

WEBINAR FOR SRAE GRANTEEES



FYSB Family & Youth
Services Bureau
Adolescent Pregnancy
Prevention Program



Supporting Youth Mental Health: An Action Guide for Schools

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Webinar Logistics

- Mute when not talking.
- Turn off video if you experience any connection issues.
- Type questions in the chat.
- Use time reserved for Q&A at the end.
- Take off “everyone” if you want to directly message with someone.
- Transcript & recording will be available.



Agenda

- Welcome & Overview
- Background
- Chat – Group Discussion
- Evidence-Based Strategies and Approaches to Supporting Youth Mental Health
- In Action – Explore the Action Guide
- Q&A
- Reflection and Closing Remarks



Meeting Norms

- **Participate and engage.** We want to hear from you, and we want you to hear your colleagues. Having a balance in participation will allow for all voices to be heard.
- **Be fully present.** Although sidebar conversations in the chat and cell phone use may be tempting, we want to ensure that our engagement is a focus so that we can maximize our time together.
- **Begin and end on time.**

Webinar Objectives

At the conclusion of this webinar, participants will be able to:

- Identify **specific, classroom-based activities** that support youth mental health and well-being.
- Describe **how community-based partners might be able to support schools** in supporting the mental health and well-being of students and staff.
- Identify how strategies to promote mental health and well-being among young people **connect to SRAE requirements**.
- **Apply evidence-based strategies** to support youth mental health and well-being in their schools and communities.

Recent data trends have amplified the importance of schools in responding to the mental health needs of students.

- Poor mental health relates to increased risk of school absence and dropout, risky sexual behavior, and illicit substance use (Conway et al., 2016; Finning et al., 2019).
- 2021 YRBS shows worse mental health suggest outcomes for some groups of youth (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2023):
 - Female students
 - 14% attempted suicide
 - Lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, or questioning students (LGBTQ+)
 - 22% attempted suicide

In 2021...

- **42%** of high school students reported feeling sad or hopeless for at least 2 weeks in the past year
- **22%** of high school students reported that they had seriously considered suicide (CDC, 2023).

Data point to specific suicide risk among Black students.

- Students who experienced racism in school were more likely to show poor mental health (Mpofu et al., 2022).
- Black students showed highest levels of suicide attempts among students in 2021 YRBS – 14% (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2023)
- 4% of Black and Hispanic students reported being injured in a suicide attempt (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2023)
- These rates are a significant **increase**, as Black students previously showed lowest rates of suicide (Meza, Patel, & Bath, 2022).

Important Role of Schools

- Offer the opportunity to promote the well-being of students through education, prevention, and early intervention efforts
- Provide the potential to establish safe and supportive environments that connect students to caring adults and encourage positive peer relationships
- Link students and families to mental and behavioral health services, especially for students living in low-income settings

Source: Finning et al., 2019

Strategies for Promoting Mental Health and Well-Being in Schools: An Action Guide for School Administrators

Purpose:

- CDC developed an Action Guide in 2023 **to identify evidence-based strategies, approaches, and practices** that can positively influence students' mental health

Audience:

- The goal was to **provide a resource to school administrators** in kindergarten through 12th grade schools (K–12)
- Can be useful for a range of youth-serving groups

Developing the Action Guide

Rigorous
review of
empirical
literature



Contextual
evidence from
gray literature,
focus groups,
& subject
matter expert
feedback



Comprehensive
Action Guide for
K-12 School
Administrators,
principals, and
leaders of school-
based student
support teams

Why is supporting youth mental health important from your perspective?



Strategies for Action



**Increase
Students'
Mental Health
Literacy**



**Promote
Mindfulness**



**Promote
Social,
Emotional, and
Behavioral
Learning**



**Enhance
Connectedness
Among
Students, Staff,
and Families**



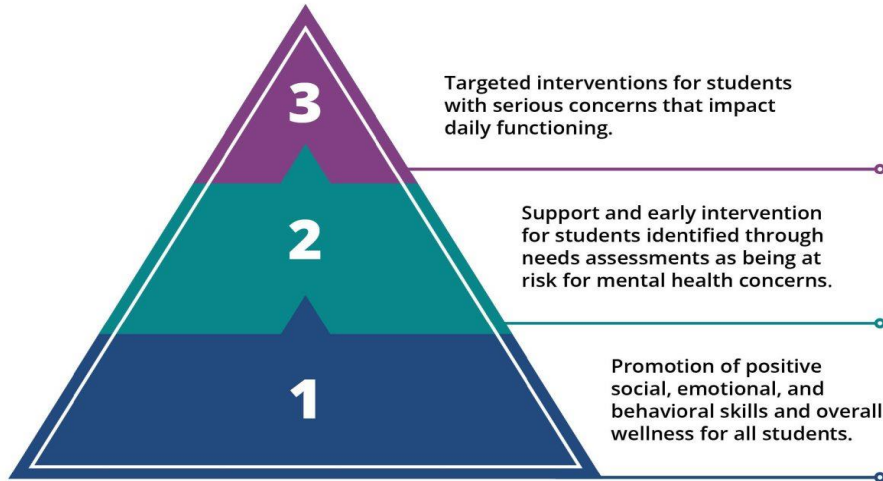
**Provide
Psychosocial
Skills Training
and Cognitive
Behavioral
Interventions**



**Support Staff
Well-Being**

8

Multi-tiered Systems of Support



FOUNDATIONAL ELEMENTS

- Professional development and support for a healthy school workforce.
- Family-school-community partnerships.

Image from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (December, 2023) *Promoting Mental Health and Well-Being in Schools: An Action Guide for School and District Leaders*.

Action Guide Strategies and Approaches #1

Increase Students' Mental Health Literacy

- Delivering classroom-based mental health education curricula
- Implementing peer-led modeling programs

What is mental health literacy?

Having knowledge and understanding of mental health and skills that support help-seeking (i.e., reaching out for mental health support when needed).

Action Guide Strategies and Approaches #1

Increase Students' Mental Health Literacy

Classroom-based mental health education curricula

- ↓ *Stigma related to mental health*
- ↑ *MH knowledge and attitudes*
- ↑ *Help-seeking behaviors*

Example Programs (Tier 1)

- Ending the Silence
- Adolescent Depression Awareness Program
- Eliminating the Stigma of Differences*

Implementing peer-led modeling programs

- ↑ *Coping attitudes*
- ↑ *Acceptability of seeking help*
- ↑ *Perception of adult support*

Example Program

- Sources of Strength (Tier 1)

Increase Students' Mental Health Literacy

Equity Considerations

- Expand the availability of culturally relevant Tier 2 and 3 supports through partnerships with local, state, and regional organizations and community-based groups
- Consider how parent, caregiver, and community perceptions of mental health may affect students' ability and decision to seek mental health support



Applying Strategy #1 to SRAE Programming

Increase Students' Mental Health Literacy

Supplement SRAE program with mental health literacy programming.

If already using a peer mentoring program, considering adding in a mental health literacy component.

Action Guide Strategies and Approaches #2

Promote Mindfulness

- Delivering classroom-based mindfulness education,
- Dedicating time for students to independently practice mindfulness, and
- Offering small group mindfulness activities.

What is Mindfulness?

Intentionally bringing one's attention to the present moment by noticing thoughts and sensations in a nonjudgmental and nonreactive way.

Action Guide Strategies and Approaches #2

Promote Mindfulness

Classroom-based mindfulness education

- ↓ *Anxiety*
- ↓ *Depressive symptoms*
- ↓ *Negative coping behav.*
- ↑ *Positive coping behav.*

Example Programs (Tier 1)

- Master Mind
- Transformative Life Skills
- MindUp

Time for students to independently practice mindfulness

- ↓ *Anxiety*
- ↑ *Resilience*

Example Programs

- Quiet Time (Tier 1)

Action Guide Strategies and Approaches #2

**Promote
Mindfulness**

Small group
mindfulness activities

↓ *Stress*
↓ *Depressive symptoms*
↓ *Internalizing behaviors*

Example Program

- Learning to BREATHE (Tier 2)

Promote Mindfulness

Equity Considerations

- Explore mindfulness practice as a way to advance equity
- Incorporate student voice in the development of mindfulness activities by:
- Asking students what visualization strategies they like best
- Offering students the opportunity to lead mindfulness exercises



Applying Strategy #2 to SRAE Programming

Promote Mindfulness

Consider introducing mindfulness activities in your existing programming:

- Build in opportunities for mindfulness during reflection activities
- Start or end sessions with mindfulness activities
- Train staff on mindfulness and how they can incorporate into their facilitation

Action Guide Strategies and Approaches #3

Promote Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Learning

- Provide classroom instruction focused on building social skills and emotional development
- Offer targeted education focused on teaching social skills and emotional development

What is social, emotional, and behavioral learning?

Promotes social skills and emotional development by focusing on the following: self-management, responsible decision-making, relationship skills, social awareness, and self-awareness.

Action Guide Strategies and Approaches #3

Promote Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Learning

Classroom instruction building social skills and emotional development

- ↓ *Anxiety*
- ↓ *Depressive symptoms*
- ↓ *Internalizing behaviors*
- ↑ *Mental health and well-being*
- ↑ *Resilience*

Example Programs

- The PATHS program (Tier 1)
- Project Growing Minds (Tier 1)
- Second Step (Tier 1)
- Speaking to the Potential, Ability, & Resilience Inside Every Kid (Tier 1)
- Strong Kids (Tier 1)

Targeted education teaching social skills and emotional development

- ↓ *Anxiety*
- ↓ *Depressive symptoms*
- ↓ *Internalizing behaviors*

Example Programs

- SEL Foundations Curriculum (Tier 2)
- Forgiveness within the Family* (Tier 2)

Promote Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Learning

Equity Considerations

- Consider using transformative SEL to advance equity
- Consider using screening tools to support students' development of social-emotional skills, but examine the tools for potential bias and misuse



Applying Strategy #3 to SRAE Programming

**Promote
Social,
Emotional, and
Behavioral
Learning**

- Train staff in skills related to social, emotional, and behavioral learning and how it can support classroom management
- Connect social, emotional, and behavioral learning with positive youth development
- Identify opportunities to support young people develop positive relationships with peers and trusted adults
- Give young people a voice in the learning process

Action Guide Strategies and Approaches #4

**Enhance
Connectedness
Among
Students, Staff,
and Families**

- Provide relationship-building programs

What is connectedness?

Connectedness refers to each student's belief that adults and peers in school care about their learning and about them as individuals. This feeling includes a sense of being cared for, being supported, and belonging at school.

Action Guide Strategies and Approaches #4

Enhance
Connectedness
Among
Students, Staff,
and Families

- Provide relationship-building programs

↓ *Internalizing behaviors*

Example Programs

- Staying Strong with Schools* (Tier 1).
- Starting Strong* (Tier 3).

Enhance Connectedness Among Students, Staff, and Families

Equity Considerations

- Intentionally include and center students who are at disproportionate risk for being marginalized at school (i.e., girls, youth who report experiencing racism, youth from racial and ethnic minority groups, and youth who identify as LGBTQIA)
- Consider:
 - Establishing affinity groups for students of color and LGBTQIA+ students (e.g., genders and sexualities alliances)
 - Enacting anti-bullying and anti-harassment policies
 - Enacting trauma-informed policies and practices



Applying Strategy #4 to SRAE Programming

**Enhance
Connectedness
Among
Students, Staff,
and Families**

- Partner with schools to offer community-focused events
- Identify opportunities to support parents/caregivers

Action Guide Strategies and Approaches #5

Provide Psychosocial Skills Training and Cognitive Behavioral Interventions

- Provide cognitive behavioral interventions
- Engage students in coping skills training groups
- Promote acceptance and commitment to change

What are cognitive behavioral interventions?

Cognitive behavioral interventions teach students to identify their own unhelpful thoughts and replace them with alternative thinking strategies.

Action Guide Strategies and Approaches #5

Provide Psychosocial Skills Training and Cognitive Behavioral Interventions

Provide cognitive-behavioral interventions

↓ Anxiety
↓ Depression
↓ Internalizing behaviors
↓ Posttraumatic stress

Example Programs (Tier 1)

- LARS & LISA
- Tools for Getting Along Curriculum—Behavior Management Resource Guide

Engage students in coping skills training groups

↓ Anxiety
↓ Depression
↑ Coping

Example Programs

- Journey of Hope (Tier 1)
- High School Transition Program* (Tier 3)

Promote acceptance and commitment to change

↓ Somatic symptoms
↓ Depression
↑ Coping

Example Program

- Teen Talk (Tier 3)

Provide Psychosocial Skills Training and Cognitive Behavioral Interventions

Equity Considerations

- Be aware of students' fight-or-flight emotional response
- Consider and address the unique mental health needs of students who have been exposed to adverse childhood experience and trauma



Applying Strategy #5 to SRAE Programming

**Provide
Psychosocial
Skills Training
and Cognitive
Behavioral
Interventions**

- Understand programming available in the school and through community partners
- Develop robust referral networks
- Offer an opportunity for positive activities

Action Guide Strategies and Approaches #6

Support Staff Well-Being

- Offer mindfulness-based training programs
- Provide therapeutic resources

Why is it important to support staff well-being?

Compared with other working adults, teachers and principals were also more likely to report burnout and symptoms of depression, and less likely to report feeling resilient.

Action Guide Strategies and Approaches #6

Support Staff Well-Being

- Offer mindfulness-based training programs

↓ *Anxiety*
↓ *Depressive symptoms*
↓ *Stress*
↑ *Well-being*

Example Programs (Tier 1)

- Healthy Minds Program
- Cultivating Awareness and Resilience in Education
- Stress Management and Relaxation Techniques in Education

- Provide therapeutic resources

↓ *Anxiety*
↓ *Depressive symptoms*
↓ *Stress*

Example Program

- ACT Bibliotherapy* (Tier 1/2)

Support Staff Well-Being

Equity Considerations

- Offer culturally relevant mental health and well-being supports that are accessible to staff
- Ensure that efforts to build supportive environments for students include safe spaces for staff (e.g., affinity groups) and activities that provide social support and promote resilience



Applying Strategy #6 to SRAE Programming

Support Staff Well-Being

- Support staff well-being
- Identify ways to support school staff, if relevant

Mentimeter:
Incorporating these
strategies in your
work with young
people through the
SRAE program



Connecting Strategies to Promote Mental Health and Well-Being with SRAE Requirements

SRAE Requirements	Strategies to Promote Mental Health and Well-Being
Ground programming in Positive Youth Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote social, emotional and behavioral learning • Enhance connectedness among students, staff, and families • Support school staff well-being
Support the development of healthy life skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase mental health literacy • Promote mindfulness • Promoting social, emotional and behavioral learning
Increase individual protective factors that reduce risks, make healthy decisions, engage in healthy relationships, and set goals for the future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote mindfulness • Promoting social, emotional and behavioral learning • Enhancing connectedness among students, staff, and families

Questions?



Related Resources on *The Exchange*

[Webinar on Incorporating SEL in SRAE Programming](#)

[Infographic on Building on Youth Strengths](#)

[Planning My Next Steps Curriculum](#)

[Webinar on Empowering Personal Agency through Creativity](#)

[Lesson Supplement – Finding My Passion](#)

Additional Related Resources

[Promoting Mental Health and Well-Being in Schools \(CDC\)](#)

[Social and Emotional Learning: An Activity Toolkit \(Act for Youth\)](#)

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***Thank
you!***