

# School-Linked Behavioral Health Services

School-Linked Behavioral Health programs connect or locate effective mental health services in schools.

They work to:

- Increase accessibility for children and youth who are uninsured or underinsured
- Improve clinical and functional outcomes for children and youth with a mental health or substance use disorder diagnosis
- Improve identification of mental health and substance use issues for children and youth.

## Why schools?

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Untreated mental health issues are a significant barrier to learning and educational success. Placing children's behavioral health services in schools provides a great opportunity for behavioral health promotion, prevention and early identification and intervention.

Schools reduce barriers such as:

- Financial barriers, including being uninsured or underinsured
- Child care
- Transportation
- Concerns about parents missing work
- Mistrust/stigma
- Negative past experiences
- Waiting lists and intake processes
- Stress.

School-Linked Behavioral Health services have proven particularly effective in reaching children who have never accessed mental health services. Many children with serious behavioral health needs are first identified through this program.

*Untreated mental health issues are a significant barrier to learning and educational success*

Community mental health agencies provide mental health professionals and practitioners at schools, with most of their time involved in direct child and family services including assessment and treatment, as well as teacher consultation, care coordination and school-wide trainings.

Results include:

- Coordination of care, with services delivered to where the kids are
- Increased access and sustained engagement in treatment
- Evidence-based services from highly trained behavioral health professionals, regardless of the student's insurance status.

## About Children’s mental health

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Mental health problems are common, affecting one in every five young people. In Minnesota, 9% of school-age children and 5% of preschool children have a serious emotional disturbance, which is a mental health problem that has become longer lasting and interferes significantly with the child’s functioning at home and in school. An estimated 109,000 children and youth, birth to age 21, in Minnesota need treatment for serious emotional disturbances.

With appropriate identification, evaluation, and treatment, children and adolescents living with mental illness can achieve success in family life, in school, and in work. However, the overwhelming majority of children with mental disorders fail to be identified and lack access to treatment and supports.

The Minnesota Department of Human Services is committed to promoting and supporting the behavioral health and development of all Minnesota children and youth. The department believes that these services must be based in research and lead to measurable reduction in mental health symptoms and increases in strengths and functional abilities.



Youth ACT— Assertive Community Treatment    CTSS— Children’s Therapeutic Support Services    MH-TCM — Mental Health Targeted Case Management  
PRTF— Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility

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*Mental health matters at every stage of life and requires a continuum of services, ranging from prevention to recovery.*

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**For more information, visit <http://mn.gov/dhs>**