



Engaging Schools in Mental Health Services:

The Role of a Community Health Worker in Supporting School - Based Mental Health Initiatives and Promoting Engagement

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Continuing Education Credits

In support of improving patient care, this activity has been planned and implemented by School-Based Health Alliance and Moses/Weitzman Health System, Inc. and its Weitzman Institute and is jointly accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME), the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE), and the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), to provide continuing education for the healthcare team.

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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OUR MISSION

To help build healing relationships that empower children and families to reach their full potential.



We focus on ensuring comprehensive care for children and their families.

Critical programs and services provided at Klingberg Family Centers include:

Child & Adolescent Trauma Services (CATS)

Children's Advocacy Center (CAC)

Extended Day Treatment (EDT)

Klingberg Family Pantry

Intensive Family Preservation (IFP)

Outpatient Clinic (OPC)

Parenting Education Program (PEP)

Phoenix House

Quality Parenting Center (QPC)

Raymond Hill School (RHS)

Screening Connecticut's Youth (SCY)

Stop It Now!

Therapeutic Foster Care & Adoption Services

Traumatic Stress Institute (TSI)

Webster House

Wendy's Wonderful Kids (WWK)

Youth Empowerment Services



Objectives of this presentation

- The participant will learn what a Community Health Worker (CHW) is and
- How this role was created from the ground up to be embedded in school - based services.
- The participant will receive information on how a Community Health Worker (CHW) is added to school - based work.
- Improves engagement in services and works with providers in school - based services.

Why School Engagement Matters and What we learned?

- Schools' partnerships with community providers promote engagement of students and families.
- Waterbury's story
- Why a Community Health Worker?

What is a Community Health Worker?

- A community health worker (CHW) is a frontline public health professional who serves as a trusted link between community members and health/social services.
- They improve health access, provide education, and address social determinants of health to bridge gaps in care.

How do we do this?

- Education that is needed to be a CHW
- Is this sustainable?
- What were we looking for in a CHW?

Community Health Worker Certificate

- The AHEC (Area Health Education Centers)
- The Community Health Worker Core Competencies Training is a 90 - hour training program that prepares participants for work as a Community Health Worker (CHW) in Connecticut.
- Cost \$2,400.00

Overview of Community Health Worker Core Competencies Training

The Community Health Worker Core Competencies Training is a 90 -hour training program that prepares participants for work as a Community Health Worker (CHW) in Connecticut. Certification for CHWs began in 2020, and this course can be used to meet the educational requirement for Pathway 1 for new CHWs. All classes are being provided in person. The curriculum consists of 23 modules and 18 sessions. The training consists of four parts

Part 1: The Big Picture

CHWs as an Emerging Profession, Introduction to Public Health, Guiding Principles

Part 2: Working with Individuals and Families

Individual Assessment Skills, Interpersonal Communication and Relationship Building Skills, Individual Capacity Building, Client - Centered Behavior Change, including Motivational Interviewing, Care Coordination and Navigation, and Home Visitation. Health topics: Physical Activity, Nutrition, and COVID - 19.



Overview of Community Health Worker Core Competencies Training

Part 3: Working with Groups and Communities

Health Outreach, Education and Facilitation
Skills, Community Assessment, Capacity
Building, and Community
Organizing/Advocacy. Health topics: Health
Equity/Social Determinants of Health,
Diabetes and Hypertension

Part 4: Professional Development

Research and Evaluation, Professional Skills and Conduct, CHW
Certification and Continuing Education. Health Topics: Trauma, Mental
Health and Substance Abuse

During the training, the instructor will present information on the skill
areas, share videos, engage small groups in various activities in
breakout rooms, and have groups work in a team on projects. All
sessions are required; each of the topics and skills covered build on
each other, so picking and choosing from topics is not an option for
this training. To receive a certificate of completion, participants must
attend all sessions or complete make - up assignments .

Final Step: Apply for CT CHW Certification.
Submit two letters from peer community member
and professional supervisor and approved letter
of 1000 hours of experience.



Sustainability of the Role

- As of early 2026, community health workers (CHWs) bill for services in over 24 states through Medicaid. States use Medicaid State Plan Amendments (SPAs) or managed care to cover services like health education and navigation, with notable examples including California, Minnesota, Oregon, Indiana, Louisiana, and New Mexico.
- [https://www.kff.org/medicaid/state - policies - for - expanding - medicaid - coverage - of - community - health - worker - chw - services/](https://www.kff.org/medicaid/state-policies-for-expanding-medicaid-coverage-of-community-health-worker-chw-services/)
- Grants and community foundation funding.

What are we looking for in a CHW

- Empathy and Compassion
- Cultural Competency
- Someone who was Creative
- Strong Interpersonal Skills
- Manage personal bias
- Positive and Hopeful

Meet our Bilingual Community Health Worker, Jade Siqueira, BS.

Jade brings light to less brighter areas. With a background in public health promotion and education, Jade's goal was to meet families where they were at and navigate Waterbury resources and systems.



"Every voice matters! I am here to make every action count when helping families get access to the services and actively listen to their needs. I value families' understanding of mental health and providing resources that will bridge together the family to the community. No one should feel like they have to figure it out alone." - Jade Siqueira



Our Families in Waterbury, CT

Who did we serve?

Ethnic/Racial Populations

- Latino/Hispanic
- African American
- Caribbean
- Middle Eastern
- White

Patterns of need in our families:

- Education levels: less than high school diploma to GED
- Food: Food insecurity
- Housing: Looking for a better place, eviction history, emergency housing replacement,
- Social support: none to little family members
- Finances: Looking for financial counseling
- School advocacy: None to little knowledge of their child's IEP, classroom management, how to help their kids at home



Importance of Overall Well-Being of our Families

Social Determinants of Health (SDOH)

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Healthy People 2030, these are the nonmedical, environmental conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work, and age that significantly impact their health outcomes and overall quality of life.

10 areas screened:

1. Socioeconomic Status
2. Housing Security
3. Food Accessibility
4. Transportation
5. Utilities
6. Medical and Health Care Access
7. Health Literacy
8. Personal Safety
9. Social Support
10. Community and Culture

Total 25 questions in social health screening covering each area



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2024).

Importance of Overall Well -Being of our Families

Statistics on Social Health

High -risk populations experience a greater number of SDOH needs than general populations

General population faces approximately 3 simultaneous and compounding SDOH needs

More complex clients face upwards of 10 SDOH needs

Meeting the families: Creating a social needs action plan and follow - up targeting multiple areas that take place around the time their child receives therapy



Ask Yourself and Apply

Where are the gaps in this system?

What are we assuming when working with our population?

How are we asking our questions when we want to meet the needs of those we are serving?

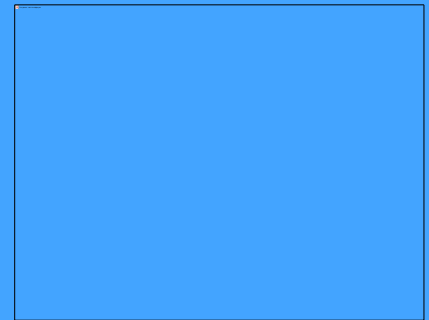
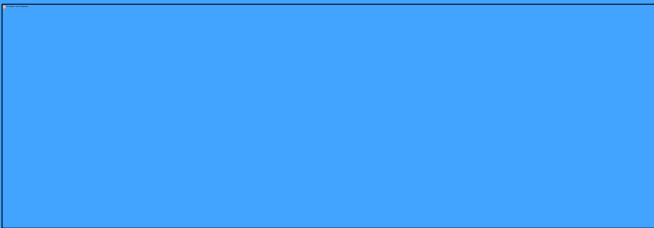
What our CHW was up to?

- Our CHW provided 594 services to families and supported the completion of 6230 mental health services within the Waterbury School District . This does not include phone calls and community collaborations .
- CHW attended 50 plus Community Events and Meetings:
 - Community Resource Fairs
 - Family Focus Partnership Greater Collaborative Meeting
 - Collaborative Community Providers
 - Back to School Events
 - Mental Health Meetings
 - Autism Resource Fair
 - YMCA
 - Food pantry
 - Nutrition events
 - Presented to DPH (Department of Public Health) Nurses in Waterbury about services
 - PPTS



**Interact: Pair up and go through
the screening together**

**How will you create an action
plan?**



Impact Story:

A single mom with three kids who has the strength to keep going. Mom has never trusted the system and always felt like it was against her and her kids. She wanted to receive support for her kids.

Mom opened up with services overtime and received guidance. Client is now transferring back to original school after being placed in an alternative program with the support from outpatient services.

Per the mother,

"I was included and when a goal wasn't met in one way they all helped find a way until the goal was moving forward or completed.

I was helped with everything and anything that was a step closer to my children's needs and me with methods of how to work with the kids at home. The workers were all amazing, understanding, and nice."

CONNECT WITH US

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