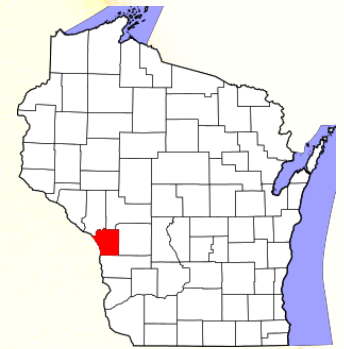


# SCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH SPOTLIGHT

Project AWARE Recipient



## School District of La Crosse

### **INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

The School District of La Crosse is a K-12 suburban district located in western Wisconsin. The district was awarded the Project AWARE grant in 2019. Part of the grant's goal is to increase youth and family voice and authentic engagement with the district. For example, through the grant, we have rolled out an online learning platform for families, caregivers and parents called +Positive Foundations. The platform provides educational and family-oriented workshops for families free of charge to model a love of learning, expand parenting skills and engage families.

### **KEY CONTRIBUTORS**

*The Parenting Place*  
*Gunderson Health System*  
*The Parenting Professor*  
*Coulee Recovery Center*  
*La Crosse County Health & Human Services*  
*District Teachers & Administrators*  
*Local Therapists*



**SERVING UNDERREPRESENTED STUDENTS**

Our Storytime series (released every Wednesday on our Facebook platform and YouTube channel) centers the voices and stories of Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Trans, LGBTQIA+ and Hmong community leaders. The videos have had thousands of views; what began as a 6-week project expanded to a semester-long initiative. Once the pandemic ends and we are able to hold in-person listening sessions, we will be hosting sessions in historically underserved neighborhoods to hear from families what programming THEY want through the +Positive Foundations workshops.



**PARTNERSHIP WITH FAMILIES**

We believe in bringing the district to the families, both figuratively and literally. We do this by holding workshops IN our underserved neighborhoods and offering virtual options to overcome barriers.

*It is a priority in the district to make sure EVERY student is represented in our programming.*

We are currently scheduling programming for the 21-22 school year to include support on identifying anxiety and depression in students, bullying, friendships and boundaries, addressing addiction, and LGBTQIA+ gender and sexuality discussions. The platform also includes family-centered activities, including cookie decorating and rock painting classes. We also released a reading series called Storytime for families to listen together. We hoped to provide an outlet for stress and promote relaxation and positive engagements within the family.

**SUBMITTED BY**

**Stefani Haar**

Family Engagement Coordinator, School District of La Crosse  
[shaar@lacrossesd.org](mailto:shaar@lacrossesd.org)

**SCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH SPOTLIGHTS**

a partnership of the **Coalition for Expanding School-Based Mental Health in Wisconsin & Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction**

