

Date: 5/24/2023
To: Whitefish Bay Families
From: Tim Lemke, Director of Pupil Services
Re: Community Based Mental Health (CBMH)



Introduction:

Mental health issues are a concern in schools across the country. With 1 in 5 students dealing with a mental health issue (School Mental Health Framework, DPI, 2015), the Whitefish Bay School District has identified a Community Based Mental Health Provider (CBMHP) to offer direct mental health services to students within the hours of the school day and on school grounds.

We are extremely proud to announce a partnership with the North Shore Center and Director Jenny Strom. North Shore Center, LLC has been serving the community since 1994 and offers diagnostic, therapeutic, and consultative behavioral health services. North Shore Center's professional staff includes psychologists, neuropsychologists, social workers, counselors, nurse practitioners, a psychiatrist, and academic language practitioners. North Shore Center can provide a variety of services for a wide range of needs.

Beginning in Fall 2023, North Shore Center will locate a clinic within each of our schools in order to provide direct mental health services to students utilizing a clinic-employed, mental health provider. The North Shore Center will bill families through Medicaid, private insurance, or self-pay. Access to this particular service will only occur through a direct parent referral to the North Shore Center (does not include District Staff), which will initiate a collaborative partnership between the family and the provider.

The remaining continuum of mental health services for students, particularly at universal and selected levels, are supported or provided by school-employed mental health providers as part of the district service delivery model. In this model, Whitefish Bay School District will identify ways to promote equal access to the CBMHP to allow for collaboration and coordination of services.

Benefits of Community Based Mental Health Providers in Schools Include:

1. Increased youth access to care
2. Increased student time in the classroom (reduced travel time and better self-regulation)
3. Deepened ties between community mental health providers and school staff
4. Increased family engagement and access to care in the school community
5. Increased likelihood of better grades, improved attendance, and fewer classroom disruptions
6. Development of a comprehensive health and wellness plan
7. The use of evidence based programs and interventions
8. Staff training to better understand behavioral health issues and implications on learning
9. Collaboration with providers that serve youth in the community through high quality referrals and teaming with families and students on shared goals and strategies
10. Recognition of the important role of school mental health providers as well as community providers in continuing to support the mental health needs of children

Potential Outcomes of Community Based Mental Health Providers in Schools:

1. Strong partnerships across agencies
2. Streamlined referral systems
3. Caregivers may have choices of providers and will consent to treatment and setting
4. Equivalent level of service matched to the level of need for the child
5. Coordination and integration of mental health services from early identification of needs, through assessment and diagnosis, to providing services or treatment, and after-care or supports
6. Drawing on the expertise of existing systems and personnel, as well as co-creating new systems if gaps are exposed in the delivery of service
7. Ensuring culturally responsive collaboration and service delivery

Focus Plan:

We are all extremely excited for this amazing opportunity to collaborate with Jenny Strom and the North Shore Center in order to support our District Focus Plan areas of focus:

“The School District of Whitefish Bay, in partnership with families and community, is student-centered with a tradition of educational excellence. We will build upon this tradition by: Empowering students with the knowledge, skills, and character necessary to thrive in a changing, global society. Respecting the diversity of our students and engaging them as individual learners in an innovative learning community. Addressing the needs of the whole child in a caring, inclusive environment.”

“Every student will experience a caring, inclusive learning environment that supports the development of the whole child with balanced attention to physical, social, emotional, and intellectual well-being.”

Next Steps:

Over the summer months, Whitefish Bay School District in collaboration with North Shore Center, will develop website content with all pertinent information related to CBMH in our schools. Additional content will also be conveyed to parents in newsletters as information becomes available. CBMH services will begin within our schools beginning in the Fall of 2023.

Should you have any questions related to CBMH in our schools, please feel free to reach out to Tim Lemke, Director of Special Education and Pupil Services.

Regards,

Tim Lemke

Director of Special Education & Pupil Services

414-963-3871

tim.lemke@wfbschools.com