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Providing Mental Health Treatment In A School Setting: The Creation of School Based Mental Health Clinics

Ashley S. AuPont
Binghamton University--SUNY

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Providing Mental Health Treatment In A School Setting: The Creation of School Based Mental Health Clinics

Ashley Simone AuPont MPA, MSW'16 Candidate

Master of Public Administration Capstone
Capstone Advisor: Thomas Sinclair, Ph.D.
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Overview
Historically, less than 20% of children and youth with mental health (MH) concerns obtain MH treatment. Federal and state policies have begun to support MH treatment in school settings. Initiatives have begun to ensure accessible MH services as the intersection of MH services and the education system has been more heavily scrutinized. In Broome County, school districts are looking to increase access to MH services. The Family & Children's Society is also responding to this need by creating School Based Mental Health Clinics.

School Based Mental Health Clinics
- May Be Housed in Elementary Schools, Middle/Junior High Schools, High Schools, or District Offices
- Integrates Into School Community
- Provides Clinical Treatment Services Throughout the School Day
- Provides Intervention and Referrals to Community Resources
- Services Available to Registered School Students and Student’s Family
- Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Involved in Treatment Process
- Open During & After School & Summers
- Staff are Licensed Social Worker, Psychologist, and Psychiatrist

Method
Examined Office Mental Health Hygiene Laws, Laws for Children and Adolescents, New York State Department of Education policies, The Family & Children's Society policies, and the school district policies of: Maine-Endwell, Johnson City, Union-Endicott, Windsor Central, and Whitney Point Central School District. After the integration of primary sources, direct interviews with Social Workers with school practice expertise guided the policies focused on collaboration and practice specific information essential to successful integration to a school environment.

School Based Mental Health Clinics
The School Based Mental Health Clinic Program Policy & Procedure Manual integrates New York State's Office of Mental Health and Department of Education policies.

Agency Context
The Family & Children’s Society, Inc. is a private human and health services agency whose Family Mental Health Clinic specializes in the provision of outpatient mental health treatment.

Benefits of A School Based Mental Health Clinic
- Increases Access to Mental Health Services
- Assessments, Interventions, and Referrals Are Available In the School Building/District
- Decreases Discipline Problems In School
- Decreases Student Displacement From School Community Setting
- Services Provided At No Out-Of-pocket Cost to Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

Challenges of A School Based Mental Health Clinic
- Previous lack of Supportive Federal and State Policies-Greater number of Policies and Initiatives Focusing on Mental Health Treatment
- Lack of Health Insurance-Greatly Improved Since the Affordable Care Act

Deliverables
- School Clinics Policy & Procedure Manual
  - Composed of 16 Sections
  - Client Welcome Packet
  - Containing Welcome Letter
  - Consents and Referral Forms
  - Client Information and Medical History Collection Forms
  - Resource Manual
  - Emergency Contacts & Emergency Procedures for Each School District
- Potential Logos
- Potential Clinic Names
- School Program Communication Flow Chart
- Letter to School Community

References
Policy Leadership Care for Mental Health in Schools.(2001).Mental health in schools: Guidelines, Models, Resources & Policy Considerations. Centers for Mental Health at UCLA.

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