Behavioral Health, School and Justice Intersections

3x

Students suspended or expelled are nearly 3x as likely to be in contact with the juvenile justice system the next year than their peers.

2x

Students with disabilities are twice as likely to receive an out-of-school suspension than those without disabilities.

More than 1 in 4 boys of color with disabilities receive an out-of-school suspension.
NCYOJ’s NIJ School Safety Study

January 1, 2017 – December 31, 2020

To examine the effects of the School Responder Model (SRM) and Adolescent Mental Health Training – School Resource Officers (AMHT-SRO), both independently and collectively, on key outcome measures

To measure any differences in outcomes due to local variations in resources

Acknowledgements
Assessing a School, Justice and Behavioral Health Collaborative Approach to Improving School Safety

This project was supported by Award No. 2016-CK-BX-0010, awarded by the National Institute of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this publication/program/exhibition are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect those of the Department of Justice.

Partners
LSU Health New Orleans
Child Health and Development Institute
School Responder Models
Typical Response Models

Traditional School-Justice Pathway

- School Infraction
- Out of School Suspension
- Arrest
- Entry into the Juvenile Justice System
Alternative Response Model

A School Responder Model is a behavioral health response

School Infraction

Responder Completes Behavioral Health Screening

School Discipline Based on Graduated Response/Restorative Justice Model

Clinical Assessment for Youth Who Flag on Screening

Treatment Plan and Connection to Behavioral Health Services

Suspension, Expulsion, Arrest
SRM: Four Key Activities

- Form a Cross-Systems Collaborative Team
- Engage Families and Youth
- Implement a Behavioral Health Response
- Create Formal Structures
What We Know...

Connecticut
- 34% reduction in court referrals
- Connected 47% more students to behavioral health services
- 4300+ teachers and staff have been trained to recognize trauma and mental health concerns

Nevada
- 15% reduction in referrals to probation

Schenectady High School, New York
- 70% reduction in superintendent hearings in 2017-2018 when compared to the previous year

ReNew Accelerated High School, Louisiana
- 49% decrease in suspensions in the 2018-2019 school year when compared to the previous year
Adolescent Mental Health Training for School Resource Officers & Educators
AMHT-SRO

Overview

• 1.5 day training
• Audience: School resource officers and security, administrators and educators
• Focus on skill-building

Topics Covered

• Adolescent development
• Child trauma, historical trauma and intergenerational trauma, and the family experience
• Signs and symptoms of behavioral health conditions, neurodevelopmental disorders, and suicide
• Crisis intervention and de-escalation
• Roles and responsibilities
• Establishing community partnerships
Data and Methods

- Quasi-experimental design and a convergent parallel mixed method approach to data collection and analysis (data collection ongoing)

- **Quantitative**: youth-level administrative data from the schools, behavioral health providers, and law enforcement, as well as school-level surveys on climate

- **Qualitative**: interviews, focus groups, and observations with system professionals
Intervention Groups

- **Group A:**
  - SRM & AMHT-SRO

- **Group B:**
  - SJMHC Only

- **Group C:**
  - AMHT-SRO Only

- **Group D:**
  - Control Group
Overview of Data Collection

Quantitative Data Constructs

Youth-Level:
- Demographics
- Academic & Disciplinary Records
- Juvenile Justice System Involvement
- Behavioral Health Utilization

Organizational-Level:
- **High Schools**: Climate and culture.
- **NCYOJ Intervention Implementation Team**: Quality of intervention services (e.g., satisfaction and knowledge gained)

Community-Level:
- Measures of human, social, and financial capital

Sources of Quantitative Data

- Administrative data from high schools, and state-level agencies for justice and health
- School climate survey administered to school leadership, faculty and staff members
- Satisfaction surveys and questionnaires completed by those in participating organizations
- Community data from the American Community Survey (ACS)

Qualitative Data Constructs

Organizational-Level:
- **High Schools, Law Enforcement and Mental Health Agencies**: Climate, culture and attitudes regarding discipline and mental health
- Readiness for and managing change
- Organizational resources
- **NCYOJ Intervention Implementation Team**: Quality of intervention services provided

Cross-Organizational Level:
- **High Schools-Law Enforcement Agencies-Mental Health Agencies**: Collaborative structures and practices

Sources of Qualitative Data

- Individual interviews with school and agency administrators/leaders, educators, law enforcement officers, mental health practitioners, and student support staff in schools
- Group interviews with educators, student support staff, and mental health practitioners
- School policies and procedures
Challenges

- Staff Turnover
- Transforming Culture
- Integrating into Existing Efforts
- Family Engagement

I’m at ground zero.
– SRM Implementation Site Staff
Challenges

- Existing Policies
- Few Community Champions
- Securing Buy-In
- Creating a Permanent Structure

—if the hearing officer decides to expel, that’s just what it is.
– SRM Implementation Site Staff
Lessons Learned

Construct Interdisciplinary Intermediary Team

Incorporate Peer-to-Peer Learning Opportunities

Mentor a Community-Based Intermediary Group
Questions and Discussion

Thank you!
Contact Us

National Center for Youth Opportunity and Justice
345 Delaware Avenue
Delmar, NY 12054
P: (866) 962-6455