

H5-The Missing Link: Tapping into Pediatric Mental Health Care Access (PMHCA) Programs to Fill School-Based Mental Health Gaps

June 25, 2026: 4:00pm-5:15pm



Continuing Education Credits

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This series is intended for Dentists, Nurses, Nurse Practitioners, Pharmacists, Physicians, Physician Assistants, Psychologists, Registered Dietitians, and Social Workers.

Please complete the survey and claim your post-session certificate on the Weitzman Education Platform after today's session. **Please note:** Pharmacists must claim credits within two week's following today's session or we will not be able to award ACPE credits.



Disclosures

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Today's Presenters



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School-Based Health Alliance

Transforming Health Care for Students

Our **Focus**

The School-Based Health Alliance Works to Support & Grow SBHCs

Policy



Establishes and advocates for national policy priorities

Standards



Promotes high-quality clinical practices and standards, including for telehealth

Data



Supports data collection and reporting, evaluation, and research

Training



Provides training, technical assistance, and consultation

We support the improvement of students' health via school-based health care by supporting and creating community and school partnerships.

www.sbh4all.org

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Learning Objectives

1. Participants will be able to describe the core services PMHCA programs offer and explain one way these services support SBHCs.
2. Participants will be able to identify one strategy and one concrete next step for engaging their state or region's PMHCA program to strengthen youth mental health care.

Menti Question: What word(s) come to mind when you think about student mental health in 2026?



Slide 7

AZ1

Slides 5-7 will have new QR code closer to the event. I added a text box with the menti question at the top of each slide in case it does not come through in the review process. These text boxes will be removed as we will be pulling the live results from the menti poll.

Addie Van Zwoll, 2026-05-15T19:09:54.913

Menti Question: What is one way you plan to support your own mental health this summer?

What is one way you plan to support your own mental health this summer?

Responses can be up to 200 characters and will appear here.

You can group responses if you get more than 10.

Turn on voting so people can flag their favorite responses.

 Mentimeter

Replace this slide

Open Menti to edit



menti.com
2793 0141

Waiting for participants

Menti Question: Before today, how familiar were you with PMHCA programs?



What is a PMHCA?

A state-level program developed in response to the children's mental health crisis and shortage of child psychiatrists

- Designed to increase workforce capacity of primary care providers to make early identification, diagnosis, treatment, and referral of mental health conditions a routine part of children's health care.
- Programs consist of small teams, including a child psychiatrist, that provide:



Tele-consultation

through an established statewide phone line to pediatric primary care providers



Training and Education

to providers through ECHOS and web-based trainings



Resources and Referrals

to providers, families, and community members

What is a Pediatric Mental Health Care Access Program?



PMHCA PROGRAM SERVICES



Telephone consultation (primary service)



Resources and referral to community services



Direct delivery of **telehealth services** (some programs)



Direct **education and training** (some programs)



Providers served: *primary care, school-based health, emergency medicine*

Why Are PMHCAs Expanding to Schools & SBHCs?



Mental Health Workforce Challenges

Promise to mitigate children's
mental health crisis
and workforce shortages of
child psychiatrists



IDENTIFYING NEEDS IN THE SCHOOL SETTING

Recognition of school as setting
where children and adolescents are
being identified for and receiving
mental health services

PMHCAs & SBHCs: A Natural Fit for Supporting Youth Mental Health

ACCESSIBILITY

SBHCs place critical services, like mental health care, directly in schools; students without a medical home can receive comprehensive healthcare, regardless of ZIP code.

INTEGRATED CARE

Embedded into SBHCs are systems to identify, assess, treat, and refer students for mental health services.

STAFFING

SBHCs have on-site primary care providers who can prescribe medication.

HIGH-QUALITY CARE

SBHCs aim to provide children with quality mental health care services through evidence-based standards, performance measures, and quality improvement systems.

SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH CENTERS



PEDIATRIC MENTAL HEALTH CARE ACCESS PROGRAMS

SUSTAINABILITY

Like FQHCs, SBHCs use sound management practices, including a billing infrastructure, financial performance metrics, and diverse funding sources.

TECHNOLOGY

Many SBHCs are actively utilizing telehealth and electronic medical records and therefore are well-equipped to access teleconsultation services.

SYSTEMS COORDINATION

Like PMHCAs, SBHCs coordinate across care systems, make referrals, and involve family members in care.

GROWING MOVEMENT

SBHCs are working in every state!

How we learned about PMHCA-SBHC collaboration



SBHA + PMHCA Program Partnerships

Between 2023-2025, SBHA worked with the following PMHCA Programs:

Alaska: PAL-PAK

Kansas: KSKidsMAP

New York: Project TEACH

Alabama: AL-PATHS

Louisiana: PPCL

Ohio: OPPAL

Arkansas: AR MAPP

Michigan: MC3

Pennsylvania: PA TiPS

California: Cal-MAP

Mississippi: MS CHAMP

South Carolina: YAPP

Chickasaw Nation: CNPC

Missouri: MOCPAP

South Dakota: BEAM-SD

Colorado: COPPCAP

Montana: MAPP-Net

North Texas: Help Me Grow, Help
Me Thrive

Delaware: DCPAP

Nebraska: NEP-MAP

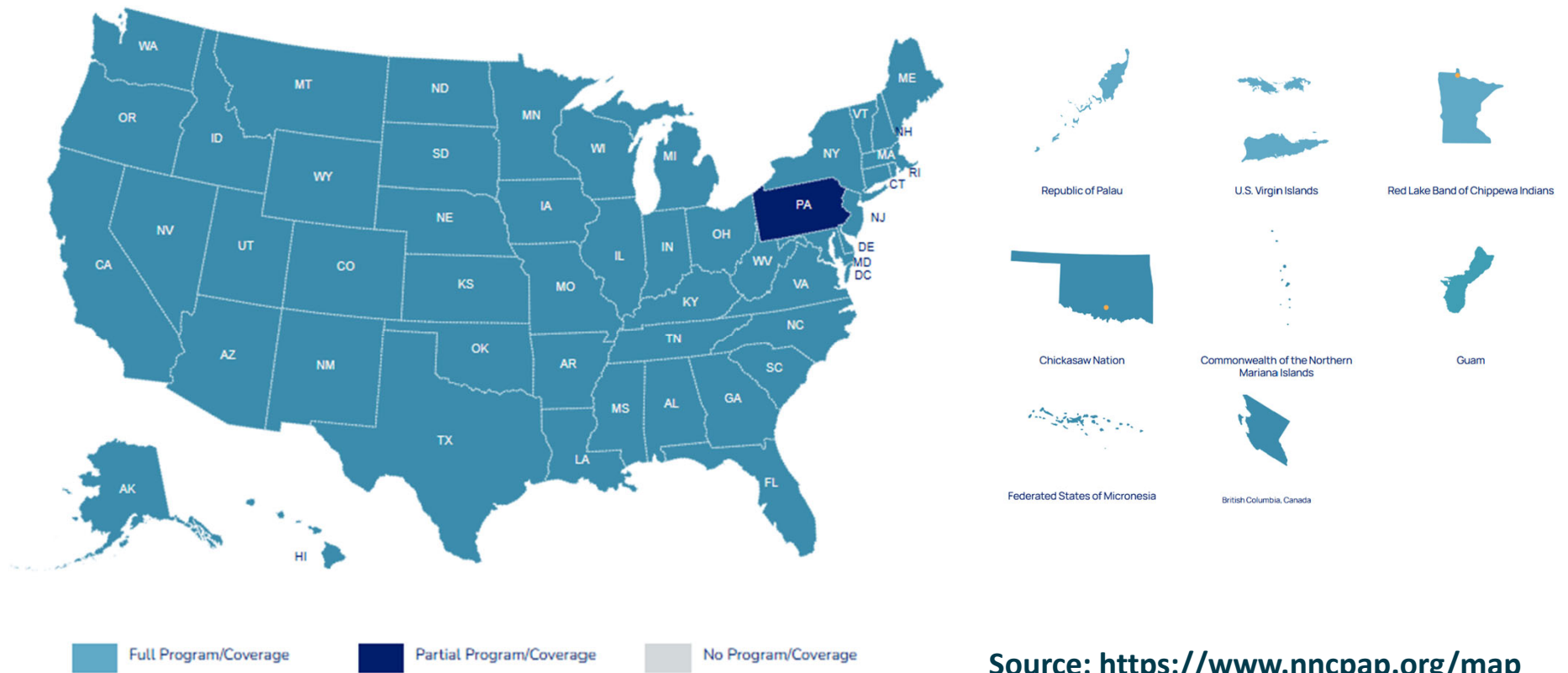
US Virgin Islands: VICPAP

Illinois: IL DocAssist

New Mexico: NM-ABC

Washington, D.C.: DCMAP

Child Psychiatry Access Programs (CPAPs) MAP



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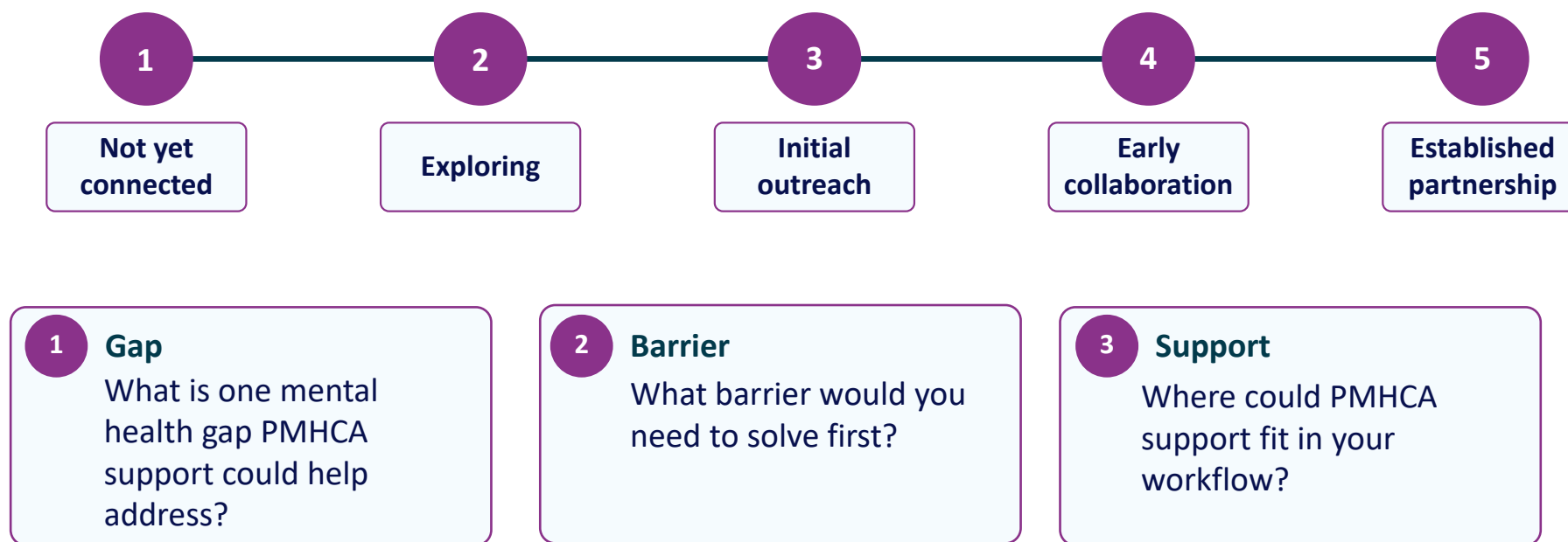


Discussion Activity

Where are you on the SBHC-PMHCA collaboration spectrum?

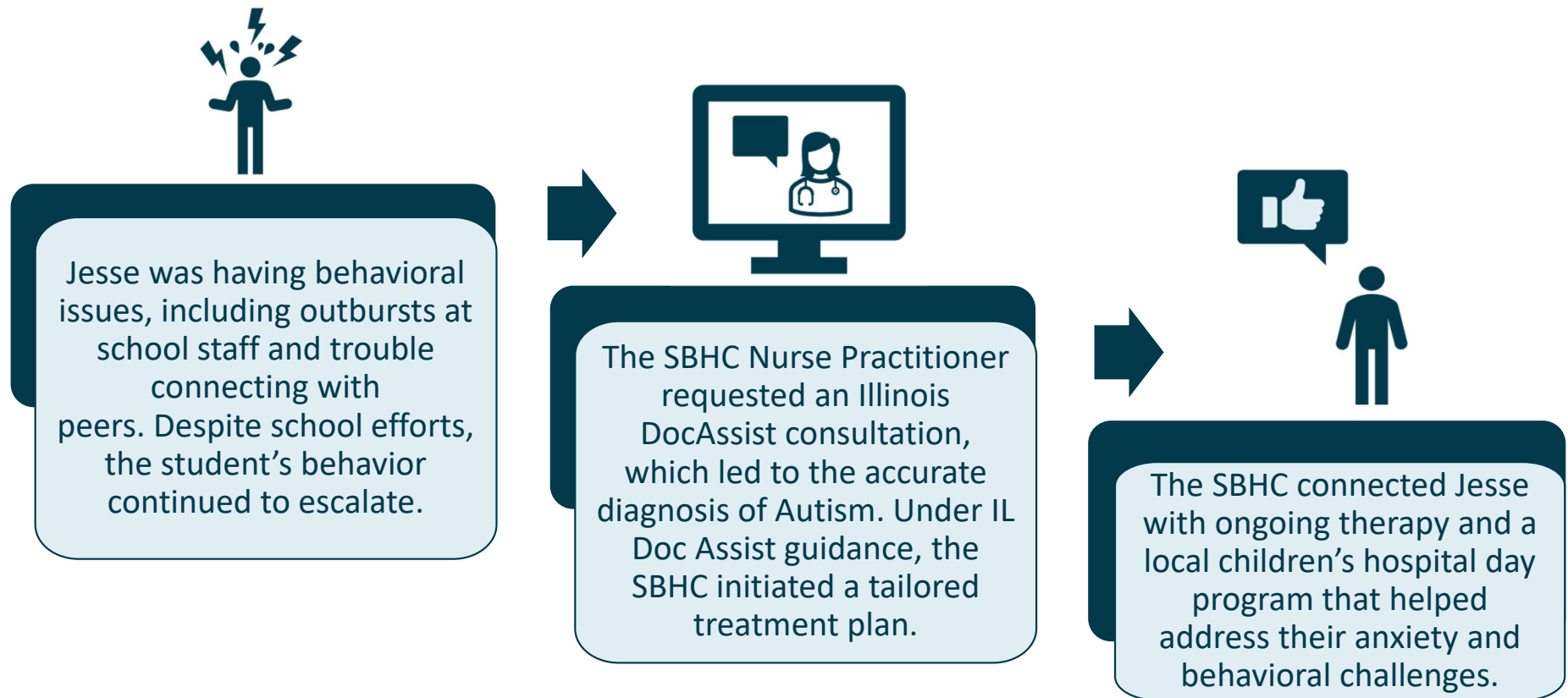
Take 2 minutes to reflect, then discuss with a partner or small group.

Which stage best describes where you are today?



SBHA-PMHCA Partnership Case Study #1

Chicago, Illinois



SBHA-PMHCA Partnership Case Study #2

Kansas PMHCA Program: KSKidsMAP



Taylor, a 10th grader lives with depression and was struggling with CPTSD. The SBHC nurse practitioner consulted KSKidsMAP for guidance on how best to support the student.



KSKidsMAP recommended therapy, medication, and additional resources to improve the student's ability to manage her depression. Taylor began to thrive socially and academically.

SBHA-PMHCA Partnership Case Study #3

Washington, D.C.

Recognizing his emotional distress, the SBHC team referred him to DCMAP.

Martin was struggling with feelings of homesickness and isolation after his parents sent him to the U.S. for high school while his family remained in South America.

DCMAP connected Martin to a Spanish-speaking mental health provider who understood his cultural background and ensured the student received the appropriate therapy and medication.

The Outcomes



Improved Diagnostic Accuracy



Streamlined Referrals



**Medication Management
Support**



**Increased Family Trust and
Engagement**



Culturally Competent Care

PMHCAs Engaging SBHCs and Schools



Partnerships, Strategies, and Resources

- **California:** Cal-MAP has a School Resources webpage for SBHC and school staff, including their school-based ECHO with past webinar recordings, school newsletters, and school handouts.
- **Illinois:** IL SBHA State Affiliate included IL DocAssist PMHCA program info and questions in their state-wide mental health assessment for SBHCs.

Session and Presentation Title(s)
Supporting Worried, Anxious, and Avoidant Students: How to Identify What Is Going On and Co-Create a School Re-Entry Plan
Addressing Student Attention, Learning, and Rule-Following Concerns With School Behavior Plans
Grief in School Communities
Identifying and Promoting Success for Neurodiverse Students
Substance Use Prevention Alternative to Suspension Strategies
School Suicide Prevention, Identification, and Post-Vention Plans
What is Early Psychosis and How Can We Help Students
Services Landscape & Referral Pathways for Students Who Need More Support
Partnering to Promote Youth Mental Health: Pediatric Primary Care and Schools

PMHCAs Engaging SBHCs and Schools

Kansas: KSKidsMAP

KSKidsMAP dedicated a section of their 2023-2024 annual report to highlight their work with SBHCs.



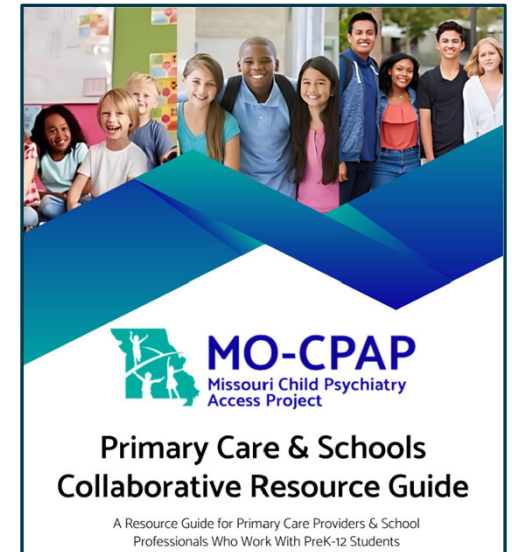
KSKidsMAP has made strides in advancing our school-based health center integrated program, **Interprofessional Child-Centered Integrated Care (ICX2)**. This initiative dedicates collaborative care time with our mental health experts and the primary care teams at the Haysville and Valley Center School-Based Health Clinics to address mental health concerns directly within the school environment, thus efficiently utilizing limited expert resources. Over a six-month pilot period (January-June 2023), the program evaluated 27 unique patients through 50 case consultations, focusing on children ages 5-18 years (mean age 11.5 years). Top concerns addressed included depressive disorder (52% of cases), generalized anxiety disorder (52%), ADHD (48%), and behavioral issues (33%). To date, **over 135 cases have been reviewed**, demonstrating the program's growing impact in delivering essential mental health support.



PMHCAs Engaging SBHCs and Schools

Missouri: MO-CPAP Schools (2022-2025)

- Enhanced school professionals' capacity to promote well-being and provide behavioral health supports to young people through:
 - Consultation: Partnered with **37 districts**, providing peer-to-peer consultations to school staff, supporting **60 students**.
 - Professional Development: Trained over **500 school professionals** across 6 districts in trauma-aware and informed classrooms.
 - Resources & Education: MO-CPAP Schools Resource Hub used by over **4,500 users**, **1,500 files downloaded**, **2,000 resource clicks**.
- Created “*Primary Care & Schools Collaborative Resource Guide*” that provides tools, resources, language, forms, and knowledge needed to improve collaboration and communication between the two systems.



← Check Out
the Guide

PMHCAs Engaging SBHCs and Schools

Examples of Partnerships, Strategies, and Resources

- **Montana:** MAPP-Net offered mini-grants to SBHCs in Montana to build buy-in, engagement, name recognition in the SBHC field, and ongoing relationship development.
- **New York:** NY SBHA's website highlights the NY PMHCA Program and NY SBHA State Affiliate partnership, including cross-collaborative promotion of NY PMHCA services + resources to NY SBHCs directly on a state SBHC leader/partner's page.
 - PMHCA Project: SBHCs & Project TEACH
 - PMHCA Project: Family & Student Resources



How to Engage Your PMHCA Program

A practical starting point for SBHCs and schools



Find your PMHCA

Find the state or regional program.



Identify the right contact

Connect with the program lead.



Are services available to SBHCs?

Ask about consultation, training, and referrals.



Clarify who can call

Confirm which providers or staff can access support.



Start with one case

Begin with one student-care or workflow example.



Track what happens

Track outcomes or lessons learned.

Build the connection. Start small. • Share value. • Strengthen student mental health.

Engaging PMHCAs: Worksheet for SBHCs



American Academy of Pediatrics
SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH ALLIANCE
The National Voice for School-Based Health Care

How to Engage with Pediatric Mental Health Care Access (PMHCA) Programs: A Worksheet for School-Based Health Centers

Introduction

School-Based Health Centers (SBHCs) play a crucial role in addressing youth mental health needs through routine screening, referral, treatment, and even direct services if mental health providers are on staff. With mental and behavioral health being so connected to physical health, most staff at these centers, regardless of their position, background, or training, provide some form of mental health support for children and adolescents. Pediatric Mental Health Care Access (PMHCA) Programs offer valuable support through provider-to-provider consultations, resources, referrals, and opportunities for training and continuing education. This worksheet is designed to help SBHC staff assess whether they would benefit from connecting with their state's PMHCA program.



Who is this worksheet for? Any SBHC staff member, leader, or team interested in improving student mental and behavioral health care access in their SBHC, school, and community. The worksheet can be used internally by SBHC staff or externally with partners and stakeholders to enhance collaboration and access.

1 Step 1: Learn

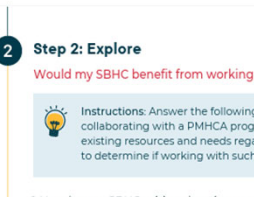
Check out the resources below to familiarize yourself with PMHCA programs

The Health Resources and Services Administration Maternal & Child Health Bureau provides funding to 54 PMHCA programs across the country, including U.S. territories, the District of Columbia, and Tribal Nations. To learn more about each individual program [click here](#)

The School-Based Health Alliance (SBHA) has provided training and technical assistance to PMHCA programs and SBHCs wanting to learn more about each other. SBHA created a webpage that houses a number of resources. To access the resources [click here](#)

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) has a website dedicated to learning more about PMHCA programs. [Click here](#) to learn more about virtual events, webinars, and other important resources.

This video from AAP explains what PMHCA programs are and how they work — [click here](#) to watch the video.



American Academy of Pediatrics
SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH ALLIANCE
The National Voice for School-Based Health Care

How to Engage with Pediatric Mental Health Care Access (PMHCA) Programs: A Worksheet for School-Based Health Centers

2 Step 2: Explore

Would my SBHC benefit from working with a PMHCA program?



Instructions: Answer the following questions to assess if your SBHC could benefit from collaborating with a PMHCA program. These questions aim to highlight your center's existing resources and needs regarding student mental and behavioral health support to determine if working with such a program can help you meet students' needs.

1. How is your SBHC addressing the mental and behavioral health needs of your patient population?

2. What is the overall composition of your SBHC's staff?

Consider all mental and behavioral health on staff (e.g., psychiatric nurse practitioners, psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers)

If employed by your sponsoring or operating organization, are your SBHC's mental and behavioral health staff able to work with SBHC patients and staff?

3. Do your SBHC nurses, medical assistants, pediatricians, or other clinical staff, etc., provide some level of mental and behavioral health support to patients (i.e., medical assistant administers MH screening tools, nurse practitioner or pediatrician work with a patient who walks into the clinic reporting feelings of stress and anxiety)? If yes, how?

4. Does your SBHC connect students and families to mental and behavioral health services in the community? If yes, how is this typically done, through a social worker, care coordinator, community health worker, etc. or something else?

5. Do you have established relationships in place for referrals to mental and behavioral health providers in the community?

- If so, what is your referral process?
- If not, what are your barriers?

6. What mental and behavioral health supports and/or initiatives does your SBHC's school or district offer (e.g., Multi-tiered Systems of Support, Universal Mental and Behavioral Health Screening, Mental and Behavioral Health Awareness Week activities)?

- What is your involvement with the school or school district's mental and behavioral health services and/or initiatives available to your patient population?

7. PMHCA programs can provide training and technical assistance to school-based personnel and SBHC staff. Does your staff have access to continuing education and training related to addressing youth mental and behavioral health concerns?

What are some mental and behavioral health topics that your SBHC would benefit from learning more about?

If your SBHC has access to professional development on youth mental and behavioral health, what is your SBHC providers' capacity e.g. staff, space, time?

If your SBHC has access to professional development on youth mental and behavioral health, what obstacles are preventing your team from making use of the available opportunities?

Your Next Step

Turn today's ideas into one concrete action.

**Before you leave, write down one person you will contact
and one question you will ask.**

Person or Program I will contact

Name / organization / role

Question I will ask

What do I need to know to get started?

Small steps can build strong PMHCA-SBHC partnerships.

VMAP-School Nurse Mental Health Toolkit



Evidence-based tools for school nurses to support children and families related to:

- Mental Health Action Signs
- School Avoidance
- Anxiety and Panic Attacks
- Depression
- Preventing Suicide
- Self-Harm
- Anger
- Coping
- Resources

<https://vaaap.org/nurses-toolkit/>



School Nurse's Mental Health Toolkit

Practical Strategies for Helping Students



PMHCA and SBHCs: Lessons and Insights from the Field



Lessons Learned Resource Guide (60 pages)

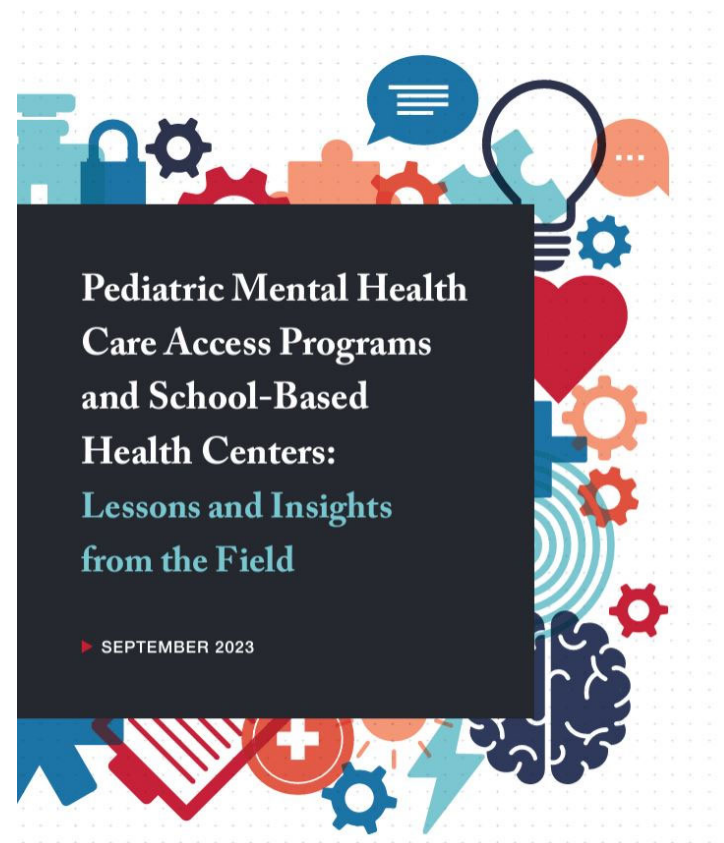
- Steps for partnership between SBHCs and PMHCAs
- Modifications and innovation for providing services to SBHCs
- Implications for evaluation, quality improvement & data
- Spotlights on PMHCA programs
- Resources & recommendations for future directions

Lessons Learned Summary (2-Pager)

- Overview of the larger guide
- Top lessons learned for SBHC and PMHCA collaboration
- Future directions for SBHC and PMHCA collaboration

Lessons Learned Webinar

- Benefits of PMHCA and SBHC collaboration
- Types of collaboration
- Key lessons from 2023 about PMHCA and SBHC collaboration
- CA and CO State examples



Additional Resources



- [AAP Pediatric Mental Health Care Access \(PMHCA\) Technical Assistance Program](#)
- [AAP Clinical Report “Promoting Optimal Development: Screening for Behavioral and Emotional Problems](#)
- [AAP Developmental Surveillance and Screening Webpage](#)
- [AAP Mental Health in Schools](#)
- [AAP Enhancing School Health Services: Recommended Team Members](#)
- [School-Based Health Centers: A Shared Commitment for the Good of Healthy Students](#)
- [Information Sharing and Confidentiality Protection in SBHCs: A Resource Guide to HIPAA and FERPA](#)
- [HIPAA + FERPA – Key Considerations for SBHCs \(2-pager\)](#)
- [HIPAA + FERPA – What PMHCAs working with SBHCs Need to Know \(2-pager\)](#)

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