SUPPORTS FOR YOUTH WITH ANXIETY

Christie Gause-Bemis, MSW, LCSW, Education Consultant

Department of Public Instruction
Objectives

Overview of the School Mental Health Framework
Motivating school staff and leaders to engage in MH supports
Practical tools to support students and families with complex needs and anxiety
Wisconsin School Mental Health Framework

WHY?

1. To improve student mental health by participating in the Wisconsin School Mental Health Framework.

2. Because improving mental health improves student learning.

3. Because focusing on mental health improves conditions for teachers.

4. Because all children and youth deserve it and are entitled to it.

http://sspw.dpi.wi.gov/sspw_mental_health
Wisconsin School Mental Health Framework
Promoting Relationships, Engagement & Learning

Integrating School Mental Health with Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports through:
1. Strong Universal Implementation
2. Integrated Leadership Teams
3. Youth-Family-School-Community Collaboration at all Levels
4. Culturally Responsive Evidence Based Practices
5. Bata-Based Continuous Improvement
6. Positive School culture & Climate
7. Staff Mental health Attitudes, competencies & Wellness
8. Systemic Professional Development & Implementation
9. Confidentiality & Mental Health Promotion Policies
10. Continuum of Supports

Linking with Systems of Care
Appropriate Information Sharing
Continuous Communication Loop
Supported Navigation through Systems of Care
Wraparound Support
Family-Driven & Youth-Guided Planning

FEW
- Counseling & Support Teams
- Safety & Re-entry Plans
- Seamless Referral & Follow-up Processes
- Deepened Collaboration with Youth, Families, & Community Providers

SOME
- Early Identification, Screening, & Progress Monitoring
- Effective Individual & Group Interventions
- Wellness Plans
- Co-Planning Strategies with Students, Families & Community Providers

ALL
- Relationship Building, Resiliency & Rich Social-Emotional Learning
- Trauma Sensitive Practices
- Mental Health & Wellness Education
Laying the Foundation for Parent Collaboration Moving Forward

- Listen first to families
- Focus on building relationships rather than providing programs
- Highlight families strengths
- Encourage families to experiment with new practices that fit their lives
- Emphasize parenting as a relationship rather than a set of techniques
- Broaden coalitions focused on young people’s success to actively engage families

Source: Search Institute (2015) Don’t Forget the Families
Anxiety

• Generalized Anxiety Disorder
• Social Phobia
• Separation Anxiety
• Specific Phobia
• Panic Disorder
• Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
• Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
Linking with Systems of Care
- Appropriate Information Sharing
- Continuous Communication Loop
- Supported Navigation through Systems of Care
- Wraparound Support
- Family-Driven & Youth-Guided Planning

FEW
- Counseling & Support Teams
- Safety & Re-entry Plans
- Seamless Referral & Follow-up Processes
- Deepened Collaboration with Youth, Families, & Community Providers

SOME
- Early Identification, Screening, & Progress Monitoring
- Effective Individual & Group Interventions
- Wellness Plans
- Co-Planning Strategies with Students, Families & Community Providers

ALL
- Relationship Building, Resiliency & Rich Social-Emotional Learning
- Trauma Sensitive Practices
- Mental Health & Wellness Education
What do these youth look like?
Anxiety and Prevention

• Approximately 25 percent of 13- to 18-year-olds have had an anxiety disorder in their lifetime (Merikangas et al., in press). Studies of universal prevention strategies in school settings have revealed reductions in anxiety symptoms for all children and beneficial effects for children at higher risk for anxiety disorders (Barrett et al., 2000; Lowry-Webster et al., 2001)

• Unleashing the Power of Prevention (2015 IOM Discussion Paper)
Strategies and Resources for ALL

- Trauma Sensitive Schools: [http://dpi.wi.gov/sspw/mental-health/trauma](http://dpi.wi.gov/sspw/mental-health/trauma)
- Reviewing bullying policies and procedures
- Overall climate of your school or home
- Environments, structures, fore-
  - Shadowing, increasing skills and
  - Coping skills, MH Curriculum
- YOU as a role model
- Connections.....
- WRAP
Linking with Systems of Care
- Appropriate Information Sharing
- Continuous Communication Loop
- Supported Navigation through Systems of Care
- Wraparound Support
- Family-Driven & Youth-Guided Planning

**FEW**
- Counseling & Support Teams
- Safety & Re-entry Plans
- Seamless Referral & Follow-up Processes
- Deepened Collaboration with Youth, Families, & Community Providers

**SOME**
- Early Identification, Screening, & Progress Monitoring
- Effective Individual & Group Interventions
- Wellness Plans
- Co-Planning Strategies with Students, Families & Community Providers

**ALL**
- Relationship Building, Resiliency & Rich Social-Emotional Learning
- Trauma Sensitive Practices
- Mental Health & Wellness Education
What do these youth look like?
Strategies and Resources for Some

- Wellness plans
- Screenings tools and progress measures
- Youth Mental Health First Aid
- Managing acute symptoms
- Adaptations, accommodations, and modifications
- Capturing the youth voice in the planning and collaborating with parents.
### Generalized Anxiety Disorder 7-item (GAD-7) scale

1. Feeling nervous, anxious, or on edge 0 1 2 3  
2. Not being able to stop or control worrying 0 1 2 3  
3. Worrying too much about different things 0 1 2 3  
4. Trouble relaxing 0 1 2 3  
5. Being so restless that it's hard to sit still 0 1 2 3  
6. Becoming easily annoyed or irritable 0 1 2 3  
7. Feeling afraid as if something awful might happen 0 1 2 3  

*Add the score for each column + + +*

**Total Score (add your column scores) =**

If you checked off any problems, how difficult have these made it for you to do your work, take care of things at home, or get along with other people?

Not difficult at all ____________
Somewhat difficult ____________
Very difficult ________________
Extremely difficult ____________

School Mental Health Framework and Students with Complex Needs

Panic Attacks, Obsessive Compulsive Behaviors, Severe Avoidance or Fears, Excessive Worry, Somatic Complaints, Mutism, Depression, AODA, PTSD Symptoms, Suicidality

FEW
- Counseling & Support Teams
- Safety & Re-entry Plans
- Seamless Referral & Follow-up Processes
- Deepened Collaboration with Youth, Families, & Community Providers
This is one of the most frustrating things about having an anxiety disorder; knowing as you're freaking out that there's no reason to be freaked out, but lacking the ability to shut the emotion down.

It's sad, actually, because my anxiety keeps me from enjoying things as much as I should at this age.

-Amanda Seyfried

Living with anxiety is like being followed by a voice. It knows all your insecurities and uses them against you. It gets to the point when it's the loudest voice in the room. The only one you can hear.
Strategies and Resources for Few

- Emotional Regulation Plans
- Crisis/safety planning
- Post crisis debriefing
- Re-entry planning
- CST and CCS, Wrap-around models
Motivating School Leaders and Staff to Engage in MH Supports

- Defining the role of the staff
- Perspective shifts...what if: "Youth do well if they can"?
- Balancing needs of the individual student and the learning environment
- Maximizing in classroom learning time
- Tools to manage MH issues and crisis across the tiers
Resources

Accommodations:
http://www.worrywisekids.org/node/40
Accommodations by law
http://idea.ed.gov/
for parents:
definition of anxiety
http://www2.massgeneral.org/schoolpsychiatry/info_anxiety.asp
test anxiety
http://childmind.org/article/tips-for-beating-test-anxiety/
resources:
http://childmind.org/topics/concerns/anxiety/
Screening Tools:
Beck’s and Zung’s
http://www.uhs.wisc.edu/services/counseling/topics/anxiety.shtml

Podcasts that are available:

http://www.uhs.wisc.edu/health-topics/mental-health/podcasts.shtml