



NEWSLETTER

September 2022 Edition

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Welcome to the Office of Children's Mental Health (OCMH) September Newsletter!

Report Offers School Mental Health Policy Recommendations for Wisconsin

It is back-to-school time, and the youth mental health crisis is front and center. Emphasizing the need to address this crisis, the Office of Children's Mental Health (OCMH) asked the University of Wisconsin – Madison's La Follette School of Public Policy to help study the state of mental health services at Wisconsin K-12 schools.



Graduate students from the La Follette program: 1) examined findings from a survey of Wisconsin school districts as well as conducted interviews with a sample of district staff regarding the status of mental health services offered within their district; 2) completed a comparative analysis of other state's school mental health policies; and 3) developed policy recommendations. The comparison of other states considered states with geographic proximity to Wisconsin, states with similar legislative composition as Wisconsin, or states that implemented national models of successful school mental health services.

The study found:

- Wisconsin's policies at the state level provided limited support to school mental health services compared to the other six states included in the analysis.
- The comparative analysis of states identified major areas for growth, including the number of school mental health professionals available, teacher and staff training, sustainable funding supports, and well-being checks for both staff and students.
- 73 percent of surveyed respondents noted they have some structures in place to identify students in need of mental health services and connect them to resources, but they are limited or at capacity.
- Both survey respondents and interviewees identified that schools and districts need tangible resources, specifically noting funding, staff, and technical assistance, to grow their mental health services.

The report offered the following recommendations:

- Ensure stable and consistent state funding for school mental health and wellness.
- Provide time and training for school staff to implement mental health programming throughout their school.

- Connect schools to available resources, highlighting immediate steps that educators can take to cultivate wellness in their schools.

Read the full [report](#).

Lived Experience Insights

OCMH Lived Experience Partner Crystal Long shares her insights on working with schools as children start school.

Working with your Child’s Teachers as we Start a New School Year

Here we go again – the start of a new school year. New teachers, new classrooms, new schedules – it can be stressful for our children. They have new teachers and support staff. Or perhaps staff in a new environment with more responsibilities and new expectations. It can be stressful for parents and staff as well as our children. Getting to know the new teachers and support staff is important. If it is new staff, it’s working to set boundaries and expectations. If it’s previous staff, you most likely need to help them learn your young person again as a lot of changes may have occurred over the summer break. Things that worked last year may or may not work this year. Helping them to re-set the boundaries and expectations will go a long way to create a smooth transition.



Update the Behavioral Intervention Plan or the written expectations if you have those for your child. Having written documentation prevents unintentional misunderstanding or misinterpretation and provides a guide for future reference.

I’ve found, over the years, to expect the unexpected. Take the events one at a time and do something soothing before reacting. Get the anger and frustration out so it isn’t the dominating feeling when interacting with your young person or the school staff.

Do remember that we all have our own challenges we are dealing with, and we have to find what works best for our situation. The thing we share is we want what is best for our young people. We are the best advocates that can and will eventually make a difference, not just for our own young people but for others too.

- *By: Crystal Long, Office of Children’s Mental Health Lived Experience Parent Partner*

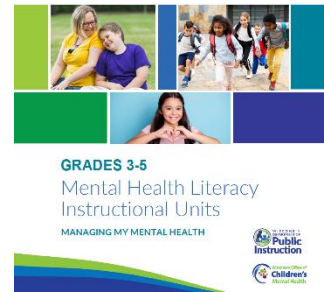
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OCMH Updates

OCMH and DPI Host Two Best Practices Learning Opportunities on Mental Health Literacy

Did you know:

- 87% of parents across the country support mental health education in schools? (NAMI Poll 2021)
- Wisconsin youth also support mental health education. Those who participated in OCMH Youth Listening Sessions believe it is needed across all grades. (OCMH Recommendations for Action)



To address this growing need, the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) and the Office of Children's Mental Health (OCMH) are hosting two Best Practices Learning Opportunities on Mental Health Literacy.

- Attendees will access and explore the Mental Health Literacy Instructional Units, a curriculum created by Wisconsin educators, parents, youth, and mental health experts.
- The curriculum includes instructional units and parent engagement activities for grades 3 through 12.

Join the training to see how you can bring the lessons and resources to your elementary, middle, or high school classroom. All educators and student services staff are invited.

Register to reserve your spot in this limited-capacity training:

- [Tuesday, September 20, 4 pm – 6 pm](#)
- [Tuesday, September 27, 9:30 am – 11:30 am](#)

Please share this opportunity with educators and student services staff in your network.

OCMH Back to School Guidance

Back to school can be an exciting time for many young people as well as a stressful and anxious time. OCMH shares things we can do to help lessen student anxiety and prepare youth for the demands of the school year.



Parents can play a large role in their child's success at school by instilling wellness habits at home. Evidence shows these practices improve mental health:

- Sufficient sleep every night
- Daily physical exercise
- Healthy diet
- Time outdoors, especially in nature
- Open conversations about mental health

Additionally, there are a number of high-quality mental health programs and implementation resources available to schools:

- [Comprehensive School Mental Health Framework](#)
- [Resiliency](#)
- [Screening tools](#)
- [Trauma sensitive schools](#)
- [Wisconsin Safe & Healthy Schools Center](#)

School districts are encouraged to utilize the above resources, collaborate with local partners and their regional Cooperative Educational Service Agency (CESA), and reach out to [OCMH](#) with any questions. For more resources on student mental health, see the OCMH [School Mental Health Resource](#) page.

Green Bay – the August Stop on OCMH’s Social Connectedness of Youth Visits

The Wisconsin Office of Children’s Mental Health (OCMH) continues its Social Connectedness of Youth visits across Wisconsin, highlighting organizations and programs doing work to promote youth social connectedness. August visits were in Green Bay and included:

- The Boys & Girls Club of Greater Green Bay
- Acceptional Minds



State Representatives joining OCMH Director Linda Hall included: First Lady Kathy Evers, Secretary Emilie Amundson – Department of Children and Families, and Secretary-designee Karen Timberlake – Department of Health Services. Below are highlights of what was learned at each visit.

The Boys & Girls Club of Greater Green (Club)

Providing a safe, inviting, place for youth ages 7-17 to learn, grow, and have fun is what the Club is all about. Professionally trained staff provide a variety of programs that focus on six pillars: equity, diversity, and inclusion; healthy lifestyles; social emotional learning; creative arts and STEM; mentorship and academic success; and workplace readiness. The Club has two locations and a presence in 13 schools.

Club staff shared that the mental health needs of youth are greater than before COVID. They are seeing increased problem behaviors and believe that is the result of kids not being socialized during COVID and experiencing grief and loss from missing out on who they should have been the past two years. Youth mental health has been one of the Club’s priorities as they see greater intensity and frequency of these needs.

The Boys & Girls Club of Greater Green Bay is laser-focused on:

- **Relationship building** – Club staff focus first on building relationships with their youth and then move to their programs. They want every youth coming through their doors to believe they matter.
- **Focusing on the arts** – The Club views arts as a basic need and a key part of everything they do. Their integration of the arts, technology, engineering, and mathematics is incorporated throughout Club programming.
- **Social Emotional Learning (SEL)** – SEL is integrated throughout Club programming. They build capacity in Club staff to do SEL work with youth.
- **Working with community partners** – There is a focus on working closely with appropriate community partners to create successful programs. An example of this is the Be Great: Graduate program where Club staff work in area schools to ensure at-risk youth graduate from high school.

Learn more about the [Boys & Girls Club of Greater Green Bay](#).

Acceptional Minds

Acceptional Minds was created for individuals newly diagnosed with Autism and their families to help with the transition to a new lifestyle and has since expanded to serve all families of children who are struggling. They share options, help navigate resources, and teach families how to

connect and interact with each other to help reduce problem behaviors and encourage growth and independence.

With a goal of providing seamless support across the ages, they use a combination of family support, family mentoring, and education in their programs and services. As the youth grow, staff can collaborate with other services, post-intensive treatment plan, and/or the child's IEP team. They place an emphasis on involving the children they serve in the community.

Lived Experience is active throughout their programming. Many staff are people they have worked with, and the programs and services they provide have been developed from the needs of the people they serve. They also work with adults who have been diagnosed with Autism.

Learn more about [Acceptional Minds](#).

New on the OCMH [Website](#)

- [OCMH Reports & Briefs](#) – lists in one place the reports OCMH has either issued or contributed to and OCMH Issue Briefs on critical children's mental health issues.
- [Our Partners](#) – an impressive list of the organizations that OCMH works with to improve children's mental health in Wisconsin. Each organization listed will link to its website.

Legislative & Policy Update

Community Substance Use Service Standards (DHS 75) – Four New Services. DHS 75 which establishes minimum standards for substance use prevention, intervention, and treatment services, beginning October 1, will allow certification for four new services.

- Intervention service and intoxicated driver services (DHS 75.15)
- Outpatient integrated behavioral health treatment service (DHS 75.50)
- Intensive outpatient treatment service (DHS 75.51)
- Office-based opioid treatment service (DHS 75.60)

The goal of the new rule is to support access to quality services while also easing administrative requirements for providers. [Certification applications for the new services are now available on the DHS website](#). Increased access to services will be helpful for youth or their family members requiring treatment.

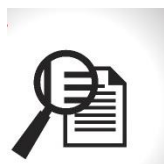
Youth Mental Health Federal Grant Funding. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), [announced](#) on September 1, that it awarded \$40.22 million in youth mental health [grants](#) throughout the month of August. This amount includes \$5.3 million from American Rescue Plan (ARP) funding to address pandemic-related stressors that have increased mental health conditions among younger Americans. Announced the same day is that \$47.6 million in new grant funding opportunities were developed from the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, including \$37.6 million for Project Advancing Wellness and Resiliency in Education (AWARE) grants. The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction has used AWARE grants to support school mental health programs in numerous communities, the work of the Coalition for Expanding School-Based Mental Health in Wisconsin, and OCMH's participation in creating mental health literacy units of instruction and support for partners with lived experience.

Biden-Harris Administration Proposes to Make Health Care Enrollment Easier for Millions of Americans. On August 31, the White House [announced](#) a proposed rule that would reduce red tape and streamline administrative processes to help children, older adults, people with disabilities, and others

from underserved communities connect to health care coverage through Medicaid and CHIP. The proposed rule follows President Biden’s executive orders in [April 2022](#) and [January 2021](#) directing federal agencies to take action to expand affordable, quality health coverage, including by strengthening Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act. If finalized, the rule would standardize commonsense eligibility and enrollment policies, such as limiting renewals to once every 12 months, allowing applicants 30 days to respond to information requests, requiring prepopulated renewal forms, and establishing clear, consistent renewal processes across states.

Children’s Mental Health in the News

OCMH Senior Research Analyst Amy Marsman spotlights recent articles, resources, and research findings about issues affecting youth mental health.



AAP Recommends Mental Health Screening for All U.S. Youth. *IBCCES.* [Read Article](#)

- [Resource](#): Dashboard of MHA Screening Data (January 2020-April 2022). *Mental Health America*
- [Resource](#): Mental Health Screening in Schools. *Mental Health America*
- [Resource](#): Screening Tools: Pediatric Mental Health Minute Series. *American Academy of Pediatrics.*
- [Related](#): Digital tool screens kids for mental health issues at Children’s Wisconsin. *WISN.*

Data Reveals Violence Among Youth Under 18 Has Not Spiked in the Pandemic. *The Sentencing Project.* [Read Article](#).

- [Resource](#): Did Youth Drive Crime Increase in 2020? *Chicago Justice Podcast*
- [Resource](#): State Action to Narrow the School-to-Prison Pipeline, *The Sentencing Project*

Study examines impact of out-of-school time (OST) programming on socioemotional health of Lakota youth. *Clemson University.* [Read Article](#)

- [Resource](#): The Afterschool Guide to Building Relationships and Routines, *National AfterSchool Association*
- [Resource](#): The Afterschool Guide to Trauma-Sensitive Practices, *National AfterSchool Association*

This Teen Was Prescribed 10 Psychiatric Drugs. She’s Not Alone. *New York Times.* [Read Article](#)

- [Resource](#): Complete Guide to Multiple Medications, *The Child Mind Institute*
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Of Interest

September is Suicide Prevention Month

A time to raise awareness of this stigmatized and often taboo topic, September provides the opportunity to share important information and provide resources on suicide prevention.

- [National Alliance on Mental Illness](#) (NAMI)
- Mental Health America [Back to School Toolkit](#)
- Child Mind Institute – Reducing Suicide Risk with [Safety Plans](#)



BadgerCare Plus and Medicaid – Keep Your Health Insurance Coverage

During COVID-19 public health emergency special rules have allowed BadgerCare and Medicaid members to keep their health insurance, even if they had a change in their situation that would normally cause them to lose coverage. After the federal government ends this public health emergency, every BadgerCare and Medicaid member will need to complete a renewal or new application to see if they still qualify—and find other insurance if they do not.

What can families do:

- Sign up for reminders on the state’s [MyACCESS app](#) and keep their contact information updated on [ACCESS.wi.gov](#).
- Contact [Covering Wisconsin](#) for information and help. Covering Wisconsin is a nonprofit that helps people in Wisconsin find and use health insurance. Their Health Insurance Navigators provide free help all year. Families can talk to a Navigator to:
 - Get answers to their health insurance questions.
 - Sign up for Healthcare.gov, BadgerCare Plus or Medicaid.
 - Understand how to use their health insurance to get health care services.
 - Get help with billing or coverage problems.

Contact a Navigator at Covering Wisconsin by [scheduling online](#), calling Covering Wisconsin at 608-261-1455, or connecting via chat [online](#) or by texting COVER to 920-507-5295.

Power of Connection in the Early Years

The Wisconsin Alliance for Infant Mental Health is pleased to provide a web-based experience created for families and communities that provides inspiration on connecting with infants and toddlers. [The Power of Connection: Building Bright Futures](#) is an online exhibit featuring videos and information on the very important first relationships in the following developmental categories: empathy, feelings, self-care, milestones, and connection.

988 Update

The US 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline successfully initiated its services on July 16, 2022. The service connects callers to trained crisis counselors for help with suicide, mental health, and substance use-related crises. Nationwide there was a significant volume increase in the first week of operation – a 45% increase with counselors answering 23,000 more calls, texts, and chats than the week before 988 was implemented. In Wisconsin, the new 988 crisis line received over 4,400 calls in the first month of operation. That was an increase of 500 calls from dial-ins to the previous hotline in June and about 1,000 more calls than in April.

Qualified Treatment Trainee Grant Opportunity

Applications are open for a Qualified Treatment Trainee Grant. The grant is seeking applications from behavioral health agencies that hire post-graduate trainee positions (qualified treatment trainees) in social work (APSW), marriage and family therapy (MFT-IT), and counseling (LPC-IT) for the qualified treatment trainee expanding agency and continuing agency programs. The deadline to apply for one of these programs is September 30, 2022. For [information](#) on the grant.

WHAT PEOPLE THINK SUICIDE PREVENTION IS
Crisis Intervention
National Suicide Prevention Hotline
(1-800-273-8255)

WHAT SUICIDE PREVENTION ACTUALLY IS
Food security
Affordable housing
Youth suicide prevention courses
Peer norm activities
Affordable healthcare
Housing stabilization policies
Destigmatizing mental illnesses
Community engagement activities
Destigmatizing mental health care
Strengthening household financial security
Increasing accessibility to mental health care
Parenting skills and family relationship programs
Family acceptance of individuals who identify as LGBTQIA+2S
#WEARENAVAJO

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