

Mentally Healthy Youth

The community supports a broad range of prevention, early intervention and intensive intervention strategies that help identify mental health issues early and connect youth to the right level of care at the right time to support healthy development and recovery.

What are you doing or what opportunities exist for you and/or your organization to support youth mental health?

- ★ Girl Scouts provides a safe space for girls to connect as they learn life skills. We support training for adults leading girl groups (troops), for recognizing and addressing age appropriate behaviors. We provide personnel support connections for troop leaders to contact, to ask questions, and get assistance. All girls are welcome in Girl Scouts - more than 50% have memberships, uniforms, camps and more paid for by Girl Scouts.
- ★ System of Care connects youth to mental health services on an individual basis. Has 5 focus acts meant to direct services and pertinent youth. Justice involvement if at all possible.
- ★ The Parenting Place offers a pyramid model training for staff and teachers meant to use for children ages 1-5.
- ★ Youth Justice will take families to appointments as well as leverage relationships, such as the crisis department. They also partner with crisis therapists to provide services in the community. This means that there are more exceptions and less barriers to staying in services.
- ★ Opportunity - Early Intervention - connecting with kids earlier than in the past
- ★ Comp Comm. Serv. Program (CCS) provides resources (ex. K9 therapy, music therapy, yoga) to youth they may not access otherwise
- ★ SDLAX collaborates with youth, parents and their therapists to address needs. Using PBIS to identify students with needs and other indicators (ex. Attendance and nurse visits)
- ★ CCS - provide resources to parents. Team meetings with a variety of providers to come up with outside the box solutions.
- ★ Supporting parents who support kids
- ★ Create lots of opportunities to connect
- ★ Early identification of needs
- ★ Clear picture of family dynamics and then connect to supports
- ★ Stabilize basic needs
- ★ Staff mental health - staff need better mental health in order to serve students.
- ★ Train staff so the job isn't a surprise which makes it more stressful
- ★ Parents need access to mental health support
- ★ Kids - safe/quiet space - is it safe?
- ★ Physical safety needs to happen before mental health
- ★ Site safe room - children extreme behaviors
- ★ Children need on-site mental health support
- ★ We need to stop exposing children to trauma in the classroom
- ★ We have one mental health consultant
- ★ CCS - working on a partnership with school. Two social workers in 4 schools, now 1 SW in 2 schools. Find a better way to access SW & services in schools.

- ★ Health Dept - public health education - can we partner or offer training in BGC's/community?
Healthy adults = healthy kids - healthy water and understand trauma and how to work with them.
Educated on ACE's and reach parents genetics and NMT assessment.
- ★ Youth assigned 2 primaries - more access to phones, text, call 24/7/365 conversation, contact
- ★ Systems in place that are safe
- ★ 24/7 text, talk crisis line
- ★ Safe space - come as you are, everyone welcome - meet immediate needs
- ★ Warm referrals
- ★ Collaborative approaches - team meetings, youth driven, self identified needs, BACA, RHYMES, Jail
- ★ SDO, Law Enforcement, Community
 - De-escalation Techniques - tool box, similar training
 - Handle with Care - methodology
 - Pyramid Model?
 - Love for Logic
 - Maslow's - Needs First
 - Ross Greene - SDO-Head Start Collaboration
 - Resources - How & When & Where to Refer
- ★ Partner with SDLAX for speech
- ★ Second Step-Social Emotional
- ★ Identify social needs and have a safe zone
- ★ Partner with families to support social emotional and other needs
- ★ Family service advocates help families and children with referrals to other resources
- ★ Pyramid Model
- ★ APTIV - training for staff, consult Friday, observations and interventions
- ★ Birth-3 Mental Health Advocate
- ★ Functional Screens (Waiver, CCS)
- ★ Parent Educator (work with parents)
- ★ Parent Peer Support
- ★ Triple P - Positive Parenting Program
 - Discipline: "To teach", coach, not ref.
- ★ Meeting people where they are at, working with mental health, police, and schools
- ★ Law enforcement - in the schools, crisis unit
- ★ Partner with ISRS, therapists
- ★ Learn more about new CCS role in SW
- ★ Continue to prioritize MHP position in section

- ★ Intensive Permanency Services - working with youth on healing & connection
- ★ Also involved with Trauma Informed Care
- ★ Community health needs assessment - County Health Dept.
- ★ BGC check-ins continuously from all staff - informally visiting kids at schools, all on board and in line with families and schools
- ★ Substance use prevention opportunity & discussion at self medication to cope with mental health issues
- ★ Using resources
- ★ PBIS
- ★ Trauma informed care
- ★ Referrals to school
- ★ FSA
- ★ Offer a free education for the littles
- ★ Curriculum - Second Step - introduce handle - deep breathing, talk through emotions
- ★ CLTS
- ★ CRU - Community Resource Unit
- ★ SROs - School Resource Officers
- ★ NROs - Neighborhood Resource Officers
- ★ CEO/DARE
- ★ CIT
- ★ Mental Health First Aid
- ★ Lightest Touch
- ★ All officers taught de-escalation
- ★ Incorporated into FTO Process
- ★ Consistent training
- ★ Universal SEL curriculum (build resilience) - 3-5? Unidentified youth
- ★ Connecting with families
 - Awareness - normalizing the conversation
 - Typical development, challenges, resources
- ★ Provide participants with social, coping, and emotional regulation skills. While in our services they are provided with a safe space and try to provide them with the tools to have difficult conversations and build confidence. We also provide staff with extensive training through safety care and contract externally to support other organizations with prevention methods targeting early intervention.
- ★ EAP
- ★ Wellness committee - snacks/coffee
- ★ Consultant
- ★ Wellness reimbursement
- ★ Soft spot

- ★ Partnering with APTIV
- ★ Meeting and working with families
 - Plans for success
 - Home visits - asking families what they need, meeting them where they are at, providing referrals
 - Partnering with birth to 3, school district
- ★ ACES training
- ★ Pyramid model training
- ★ How do we identify young children who are showing signs of anxiety? (2-5 year olds)
- ★ Providing informal supports to families in the communities
- ★ Provide opportunities to participate in positive events
- ★ Parenting Place - foundation training for parents in the protective factors
- ★ Opportunity - Second Step, MTT- specialists only under a contracted hours
- ★ Doing - Pyramid Model, Social Solution Cards
- ★ Head Start could use a full time employed mental health consultant
- ★ Contracted hours for a play therapist
- ★ CPI is appropriate for ages 3 and up as the focus is on deescalation and redirection and safety for staff and kids
- ★ 211
- ★ Cozy Corner
- ★ Better Together
- ★ Strategies in coping skills that teachers are teaching
- ★ Affirmations - “I believe in you, you can do it!”

Safe from Abuse and Neglect

The community supports a system that disrupts childhood trauma and maltreatment early and prioritizes family unification whenever appropriate and possible through comprehensive family and community supports.

What current and potential role could you and/or your organization play to strengthen families and break harmful cycles of trauma and family disruption? What's possible in our community that hasn't yet been realized?

- ★ Families in need of temporary housing
- ★ Parenting Place - Diaper bank drive-thru, supervised visits for exchanges, training for staff on strengthening families
- ★ System of Care basketball team for youth who otherwise wouldn't be able to participate in school sports
- ★ CCS - family therapy/circle of security/peer support specialist
- ★ Opportunity
 - connect with Safe Families re: families with housing insecurity
 - Connect new-to-the-area families with SAfe Families to provide healthy connections in the community for them
- ★ What is the plan for families in hotels come April when the funding is done?
- ★ Prevention work
- ★ Empowering families
- ★ Faith based and spiritual supports
- ★ Economic stability
- ★ Starting where the family is at
- ★ Put the child first, then the family
- ★ Provide all resources that would be helpful
- ★ Have more open communication
- ★ Provide more childcare options
- ★ Early on counseling
- ★ Parenting classes
- ★ Health Improvement Plan: Health department social workers are going into homes with other professionals to help with identifying needs.
- ★ Connect with Catherine to use ACES to educate support people who have an ACE score and what do supports look like
- ★ Health Department moving more directly into the community - staff going out to where the people are
- ★ Parenting Classes - ACT and Love and Logic at The Parenting Place
- ★ Trauma Sensitive Practices

- ★ Method to ID-ing attendance struggles - moving away from punitive approach to truancy to wrap-around
- ★ Disciplinary strategies have become more student sensitive and focused more on the “Why”
- ★ OSS has become more trauma sensitive
- ★ Make family friendly events...connections
- ★ Students with children - drop in Y Watch/Tot spot - reducing barriers
- ★ PD & CPS Cooperation
- ★ Potential growth and greater utilization of NGO, non-profit and community resources
- ★ EAP utilization
- ★ Hasn't been realized - funding for available supports, teaching children how to access resources, actual collaboration of government and non-government resources and agencies, real referrals to agencies outside the mainstream. The power of peer support!
- ★ The Parenting Place - play shops (more volunteer services, group sessions, and support groups), parent educators, visit & exchange program, peer support
- ★ Law Enforcement - call Resource Officers before law enforcement. What is success? More calls or less? Reach out to other programs, churches, etc!
- ★ BGC has partnered with the FCC host home program to help provide a safe environment in emergency situations
- ★ The need is high for safe homes for kids, more awareness in the community
- ★ Help finding homes
- ★ Help furnish homes
- ★ Somehow get these resources to people that need it without having them having to reach out
- ★ Parent Peer support
- ★ Encourage importance of school-education
- ★ Holistic approach for whole family
- ★ Need earlier intervention - start working with families sooner than later
- ★ Current - TIC, Community Schools Model
- ★ Potential - Hintgen/Huber - asking about needs (voice) - centering their voices
- ★ Possible - Creating natural supports, connections for families (engage through school communities)
 - Diversify PTO
 - Transportation
 - Create opportunities for connecting resources
- ★ Bonds with families to break cycles
- ★ Collaborating for resources/early detection of abuse/neglect
- ★ Safety Steps - keeping kids home

- ★ Constant communication
- ★ Home Visits
- ★ Celebrating little victories
- ★ We provide participants with coping skills to help break the cycle of abuse. We teach them healthy ways to deal with anger and frustrations rather than fall into a cycle of unhealthy behaviors. We also provide participants with a safe space to talk. Advocacy for those that can't advocate for themselves.
- ★ Recognize and report concerns
- ★ Provide time to build relationships
- ★ Support personnel
 - Parent advocate
 - Volunteers to help parents - reach out to community parents
- ★ Lesson agency expectations for academic goals and increase time to be spent on social emotional support of whole family
- ★ The Health Department can collaborate with other agencies to connect families with resources they need such as housing, food, child care to help remove these daily stressors so parents can focus on parenting skills.
- ★ Parent events
- ★ Need to increase family service advocates in our agency
- ★ Establish a full time mental health consultant that can refer families at Head Start
- ★ Having a team of family servicer advocates and some teachers who hold this role as well enables building stronger relationships to build family success. Our community partners are essential in supporting and empowering our families as they move on from our program. Often these relationships are lasting and the most meaningful part of our work. - Head Start
- ★ Counselors to come into the schools - Early Childhood
- ★ Waiting lists - big enough - federal funding
- ★ We work with the whole family and provide specific staff (FSA's) to help family's needs. We have not realized that we need more hands on deck so staff can do their jobs successfully.
- ★ Offer free care for children

Out of the Criminal Justice System

The community supports an enhanced and preventative youth justice system that prioritizes accountability for low risk offenses outside of the criminal justice system first through interventions and supports. For youth with complex needs and behaviors, the community supports comprehensive interventions, treatments and supports, based on youth risk, that ensure youth are rehabilitated and our community is safe.

What are you doing or what opportunities exist for you and/or your organization to reduce unnecessary youth involvement in the youth justice system?

- ★ Continue to work with System of Care
- ★ Pre-school - prison
- ★ Helping teachers to learn to deal with younger children that might get kicked out of child care
- ★ Starting up the basketball team for kids that usually wouldn't have those opportunities
- ★ Earlier interventions
- ★ Making mentoring connections
- ★ Different prevention programs to identify needs earlier
- ★ Look at if the disciplinary actions fit the behavior and if it will help the child or if it's merely a punitive response
- ★ Way up stream with elementary focus
- ★ Connect with supports, family, child MH supports sooner
- ★ Family stabilization
- ★ Opportunity - Mentorship
- ★ At Head Start we work with kids younger than 5 so we try to reduce behaviors so they don't continue later in life.
- ★ Story shared about an attack/fight at their child's school. As a parent they were asked what she and her husband would like to do. Two options were offered - fine issued or let it go. More support needs to be offered to students (victim/perpetrator) in cases like this. How can we offer what is being offered in SDLAX to other surrounding areas? More mental health supports is needed. Behaviors=a cry for help.
- ★ Approach to problem solving-> Absenteeism and Truancy
- ★ Ross Greene -> root of the problem -> the "Why", "Break the Stigma"
- ★ Work with Heather Johnson in System of Care
- ★ Young SRO -> work case by case on approach
 - Law enforcement vs. school related
 - Relationship building
- ★ How to appropriately use an approach to law enforcement
- ★ Refer to HHS not YJS
- ★ Every kid has an advocate/champion - good kids can make bad choices
- ★ Re-entry meetings - advocates

- ★ RHYMES BACA are working with hurt kids to prevent them from hurting themselves and others, “Hurt people, hurt people”
- ★ Honoring the inherent dignity of each individual - valuing and listening to youth
- ★ Meet them where they are at. We must
 - Make sure we are present and listening to the youth
 - Help them know they have worth - it helps them see that they are doing the right thing to move forward
 - Really invest in the person. Youth know when they are getting lip-service. We must really invest time with our youth.
- ★ The Parenting Place - Peer Parent: reduce behaviors to keep children out of juvenile justice
- ★ Law Enforcement - Reduce juvenile justice by working with system of care, CCS, Crisis, Youth Justice
- ★ Look for natural supports
- ★ More involvement in community
- ★ Reach out to teacher - coaches that have had a role in youth’s life
- ★ Build connections
- ★ Awareness - make community aware
- ★ More collaboration internally
- ★ Support families
- ★ Encourage prosocial activities
- ★ Teaching kids right from wrong at a young age
- ★ Teaching young kids the correct skills (trustworthiness, honesty, kindness)
- ★ Use resources
- ★ Work with families
- ★ We provide support for families as a whole to help make home life easier - mostly economically (housing searches, referrals to other programs - Families first, CouleeCap, Women’s transportation fund, etc.) Goodwill vouchers, The Exchange
- ★ Reflection practices post eval/referral to law enforcement (debrief)
- ★ Proactively address known systemic practices
 - Attendance
 - CPI de-escalation
 - Mental health supports
 - TIC, SEL
 - System of Care
- ★ Opportunity - continue to build competency and capacity of staff (all staff) working with kids (ex. Dress code)
- ★ Boys and Girls Club and connection with police

- Blue Crew Membership
- NROs
- All resource officers in clubs and events
- Life skills with Sara Rose Houghom
- ★ Inviting police officers into our classrooms and family nights to build relationships that are positive
- ★ Work with police officers within the agency
- ★ Teaching positive choices/behaviors
- ★ Support parents to set boundaries and consequences at a young age
- ★ Support families with older youth and teens by providing parent education and directing them to community resources
- ★ One way to improve or enhance all programs is to work to expand beyond county borders. How can we work beyond our community or offer all these amazing programs beyond La Crosse County?
- ★ Giving children and families support early on to limit or reduce being in the criminal justice system
- ★ We are teaching 1-5 year olds. We start right from the beginning to teach feelings, emotions and building relationships. We work to build relationships with the parents and families to increase their skills as well. Studies have shown that investment at the beginning prevents trauma and costs to the communities in the future.
- ★ Supportive parents/(supporting parents) (families)
- ★ Affirmation
- ★ Community social workers
- ★ Understanding the cycle/at home visits - providing services, no judgment, teaching to break the stigma
- ★ Family programs/family night
- ★ We don't kick kids out so they have a safe space
- ★ We offer resources from the community

At School, Ready to Learn

The community supports a broad range of prevention, early intervention and intensive intervention strategies that ensure all youth are at school, ready to learn and properly address chronic absenteeism. The community supports strategies that include incentivizing and improving student attendance as well as meaningful accountability for youth and families who are chronically absent.

What are you doing or what opportunities exist for you and/or your organization to increase school attendance and reduce chronic absenteeism?

★ System of Care

- Picking kids up
- Checking in at school, home, community
- Providing kids with resources/bribes
- Address issues/barriers of getting child to school
- Advocate for youth and families
- Boots on the ground assistance

★ Parenting Place

- Give parent supports, Triple “P” training
- Relationship with parents
- Advocate for families when they don’t have voice

★ Refer to system of care

★ At times, can put supportive home care in place to help before school or at bedtime

★ Team meetings; encourage collaboration between parents and schools

★ Put in mental health and/or behavior supports

★ Put in peer parent

★ Financial support

★ Rapport and relationships - genuine

★ Basic needs met - transportation and clothing

★ Mental health - sense of belonging

★ Root causes of absenteeism

★ Increase - provide a safer environment guaranteeing children’s safety

- Children have been very violent this year and we do not have a safe space for that child to act out so he/she takes it out on other children/staff physically and mentally. As a result, parents don’t feel comfortable sending their kid to school and the child doesn’t feel comfortable coming to school
- Keeping sick kids home to prevent further sickness

★ What we are doing:

- Attendance plan - Sheet parents fill out with information such as child’s routine like bedtime
- We assist the parents with a pan for pickup & drop off/anything they need
- Half day kids have a bus for transportation to and from school

★ La Crosse County Health Dept:

- Safe Routes to School: walking school bus and bike train programs to help kids get to school

safely

- In-home visits from social workers questing why child(ren) are not in school
- Supportive adults in the community to help get kids to school

- ★ Establishing policies re: time required to be out of school (COVID)
- ★ Transportation policy
- ★ School-family liaison
- ★ Community health worker
- ★ Mental health for parents/students
- ★ Sense of belonging
- ★ Welcoming families
- ★ Wellness checks and call families
- ★ Letters about attendance
- ★ Use multiple methods of communication
- ★ BGC Collaboration
- ★ Community Youth Support Group
- ★ School collaboration on attendance - same message from all partners
- ★ Community collaboration
- ★ Supporting parents who are in turn able to care for children and get them to and from school
- ★ Providing and supporting lifelong learning and enrichment activities
- ★ Helping develop good bedtime routines, set limits with screen time, etc.
- ★ Supporting parents in exploring other options outside of their boundary school
- ★ Encouraging older children to take responsibility for getting themself to school if the parent is not reliable or invested. Connect the youth to a positive person/thing at school to encourage attendance.
- ★ Talk with families about the importance of attendance
- ★ Doing home visits to try and get kids to school
- ★ Continued conversation with parents about the break they get when their child is in school
- ★ Year round schooling
- ★ Vision vs what's actually occurring
- ★ Middle school and high school should have later starts
- ★ All the stuff!
- ★ 1/3 of students qualify for busing -> transportation intervention? (Detroit example)
- ★ Review 2 mi. rule/approach
- ★ Hazard areas under review
- ★ Refresh buildings

- ★ Cultural community equity work - creating belonging and engagement
- ★ Meeting with families and family night
- ★ Have a safe/fun environment
- ★ Action plan
- ★ Offering more transportation (Head Start)
 - For all programs
 - Outside city limits
 - Partnership with school district
 - taxi/cab fees
 - Parent collaboration
- ★ 30 minute wrap around care on each end of the day to accommodate work and older kid schedules
- ★ Opportunity: provide busing or van for all students regardless of program (full day, 1/2 day, EHS)
- ★ Currently meeting with family to discuss barriers to attendance and how we can accommodate needs of family
- ★ Home visits when missing 2 consecutive days to address barriers
- ★ Address importance of attendance at orientation/home visits and conferences
- ★ Connecting with families within an hour if we have not heard from them
- ★ FSAs reaching out to help with barriers
- ★ Educating the families on resources available within the community
- ★ Family action plans - what do we need to do to help? What can you do as a family?
- ★ Transportation is a struggle for Head Start staff
 - Wishing for community volunteers or a collaboration for transportation
 - Would need to recruit volunteers
 - Writing grants to transport children back and forth
 - Gaining the funding to buy city bus tickets for parents for vouchers for a cab
- ★ Helping families develop the life skills to wake up on time, organize pickup and drop off, etc.
- ★ Letting parents know that car seats are offered by the county for free
- ★ Creating an action plan for families who have chronic absence issues

Graduation Ready

The community supports the wraparound needs of youth who face complex barriers to learning. These supports include in-school and out-of-school services that can mitigate adversity, address learning loss, strengthen learner readiness skills, and keep youth on track for graduation.

What are you doing or what opportunities exist for you and/or your organization to get or keep youth on track for graduation?

- ★ Meet them at school or outside of school
- ★ Summer group for middle schoolers
- ★ Advocate for youth
 - Possibly work at alternate school
- ★ Transfer to a transition worker
- ★ Referral to DVR and/or ADRC
- ★ In our La Crosse jail setting partnering with Western (who partners with the School District of La Crosse), we provide reading/writing to help young adults complete their HS diplomas by providing HSED/GED/5.09 classes. They (youth) are usually close to graduation and hopefully we can provide help to prevent lack of education from being a barrier.
- ★ Work with and support those engaged in this work
- ★ Get them started young
- ★ Communicate with the family
- ★ Link drug use prevention with schools - DFC/Alliance2Heal/Tobacco prevention and control
- ★ Connect to resources for parents and kids - healthy parents = healthy kids
- ★ Implementing broad education of community about ACEs
- ★ Screening the families we see for ACEs and referring for resilience support
- ★ ACP
- ★ Tours of Variety
- ★ Building the foundation for graduation
- ★ Be aware of what is out there for resources
- ★ Knowing the referral point -> especially with CCS
- ★ Inviting school to CCS meetings
- ★ Communicate with departments and school (law enforcement)
- ★ Stressing the importance of school - benefits of graduation
- ★ Be a caring adult
- ★ BGC - Be Great Graduate
 - We start at the elementary level with focusing on paralleling educational skills
 - Relationship building with everyone - focusing on importance of school and homework help
- ★ Developing buy in from caregivers
- ★ Experience parents who don't want to let others help and parents who want to hand off their child

and not be involved

- ★ Make sure they're coming to school
- ★ Provide support
- ★ Use resources
- ★ Help them understand graduation is important and helps to be successful
- ★ Providing early education skills and reenforcing the importance of reading and its correlation to school success
- ★ Encourage parents to pursue further education as an example to their children
- ★ Observations
- ★ Ready for kindergarten
- ★ Starts with us understanding with families
- ★ Etiquette, Head Start first step
- ★ social/emotional skills