

# School-Linked Mental Health Services

School-Linked Mental 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 diagnosis
- Improve identification of mental health 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 mental health services in schools provides a great opportunity for mental health promotion, prevention and early identification and intervention.

Schools reduce barriers such as:

- Financial/insurance
- Childcare
- Transportation
- Employment concerns
- Mistrust/stigma
- Past experiences
- Waiting List/intake process
- Stress.

School-Linked Mental Health services have proven particularly effective in reaching children who have never accessed mental health services. Many children with serious mental 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 mental health services from highly trained mental health professionals regardless of their 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, nine percent of school-age children and five percent 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.

DHS is committed to promoting and supporting the mental health and development of all Minnesota children and youth. DHS 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.



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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>**