



Protecting the Health of Connecticut's Young People: Brief Reports

Mental Health

It is estimated that only a quarter of children who need mental health care receive it. Of those who receive mental health services, 70-80% received that care in a school setting.¹ In an unpublished report in 2002, the CT State Department of Education found that the only school based health care system devoted to the mental health needs of regular education students in

Connecticut is the School Based Health Center program.² School Based Health Centers (SBHCs) provide individual, group, and family counseling for mental health issues in more than 40,000 visits annually.

Studies have shown that SBHCs reduce Medicaid costs associated with emergency room use and hospitalization. Apart from asthma sufferers, the children and adolescents that are most likely to utilize emergency room care or inpatient hospitalization care are those who suffer from mental health problems.³ SBHCs also provide a cost-effective means of delivering care. In the case of children and adolescents insured by Medicaid, each visit to an SBHC saves an estimated \$35.00 in Medicaid costs per child per year.⁴

School Based Health Centers offer high quality mental health care, provided by clinicians with expertise in child and adolescent health, using an interdisciplinary approach to health. SBHCs reduce the barriers experienced in traditional mental health settings, including stigma, difficulty accessing care, and long wait times for appointments. SBHCs provide students with immediate access to care for many serious health issues that impact school performance and academic success.

CT School-Based Health Centers

Selected Mental Health Need

	<u>'07-'08</u>
Students with 1 or More Identified Need	5,337
Total Annual Visits, SBHC	40,828

Treatment is provided for the following:

High risk behavior / Self-injury
 Psychosocial problems: family / peers
 Attention deficit disorder / ADHD
 Victimization; trauma; traumatic stress
 Alcohol and substance abuse
 Delusional/psychotic / personality disorder

Anxiety disorders	Conduct Disorder
Learning disorders	Adjustment Disorder
Bipolar disorder	Other disorders *
Major Depression	

*Other disorders include eating disorders, autism, developmental delays, problem behaviors.



1 Burns B.J., et al. (1995). *Health Affairs* 1995; 14,3: 149-159. 2 *Mental Health Blueprint for Children in CT: Joint Task Force of CT Chapter of American Academy of Pediatrics and CT Chapter of American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, Jan. 2010. 3 Center for Health & Health Care in Schools., 2009. 4 Guo, J. et al.. (2010). *American Journal of Public Health*, 100, 1617-1623.

