Expert Consultation to Advance Comprehensive School Mental Health Systems

For over 25 years, the National Center for School Mental Health (NCSMH) has led and supported training, technical assistance, research, program evaluation, practice, and policy efforts to advance evidence based, innovative school mental health (SMH) services with diverse school, family, and community partners across the U.S. NCSMH works collaboratively with national, state, and local colleagues to innovate, implement and scale effective comprehensive school mental health systems through learning collaboratives.

The NCSMH team has approximately 75 clinical and research faculty and staff with nationally-recognized expertise in school mental health, violence prevention, trauma-informed schools and trauma treatment, school climate, and multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS). The NCSMH collaborates with a wide range of partners invested in integrated approaches to reduce barriers to student learning including youth and families, educators, health and mental health providers, researchers, child serving agency staff, advocates, administrators and policymakers, and community partners.

Who We Work With

We work with groups at all stages of comprehensive school mental health system development. We partner with schools, school districts, and state agencies (e.g., Departments of Education, Departments of Mental/Behavioral health) to develop, grow, and sustain school mental health systems.

How It Works

If you're interested in a potential collaboration with NCSMH, please complete a, **brief interest form** to describe your consulting needs, goals, and budget. Following a brief conversation to learn more, we will develop a scope of work, cost, timeline, and deliverables.

Our Services

- **Comprehensive School Mental Health Systems Training and Implementation Support**
  Comprehensive school mental health systems provide an array of supports and services that promote positive school climate, social and emotional learning, and mental health and well-being, while reducing the prevalence and severity of mental illness. Comprehensive school mental health systems are built on a strong foundation of district and school professionals, including administrators, educators and specialized instructional support personnel (e.g., school psychologists, school social workers, school counselors, school nurses and other school health professionals), in strategic collaboration with students, families, and community health and mental health partners.

  We can review all key components of comprehensive school mental health systems including Teaming, Needs Assessment / Resource Mapping, Screening, Mental Health Promotion Services and Supports (Tier 1), Early Intervention and Treatment Services and Supports

(Tier 2 & 3), Funding and Sustainability, and Impact. Alternatively, we can focus on specific areas of comprehensive school mental health systems.

Free Resources:

- o *[National School Mental Health Best Practices: Implementation Guidance Modules for States, Districts, and Schools](#)*
- o **The School Mental Health Quality Guide Series** provides background information, best practices, action steps, examples from the field, and resources guidance on each domain: [Teaming](#), [Needs Assessment and Resource Mapping](#), [Screening](#), [Mental Health Promotion Services and Supports (Tier I)](#), [Early Intervention and Treatment Services and Supports (Tier II & III)](#),[Funding and Sustainability](#), and [Impact](#).

- **The School Health Assessment and Performance Evaluation System**

[The School Health Assessment and Performance Evaluation (SHAPE) System](#) is a public-access, web-based platform that offers schools, districts, and states/territories a workspace and targeted resources to support school mental health quality improvement. SHAPE was developed by the National Center for School Mental Health (NCSMH), in partnership with the field, to increase the quality and sustainability of comprehensive school mental health systems. SHAPE includes several measures and features designed to help teams at the school, district, entity, and state levels to document school mental health services and supports, assess system quality, and guide improvement efforts.

Example topics of SHAPE consultation include:

- o In-depth overview of all system features
- o SHAPE as a quality improvement tool
- o SHAPE as an evaluation tool
- o SHAPE engagement (encourage SHAPE use across districts, entities, and states)

Free Resources

- o **SHAPE Walk Through Videos** show how to register for the SHAPE System and navigate major features within different account types. Video are available each account type: [Individual](#), [School](#), [District,](#) [Entity](#) , [State](#)
- o **User Guides** are printable documents that describe the registration process and major features of the System. User guides are available for [schools](#), [districts](#), [entities](#), and [states](#).

o The [Step-by-Step Guide for School Mental Health Quality Improvement](#) provides a brief overview on how to use the SHAPE System to assess your comprehensive school mental health system, prioritize improvement areas, and test changes on a small scale.

- **School Mental Health Continuous Quality Improvement**
  School mental health teams have different approaches to continuous quality improvement. Some teams may want to use systematic, structured tools and strategies beyond the assessments and strategic planning guides on the SHAPE System. Plan-Do-Study-Act Cycles (PSDAs) are one key tool that school teams can use to test their quality improvement change ideas and gradually scale up in a sustainable, locally, and contextually appropriate manner. The NCSMH has used PDSAs as a tool to support school systems across the country ([Connors et al., 2020](#); [Orenstein et al., 2023](#)).

  Example topics of School Mental Health Continuous Quality Improvement consultation include:
  o PDSA Overview
  o Using PDSAs as part of a structured learning collaborative

  Free Resources

  o Plan-Do-Study-Act Cycle Quick Tips for Comprehensive School Mental Health System Improvement

Specialty Presentation Topic Areas

Below is a list of training and professional development topics available from the National Center for School Mental Health (NCSMH) for school, district, state, and organizational leaders. Most sessions can be completed in one hour or can be extended to a ½-day or 1-day training, as requested. Trainings may be delivered virtually or in-person.

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)		
Title	**Audience**	**Description**
Best Practices for Tier 1 Mental Health Promotion in Schools	District or School Teams, Individual School Mental Health Providers, Educators, Administrators, Other School Staff	*Reviews best practices for school mental health promotion including mental health literacy, teacher-student relationships, and school climate.*
Needs Assessment and Resource Mapping	District Teams, School Teams	*Provides the process for conducting Needs Assessments and Resource Mapping, including ways to integrate cultural responsiveness, anti-racism, and equity (CARE) practices.*
Best Practices in School Mental Health Multidisciplinary Team Collaboration	District Teams, School Teams	*Outlines some best practices for building effective teams and how teams can advance CARE practices.*

Tier I: Universal Mental Health Promotion		
Title	**Audience**	**Description**
Building Educator-Student Relationships	District or School Teams, Individual School Mental Health Providers, Educators, Administrators, Other School Staff	*Describes best practices to advance positive educator-student relationships to advance mental health and well-being for your entire school community.*
Promoting the Well-Being of All Students	District or School Teams, Individual School Mental Health Providers, Educators, Administrators, Other School Staff	*Clarifies the meaning, purpose, and strategies of promoting student well-being, Tier 1 frameworks, and strengths and challenges of existing Tier 1 supports.*

School Promotion of Mental Health: Improving Student Behavior	District or School Teams, Individual School Mental Health Providers, Educators, Administrators, Other School Staff	*Describes basics in behavioral planning for students, including instructions, praise, active ignoring, rewards/reinforcement, and practical steps in behavior planning with example cases.*

Screening

Title	Audience	Description
Best Practices for Mental Health Screening	District or School Teams, Individual School Mental Health Providers	*Outlines best practices in trauma-informed and culturally responsive mental health screening, key tasks involved in crafting a district/school mental health screening plan, barriers to implementing screening and strategies to mitigate such challenges. Additionally, this training reviews the use of Psychological First Aid to respond to students' needs.*

Tiers 2 and 3: Early Intervention and Treatment

Title	Audience	Description
School Promotion of Mental Health: Improving Student Behavior	District or School Teams, Individual School Mental Health Providers, Educators, Administrators, Other School Staff	*Describes basics in behavioral planning for students, including instructions, praise, active ignoring, rewards/reinforcement, and practical steps in behavior planning with example cases.*
Support BIPOC, Newcomer and LGBTQ+ Youth at Tiers 2 and 3	District or School Teams, Individual School Mental Health Providers, Educators, Administrators, Other School Staff	*Recognizes the importance of implementing culturally responsive and identity affirming practices, and identifying practices and evidence-based interventions that can be used to support BIPOC, newcomer, and LGBTQ+ youth at Tiers 2 and 3.*
Telemental Health	Mental Health Providers in Schools	*Provides an overview of telemental health, how it is used in schools, and tips for how to best use telemental health from set up to practice for the provider, student, and family.*

Adversity and Trauma

Title	Audience	Description

Engaging Students with a Trauma- Informed Approach	District or School Teams, Individual School Mental Health Providers, Educators, Administrators, Other School Staff	*Describes how to approach students using a trauma-informed approach, and use that approach when behavioral difficulties occur, including strategies for deescalating students.*
School-Based Early Intervention and Treatment for Trauma	District or School Teams, Individual School Mental Health Providers, Educators, Administrators, Other School Staff	*Describes common components of evidence-based early interventions for trauma, best practices for referral, screening, and monitoring progress for students enrolled in trauma interventions and strategies for family and youth engagement in all phases of planning and implementation.*
Trauma-Informed, Healing Centered Schools: Building the Foundation	District or School Teams, Individual School Mental Health Providers, Educators, Administrators, Other School Staff	*Describes the difference between a traditional and trauma-informed approach used in schools, characteristics of schools along a "trauma-informed" school continuum, and strategies for creating a safe environment using NCTSN's Trauma- Informed Schools System Framework.*
Trauma-Responsive Schools	District or School Teams, Individual School Mental Health Providers, Educators, Administrators, Other School Staff	*Reviews best practices for trauma-responsive schools.*

Cultural Responsiveness and Equity		
Title	**Audience**	**Description**
Cultural Responsiveness, Anti-Racism, and Equity (CARE) School Mental Health Clinician Training	Individual School Mental Health Providers	*Focuses on fostering clinician well-being, cultural humility and self-awareness, and understanding inequities and intersectionality.*
Cultural Humility and Awareness	District or School Teams, Individual School Mental Health Providers, Educators, Administrators, Other School Staff	*Reviews foundational terms related to cultural humility and awareness, the link between cultural humility and the promotion of safe supportive schools, and reflection on participants own personal identity, values, and beliefs.*

Cultural Inclusiveness and Equity WISE (Well-Being Information and Strategies for Educators)	District or School Teams, Individual School Mental Health Providers, Educators, Administrators, Other School Staff	*Addresses the impact of educational inequities on student mental health, how implicit bias influences our perceptions and responses, and culturally inclusive classroom strategies to support student mental health.*
Defining CARE (Cultural Responsiveness, Anti-Racism, Equity)	District or School Teams, Individual School Mental Health Providers, Educators, Administrators, Other School Staff	*Reviews CARE in schools, its relevance and how inequities play a role in schools and other systems.*
Supporting BIPOC and Newcomer Youth in Schools	District or School Teams, Individual School Mental Health Providers, Educators, Administrators, Other School Staff	*Provides strategies at the participant, classroom and system-level to support BIPOC and newcomer youth, promote equity, and enhance safety and belonging for BIPOC and newcomer youth.*
Supporting LGBTQA+ Students at Schools	District or School Teams, Individual School Mental Health Providers, Educators, Administrators, Other School Staff	*Describes relevant terminology, and recommendations and resources for supporting LGBTQA+ students in Maryland.*

Data-Driven Decision-Making		
Title	**Audience**	**Description**
Using Data to Monitor Progress and Impact of School Mental Health Programs	District or School Teams, Individual School Mental Health Providers	*Describes best practices and practical tools to use data to monitor progress and impact of school mental health programs.*

Funding		
Title	**Audience**	**Description**
Funding and Policies to Advance Safe, Supportive Schools	District Teams	*Describes sustainable funding mechanisms and strategies for school mental health (MH) systems, recruitment and retention strategies to maintain and grow school MH workforce, and policy levers to advance safe supportive schools.*

Mental Health Literacy

Title	Audience	Description
Classroom WISE	District or School Teams, Individual School Mental Health Providers, Educators, Administrators, Other School Staff	*Offers evidence-based strategies to promote student mental health and support students with mental health challenges.*

Provider and Staff Well-Being

Title	Audience	Description
Considerations for Mental Health Provider Well-Being	School-employed and School-based Mental Health Providers, Counselors	*Provides an overview of well-being factors and considers unique considerations for mental health providers as it relates to well-being.*
Educator Well-Being	District or School Teams, Individual School Mental Health Providers Educators, Administrators, Other School Staff	*Reviews the concepts of individual, collective, and organization (school) well-being, reasons to promote school staff well-being, and the impact of burnout, compassion fatigue, and secondary traumatic stress.*

School-Community Partnerships

Title	Audience	Description
Effective School Community Partnerships	District or School Teams, Individual School Mental Health Providers, Educators, Administrators, Other School Staff	*Reviews best practices to engage youth and families and promote effective school/community partnerships.*
Engaging Community Partners with Schools	Community Partner Clinical Staff and Leadership	*Offers practical guidance and strategies for new community partners to consider how to best collaborate with schools, considering school language, structures, and how to be a good guest in the building.*