consultation to form a Graduated Response Model
- **School Health Assessment and Performance Evaluation (SHAPE)** completion and review

"This program is making a **real difference** in the lives of students, teachers, and families across the state."

-Anne McKernan
Assistant Superintendent
West Hartford Public Schools

"SBDI is helping us create an environment **where every student can thrive**, regardless of their background or challenges."

-Joshua Robinson
Director of Pupil Services
Windsor Locks Public Schools

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