



GAPS AND BARRIERS ANALYSIS

The School Behavioral Health Services Gaps and Barriers were informed by interviews and focus groups with education professionals and behavioral health and educational experts throughout Colorado; a review of academic literature and state policy documents; and guidance from a leadership advisory committee comprised of education and behavioral health experts. Based on an analysis of the aforementioned methods, 14 district- and school-related gaps were noticed along with 6 overall systemic barriers.

DISTRICT- AND SCHOOL-RELATED GAPS AND BARRIERS

1. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS TO BE OFFERED ABOUT COMPREHENSIVE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SYSTEMS AT THE DISTRICT AND SCHOOL LEVEL.

What is Needed to Address this Gap?

- District and school staff professional development for: mental health stigma reduction, student behavioral health needs identification, teacher knowledge about child/adolescent development and mental health, and teacher knowledge about integrating social and emotional learning (SEL) across curriculum and grade levels.

What Barriers Present a Challenge?

- Lack of time, funding, and resources
- Lack of time and funding for release time for school staff
- Fear and misconceptions about prioritizing behavioral health efforts
- Overall stigma of mental health

What are Some Current Opportunities to Address this Gap?

- There are now school liaisons at each of the 17 Community Mental Health Centers (CMHCs) across the state, and the CMHCs have trainers for Mental Health First Aid Youth Curriculum (MHFA).

What are Some of the Tools and Resources to Help with this Gap That are in The Framework?

- Information about Mental Health First Aid Youth Curriculum in Colorado
- Building Bridges resources
- CLF-created needs assessment
- CLF-created universal screening toolkit
- CLF-created tip sheet on creating trauma-sensitive and culturally-responsive classrooms
- CLF-created tip sheet on SEL
- CLF-created tip sheet on stigma reduction
- CDE's Emotional and Social Wellness Standards

2. MORE OPPORTUNITIES ARE NEEDED TO RAISE AWARENESS ABOUT AND PROVIDE PRACTICE FOR STAFF AND PRACTITIONER SELF-CARE AND SELF-AWARENESS.

What is Needed to Address this Gap?

- Coaching for how schools can integrate staff self-care into the culture of the school
- Better understanding of how staff wellness drives school climate and culture and academic outcomes

What Barriers Present a Challenge?

- Lack of time and resources
- Lack of understanding about own social locations and biases
- Non-collaborative systems

What are Some Current Opportunities to Address this Gap?

- More academic research is showing the link between staff-wellness and student outcomes.

What are Some of the Tools and Resources to Help with this Gap That are in The Framework?

- CLF-created staff self-care one-pager
- Link to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) study

3. A LACK OF TIME IS DEVOTED TO PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION EFFORTS, ESPECIALLY REGARDING THE INTEGRATION OF SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL) IN ALL CLASSES (PARTICULARLY IN MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOLS).

What is Needed to Address this Gap?

- Awareness building about the research that shows the link between SEL and academic outcomes
- Skill-building for school personnel to integrate SEL across classes

What Barriers Present a Challenge?

- Lack of time, resources, and funding
- Lack of accountability for SEL

What are Some Current Opportunities to Address this Gap?

- CDE's ESW Standards and ESW Unit Samples

What are Some of the Tools and Resources to Help with this Gap That are in The Framework?

- CLF-created tip sheet on SEL
- Information about CDE's ESW Standards

4. SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES LACK POINTED EFFORTS TO REDUCE THE STIGMA AROUND MENTAL HEALTH.

What is Needed to Address this Gap?

- Resources and tools that districts, schools, and communities can easily use to create stigma-reduction campaigns
- Student-led efforts (project-based learning about social, emotional, and behavioral health)
- School-community-family partnerships that prioritize behavioral health

What Barriers Present a Challenge?

- Stigma
- Lack of time and funding

What are Some Current Opportunities to Address this Gap?

- Mental Health First Aid Youth Curriculum

What are Some of the Tools and Resources to Help with this Gap That are in The Framework?

- CLF-created tip sheet on stigma reduction
- SAMHSA tool, “Community Conversations About Mental Health”

5. OVERWHELMINGLY, SCHOOLS DO NOT HAVE FORMALIZED REFERRAL PROCESSES, AND TEACHERS AND OTHER SCHOOL STAFF DO NOT KNOW HOW AND WHEN TO REFER STUDENTS FOR MORE SPECIALIZED SERVICES.

What is Needed to Address this Gap?

- Professional development
- Referral forms for school staff
- Roadmaps for schools to include formalized referral processes

What Barriers Present a Challenge?

- Lack of time, funding, and resources
- Lack of effective community-school-family partnerships
- Fear of financial and legal liability
- Lack of professional knowledge about how to broach this topic with families and include them in the referral process

What are Some Current Opportunities to Address this Gap?

- Colorado Department of Human Services Communities of Excellence

- Building Bridges for Children’s Mental Health tip sheets for calling parents
- Spark Policy Institute’s legal memo on referrals

What are Some of the Tools and Resources to Help with this Gap That are in The Framework?

- Example referral forms
- Building Bridges resources
- Spotlight stories

6. SCHOOL BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS AND EDUCATORS DO NOT HAVE THE TIME AND RESOURCES TO EFFECTIVELY COLLABORATE TO MONITOR STUDENTS’ PROGRESS IN NATURAL SETTINGS.

What is Needed to Address this Gap?

- Adequate information sharing
- Formal processes, capacity building, and resources for how teachers and behavioral health professionals can work more creatively together
- Formal processes to screen at the universal level with progress monitoring mechanisms built into the screener
- Embedding school behavioral health professionals into the culture of the school

What Barriers Present a Challenge?

- Lack of time, funding, and resources
- Not enough school and community behavioral health employees in relationship to students’ needs NOTE: The ratio of school psychologists was approximately 1 to 1,500 students in 2009 in Colorado. The National Association of School Psychologists recommends ratios of 1:250 students for school counselors; 1:400 students for school social workers; and 1:500-700 students for school psychologists.
- Lack of adequate information sharing

What are Some Current Opportunities to Address this Gap?

- The Colorado Children and Youth Information Sharing (CCYIS) Collaborative’s Consent to Share Information Form

What are Some of the Tools and Resources to Help with this Gap That are in The Framework?

- Universal screening toolkit
- Spotlight stories on Aurora Public Schools and Boston Public Schools
- The CCYIS Form

7. SCHOOL LEADERS AND STAFF STRUGGLE TO HAVE A COMMON UNDERSTANDING OF YOUTH INFORMATION SHARING, AND THEY LACK THE CAPACITY TO DEVELOP CONSTANT COMMUNICATION LOOPS BETWEEN ALL STAKEHOLDERS (SCHOOL STAFF, BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS, AND OTHER YOUTH SERVING AGENCIES).

What is Needed to Address this Gap?

- Common information sharing form
- FERPA/HIPAA guidance for schools
- Enhanced collaboration between schools and mental health professionals
- Better understanding of what information to share, how, and who to share it with

What Barriers Present a Challenge?

- Misconceptions about FERPA/HIPAA
- Over sharing/Under sharing information
- Lack of trust building

What are Some Current Opportunities to Address this Gap?

- Uninterrupted Scholars Act
- Colorado and Youth Information Sharing (CCYIS) Collaborative

What are Some of the Tools and Resources to Help with this Gap That are in The Framework?

- CCYIS form
- Colorado Association for School-Based Health Centers Consent and Confidentiality Toolkit

8. OVERWHELMINGLY, SCHOOLS DO NOT PRIORITIZE SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL, AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH EFFORTS, DO NOT INCLUDE THEM IN ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEMS, AND DO NOT INCLUDE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH STRATEGIES WITHIN UIPS.

What is Needed to Address this Gap?

- Coaching and technical assistance through systems change process
- Stressing how social, emotional, and behavioral health systems interrelate to all of the current accountability measures

What Barriers Present a Challenge?

- Lack of time, funding, and resources
- Schools focus on what MUST currently be included in accountability

What are Some Current Opportunities to Address this Gap?

- The research that shows the link between SEL and academic outcomes

What are Some of the Tools and Resources to Help with this Gap That are in The Framework?

- CLF-created needs assessments

9. SCHOOLS LACK THE CAPACITY TO AND DO NOT PRIORITIZE DATA COLLECTION FOR THEIR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH EFFORTS.

What is Needed to Address this Gap?

- Universal screening with progress monitoring
- Ability to share information for data purposes
- If possible, partnerships with universities for data collection and evaluation

What Barriers Present a Challenge?

- Lack of adequate Information sharing for school level data between schools and youth serving agencies
- Lack of adequate information sharing for student level data
- Lack of time, funding, and resources to carefully implement systems change

What are Some Current Opportunities to Address this Gap?

- Spotighting districts and schools in Colorado and the nation using data to improve their school behavioral health systems

What are Some of the Tools and Resources to Help with this Gap That are in The Framework?

- Spotlight stories

10. SCHOOL BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS OUTSIDE OF THE SCHOOL LACK OPPORTUNITIES TO BE EMBEDDED IN THE SCHOOL CULTURE.

What is Needed to Address this Gap?

- Awareness building about the need for behavioral health professionals to be embedded in school cultures
- School behavioral health professionals need to sit on the school team driving school behavioral health work and have opportunities to lead school-wide professional development, work with students in various settings, and be visible in the school.
- Behavioral health stigma reduction

What Barriers Present a Challenge?

- Lack of time, funding, and resources
- When time in a school is limited, school psychologists are only able to provide basic and crisis related services

What are Some Current Opportunities to Address this Gap?

- Spotighting districts and schools in Colorado and the nation that integrate their school behavioral health professionals into the culture of the school

What are Some of the Tools and Resources to Help with this Gap That are in The Framework?

- Spotlight stories

11. SCHOOLS FEAR FINANCIAL AND LEGAL LIABILITY ONCE STUDENTS HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED FOR NEED.

What is Needed to Address this Gap?

- Myth busting
- Resources for schools about financial and legal liability

What Barriers Present a Challenge?

- Dealing with complex systems

What are Some Current Opportunities to Address this Gap?

- Spark Policy Institute's legal memo in regards to schools referring students for mental health services

What are Some of the Tools and Resources to Help with this Gap That are in The Framework?

- Spotlight stories
- Spark Policy Institute's legal memo

12. SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS, SCHOOL COUNSELORS, AND SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS MAY RUN INTO ROLE CONFUSION.

What is Needed to Address this Gap?

- Strong collaboration between school psychologists, school counselors, and school social workers
- Innovative plans to leverage each role in a comprehensive system

What Barriers Present a Challenge?

- Roles can vary from school to school

- Lack of time to effectively collaborate

What are Some Current Opportunities to Address this Gap?

- Through Colorado's Great Teachers and Leaders Act of 2010, SB 10-191, specific rubrics have been developed for each specialized services delivery role, which may ease role confusion.

What are Some of the Tools and Resources to Help with this Gap That are in The Framework?

- CLF-created needs assessment

13. LEADERS NEED TO BRIDGE THE GAP BETWEEN PRE-K BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SUPPORTS AND SCHOOL-AGE STUDENT SUPPORTS.

What is Needed to Address this Gap?

- Better linking of services between preschool and kindergarten
- Professional development for lower-elementary level staff to identify students in need and link them to services

What Barriers Present a Challenge?

- Lack of awareness about this need
- Students matriculate into kindergarten from a variety of settings
- The "relationship gap" in K-12 that is not present in early childhood
- A lot of pre-K social, emotional, and mental health work is being done across the state, but there is little comprehensive work being done at the K-12 level.

What are Some Current Opportunities to Address this Gap?

- University of Colorado at Denver's Early Childhood Navigation Guide
- CDE's School Readiness Assessment Guidance for Kindergarten
- Senate Bill 08-212, Colorado's Achievement Plan for Kids, aligns preschool through postsecondary education and requires school readiness plans that are individualized plans for every kindergartener.
- Early Childhood Colorado Initiative

What are Some of the Tools and Resources to Help with this Gap That are in The Framework?

- Link to JFK Partners early childhood scan for the social and emotional health of pre-k children
- CDE's School Readiness packet
- Highlight of Early Childhood Colorado Initiative

14. A LACK OF SERVICES EXISTS FOR YOUTH TRANSITIONING FROM RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT OR HOSPITALS BACK TO THE COMMUNITY AND SCHOOLS.

What is Needed to Address this Gap?

- Better processes for information sharing
- Stronger collaboration between schools, mental health centers, and community agencies
- Peer support groups and peer advocacy

What Barriers Present a Challenge?

- Fragmented systems

What are Some Current Opportunities to Address this Gap?

- Colorado HB 10-1274, Out-of-Home Juvenile Transition to Public School System
- Department of Human Services Communities of Excellence

What are Some of the Tools and Resources to Help with this Gap That are in The Framework?

- Natick High School transitioning back to school from residential treatment packet

OVERALL SYSTEMS GAPS

1. FAMILIES AND STUDENTS LACK UNDERSTANDING ABOUT HOW TO NAVIGATE A COMPLEX SYSTEM OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH.

What is Needed to Address this Gap?

- Support for parents and families
- Advocacy building
- Stronger communication and collaboration between schools, behavioral health professionals, and families
- Systems that are family and youth guided

What Barriers Present a Challenge?

- Collaboration between system is complex
- Health care costs
- Quality of care
- Stigma of mental health

What are Some Current Opportunities to Address this Gap?

- The Affordable Care Act now includes behavioral health coverage equal to primary care

- School liaisons at the 17 Community Mental Health Centers
- There are navigators to enroll families in insurance beginning October 1, 2013 and going through March 31, 2014.

What are Some of the Tools and Resources to Help with this Gap That are in The Framework?

- Highlight of the new school liaison position at the 17 CMHCs
- “On the Team and at the Table” family partnering toolkit from CDE

2. THE CAPACITY OF—INCLUDING NUMBER, CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY RELEVANT, AND QUALITY OF—YOUTH AND ADOLESCENT SERVING BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS NEEDS TO INCREASE, ESPECIALLY IN RURAL AREAS AND ESPECIALLY PROFESSIONALS SERVING MEDICAID PATIENTS.

What is Needed to Address this Gap?

- More youth and adolescent behavioral health-serving professionals
- Incentives for professionals to serve in high needs (low income, rural, and culturally diverse) areas

What Barriers Present a Challenge?

- Heavy case loads
- Insufficient training
- Lack of time for ongoing professional education

What are Some Current Opportunities to Address this Gap?

- Multi-agency partnerships
- Better integration of primary and behavioral health care
- Telemedicine

What are Some of the Tools and Resources to Help with this Gap That are in The Framework?

- Information on the Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Standards

3. PROFESSIONALS NEED TO BETTER INTEGRATE PHYSICAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES.

What is Needed to Address this Gap?

- Better information sharing and collaboration between primary care and behavioral health professionals
- Adequate space to integrate care

- Staff development
- Policy development

What Barriers Present a Challenge?

- Lack of space and staffing
- Current reimbursement and payment methods
- Lack of data sharing
- Abiding by HIPAA and FERPA regulations becomes more complex with integrated services.

What are Some Current Opportunities to Address this Gap?

- Colorado’s State Innovation Model (SIM) Plan

What are Some of the Tools and Resources to Help with this Gap That are in The Framework?

N/A

4. GREATER ACCESS IS NEEDED TO CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY APPROPRIATE SERVICES (CLAS) BOTH WITHIN AND OUTSIDE OF SCHOOLS.

What is Needed to Address this Gap?

- More behavioral health professionals with CLAS skills
- Cultural competency ongoing training for behavioral health professionals
- Community-based and community-driven work

What Barriers Present a Challenge?

- Race and SES affect access to quality of healthcare
- Language and cultural gaps in service providers
- Entrenched systemic issues

What are Some Current Opportunities to Address this Gap?

- Guidance on the Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Standards (CLAS)
- Grant and scholarship opportunities for culturally and linguistically diverse students to train in behavioral health education

What are Some of the Tools and Resources to Help with this Gap That are in The Framework?

- Information on the CLAS

5. THE NEED FOR MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IS HIGHER THAN THE FUNDING AND RESOURCES TO SUPPORT COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES, ESPECIALLY IN RURAL AREAS.

What is Needed to Address this Gap?

- Collaboration between agencies
- Funding opportunities
- Incentives for rural practitioners

What Barriers Present a Challenge?

- Lack of funding and capacity to collaborate between agencies

What are Some Current Opportunities to Address this Gap?

- Colorado HB 1451 Communities of Excellence
- Blending and braiding funding

What are Some of the Tools and Resources to Help with this Gap That are in The Framework?

- Spark Policy Institute's guide to blending and braiding funding

6. INFORMATION SHARING AND COLLABORATION BETWEEN AGENCIES AND SCHOOLS FOR YOUTH INVOLVED IN MULTIPLE SYSTEMS NEEDS TO INCREASE.

What is Needed to Address this Gap?

- Strategic collaboration between schools, mental health centers, and community agencies

What Barriers Present a Challenge?

- Lack of time, funding, and resources

What are Some Current Opportunities to Address this Gap?

- Uninterrupted Scholars Act
- Colorado and Youth Information Sharing (CCYIS)
- Communities of Excellence

What are Some of the Tools and Resources to Help with this Gap That are in The Framework?

- Link to the toolkit from the National Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence Prevention for information sharing for youth involved in multiple systems