How the Education Sector Can Help Address the Alcohol, Drug and Suicide Crises

Megan Wolfe, JD
Policy Development Manager
Trust for America’s Health

June 14, 2018
Pain in the Nation Report

- TFAH & Well Being Trust
- Released Nov. 2017
- Call for National Resilience Strategy
- Education sector brief
- Evidence-based strategies for schools
Projections

Annual Deaths from Alcohol, Drugs and Suicide, 1999-2016

Source: CDC WONDER
School-Aged Trends

- Deaths from suicide among children aged 0 to 17 grew 84 percent in the last decade.

As of 2016, more than 1 million adolescents aged 12 to 17 had a substance use disorder.
Impact

- Substance misuse can have long-term adverse effects on:
  - Physical and mental health
  - Academic and career attainment
  - Relationships with family and friends
  - Community Connectedness
Ongoing substance misuse:

- School dropout rates
- Chronic absenteeism
- Classroom behavior issues
- Impaired cognitive development
Impact

The underlying causes of substance misuse have been shown to contribute to increased likelihood of poor academic performance, bullying, depression, violence, suicide, unsafe sexual behaviors and other problems that can emerge during teenage years.
National Resilience Strategy

“If we can strengthen family and social relationships, improve the social-emotional development of America’s young people, and reduce early childhood trauma in our nation, we can reverse many of the dynamics fueling the rise in despair deaths. Much of this work can be done in our nation’s schools.”
School-Based Strategies

- ESSA Framework
- Community partnerships
- School climate and culture
- Screenings for mental and behavioral health concerns
- Personnel
- Professional development and training
ESSA Framework

- State Plans must address conditions for learning
- Title I, II, IV funding flexibility
  - Title I can be used for counseling, mental health, etc.
  - Transferability
  - Rural education
- State accountability and non-academic indicator
- State report card indicators
- Title IV-A SSAEG
Partnerships

- Systems approach that leverages community-wide protective factors
  - Communities that Care (CTC)
  - Promoting School/community-university Partnerships to Enhance Resilience (PROSPER)
  - Drug Free Communities (DFC)
Partnerships

Communities that Care

- Targets predictors of problems
- Reduced health and behavior problems
- Reduced substance use
- Reduced violence

ROI for every dollar invested in a CTC system = $8.22

Trust for America’s Health
WWW.HEALTHYAMERICANS.ORG
School Climate and Culture

Multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS)

- Prevention
- Early intervention
- Response
- Treatment
Key Policies

- Investing in evidence-based social emotional learning, life and coping skill programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence-based Approach/Program</th>
<th>Benefits per $1 of Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nurse-Family-Partnership®</td>
<td>$1.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Incredible Years® – Parent</td>
<td>$1.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthening Families 10–14</td>
<td>$5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Childhood Education Programs (state and district)</td>
<td>$5.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Behavior Game</td>
<td>$64.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Skills® Training</td>
<td>$17.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Estimates of benefits relative to costs*
School-based Screenings

**SBIRT**

- **Screening**
  - Quickly assess the severity of substance use and identify the appropriate level of treatment.

- **Brief Intervention**
  - Increase insight and awareness of substance use; motivation toward behavioral change.

- **Referral to Treatment**
  - Provide those identified as needing more extensive treatment with access to specialty care.
Personnel

- Provide support and intervention
- Consult with families and teachers
- Promote positive peer relationships
- Instruct in problem solving and conflict resolution
- Develop school-wide practices
- Connect and collaborate with community providers
Professional Development

- Mental Health First Aid (MHFA)
- CDC/DASH funding
- ESSA Titles II and IV
- Postvention
- Trauma-informed care
- Social-emotional learning
Megan Wolfe, JD
Policy Development Manager
Trust for America’s Health
mwolfe@tfah.org