

SCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH SPOTLIGHT

Project AWARE Recipient



Chippewa Falls Area Unified School District

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

In the Chippewa Falls Area Unified School District in northwestern Wisconsin, we offer a variety of mental health supports. Our Student and Family Assistance Program provides up to 4 free counseling sessions per family. Our School-Based Mental Health Program partners with several agencies and allows students to meet with their therapists during school hours. We also partner with several agencies to offer telehealth. Our Interconnected Systems Framework allows the community clinicians to work with our school staff in order to co-facilitate small groups, offer staff members consultation, offer staff professional development, and more. We have a Mental Health Navigator who helps families navigate the services available to them. Our schools offer a variety of self-care resources such as utilizing mindfulness, wellness presentations, teaching lessons about resiliency in small groups, on-site chiropractic care, access to fitness equipment, alternative seating, fidgets, and more. Each building in our district also utilizes behavior screening that covers areas of mental health, offers interventions at varying intensities, and has school staff members such as school counselors, school psychologists, school nurses, school social workers, and our district Mental Health Navigator to help parents navigate the mental health system.



REFERRAL PATHWAY

One way our district identifies students in need of mental health supports is through the use of universal screening. Our district uses the Behavioral Emotional Social Traits (b.e.s.t.) Universal Screener and the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) to identify which students are at risk. The PBIS Tier 2 team at each school analyzes the data to determine who may be in need of additional supports/services such as mental health therapy based on the scores. Most staff in our high school are trained in Question, Persuade, and Refer (QPR), and our high school also uses Sources of Strength (SOS) and BARR as additional resources to assess students and meet their needs. Staff, students, and parents can make a referral for therapy through our School Mental Health Referral Pathway that was implemented by our Mental Health Navigator.

Our district also created a [mental health supports website](#) where staff, students, parents, clinicians, and community members can access our referral forms and process along with information about therapists in each of our schools. We also have access to our virtual calming room available on the website, links to our school district's mental health newsletter called the Resilient Cardinal & community resources.

PARTNERSHIP WITH FAMILIES

A few examples of partnerships with families include our Strengthening Families program, our Cardinal Care parent focus group, having parents on our District and Community Leadership Team, and offering our Student and Family Assistance Program where every family can utilize up to 4 free therapy sessions. We are in the process of discussing more options to increase partnerships with families in children's well-being.

UNIVERSAL APPROACHES

Our universal approaches to wellness and school mental health are explained in our Mental Health and Wellness Resource Map. A few examples include the use of Second Step, health lessons, QPR, Protecting You Protecting Me, Protective Behaviors, small groups, co-facilitated small groups, mentoring, Circle of Friends, Be Free Puppetry, Sources of Strength, LINK crew, AODA groups, BARR program, HOPE room, Voyagers after school, virtual calming corner, PBIS supports, Cardinal Care mental health supports, and so much more. The Mental Health and Wellness Resource Map can be found on our [Cardinal Care website](#) in the Staff Supports tab under Staff Links.

OUTCOMES

Our main goal is that our community partnerships will promote staff awareness and increase understanding of mental health supports and resources so all students will develop life-long resiliency. We are also working to increase access to mental health supports, as well as be able to progress monitor and show progress with our mental health interventions for students in the same way that we can progress monitor and show progress with our academic and behavioral interventions.

KEY CONTRIBUTORS

Director of Mental Health & Resiliency

Executive Director of Student Services

Mental Health Navigator

Equity & Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) Specialist

District & Community Leadership Team



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