



School Mental Health: Best Practices

Janine Y. Saunders, MPH

Senior Project Director





About California School-Based Health Alliance

The California School-Based Health Alliance is the statewide non-profit organization dedicated to improving the health and academic success of children and youth by advancing health services in schools.

Our work is based on two basic concepts:

- Health care should be accessible and *where kids are*, and
- Schools should have the services needed to ensure that poor health is not a barrier to learning

Our Agenda for Today

This workshop will address how youth friendly, culturally competent, and accessible mental health services at school can reduce suspensions and expulsions; increase school connectedness; and improve learning.

We will engage in a school mental health assessment and leave with action steps to expand or enhance mental health services on campus.

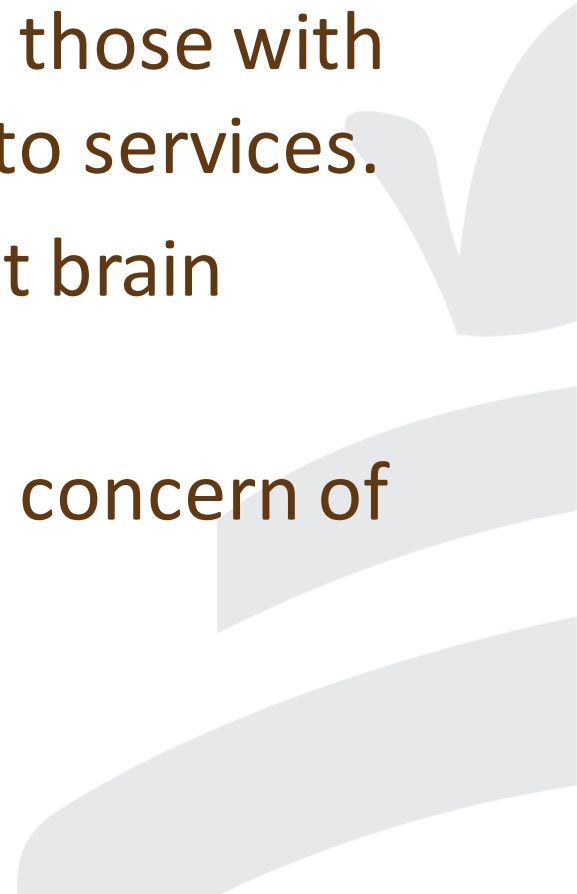
If you were talking to a reluctant colleague/parent/board member...

Why do kids and teens need mental health services?

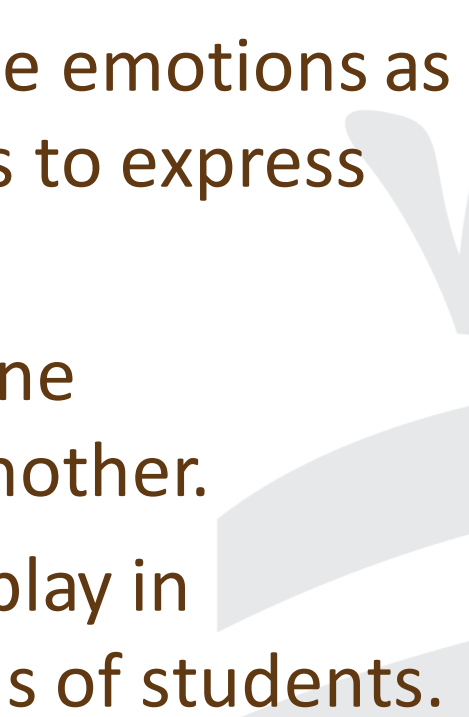
Why do we provide mental health services in school?



Mental Health and Young People

- Everyone has mental health.
 - Mental health challenges are common.
 - Most children and youth, even those with insurance, do not have access to services.
 - Mental health challenges affect brain development and learning.
 - Behavioral symptoms are a big concern of teachers and schools.
- 

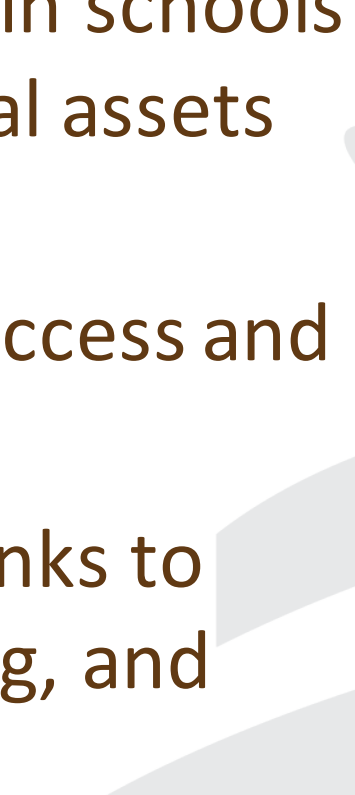
A Note About Trauma

- Trauma is prevalent in the lives of children.
 - Trauma affects learning and school performance, and causes physical and emotional distress.
 - Children/teens experience the same emotions as adults, but may not have the words to express them.
 - Some behaviors are protective in one environment, but problematic in another.
 - Schools have an important role to play in meeting the social/emotional needs of students.
- 

Explaining How Trauma Impacts Learning: Brain in the Palm of Your Hand

- Your wrist and palm:
 - Brain stem – autonomic functions
 - Your thumb
 - Mid-brain – memories, fears, connectedness
 - Your fingers over your thumb
 - Cortex – perception – motor action – speech – thinking - learning
 - Your finger nails
 - Pre-frontal cortex – emotional regulation, response flexibility, self-awareness, decision making
- 

Services in Schools

- Most children and youth who receive services get them at school.
 - Individual and group counseling in schools are linked to more developmental assets for students.
 - School-based services increase access and reduce stigma.
 - Improvement in mental health links to improvement in behavior, learning, and social skills.
- 

Providing Mental Health Care at School

Of children and youth who are receiving mental health services, 70% are getting them at school.¹

Students who receive mental health services on campus report greater connection to school and more caring relationships with adults at school.²

Mental health treatment in schools is associated with increased access for students of color – who might otherwise go without any treatment.³

¹Rones, M., & Hoagwood, K., 2000; ²Susan Stone et al., 2013; ³Snowden, L. R., & Yamada, A., 2005.



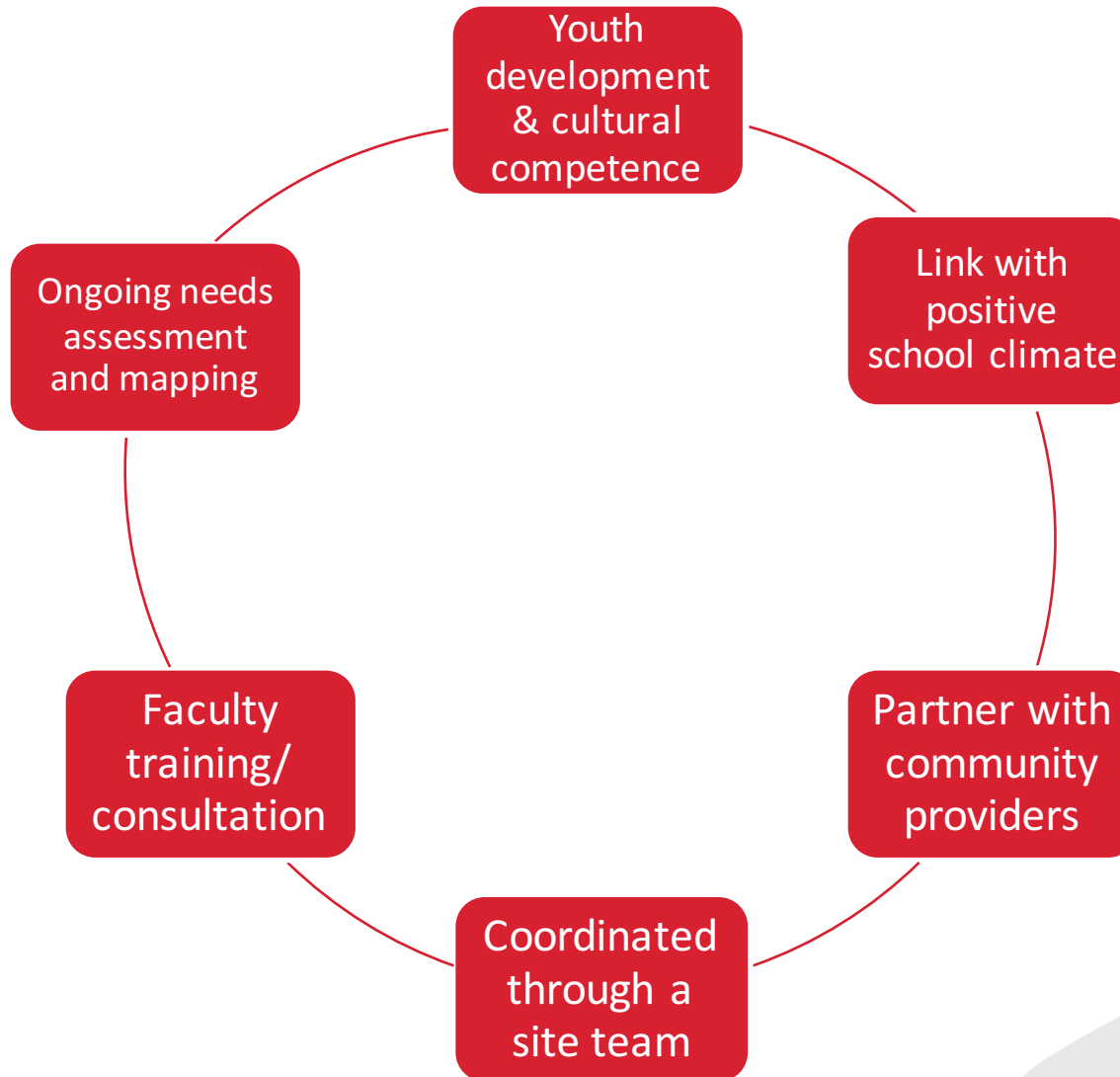
Mental Health Services and Outcomes

Students who receive mental health services on campus have lower suspension rates and get along better with peers than students who have mental health needs and do not receive school-based treatment.⁴




⁴Strolin-Goltzman, J, 2010.


Principles to guide school mental health programs



Mental health programs
and services are **responsive**
to the needs identified in
your school community.




Conducting a needs assessment

- Establishment of a planning team
 - Map existing services
 - Data collection: attendance, suspension/expulsion, California Healthy Kids Survey, public health data
 - Survey the Knowledge, Attitudes and Beliefs of students, families, teachers, administrators, community
- 

Needs Assessment

HOW DO YOU KNOW THIS SUPPORT SERVICE IS NEEDED? WHAT EVIDENCE DID YOU GATHER TO SUPPORT THIS NEED? WHO WAS INVOLVED IN THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS?



Mental health services and programs are planned with youth involvement and provided with cultural competence.



Youth Engagement

- Mental health education
- Youth advisory committee
- Wellness ambassadors
- Peer education
- Student Fishbowls



Tools for Youth Engagement


ASK (Analyzing Surveys with Kids): Students analyze and interpret existing local data (like survey results) associated with a school-related topic or problem, then produce explanations and suggestions for school improvement.

Inside-Outside Fishbowl: Students and educators trade roles as speakers and listeners during a structured discussion of a school-related topic or problem, and jointly develop an action plan.

S4 (Students Studying Students' Stories): Students lead a digital storytelling process in which they produce and analyze videotaped interviews of other students discussing a school-related topic or problem, then host forums with educators to suggest improvements.


<http://www.schoolhealthcenters.org/start-up-and-operations/engaging-youth-and-families/>

Cultural Competence and Beyond

- Cultural and language match for direct services
 - Translated materials
 - Implicit bias training for adults
 - Partner with cultural organizations
 - Engage with families!
- 

Youth Engagement & Cultural Humility

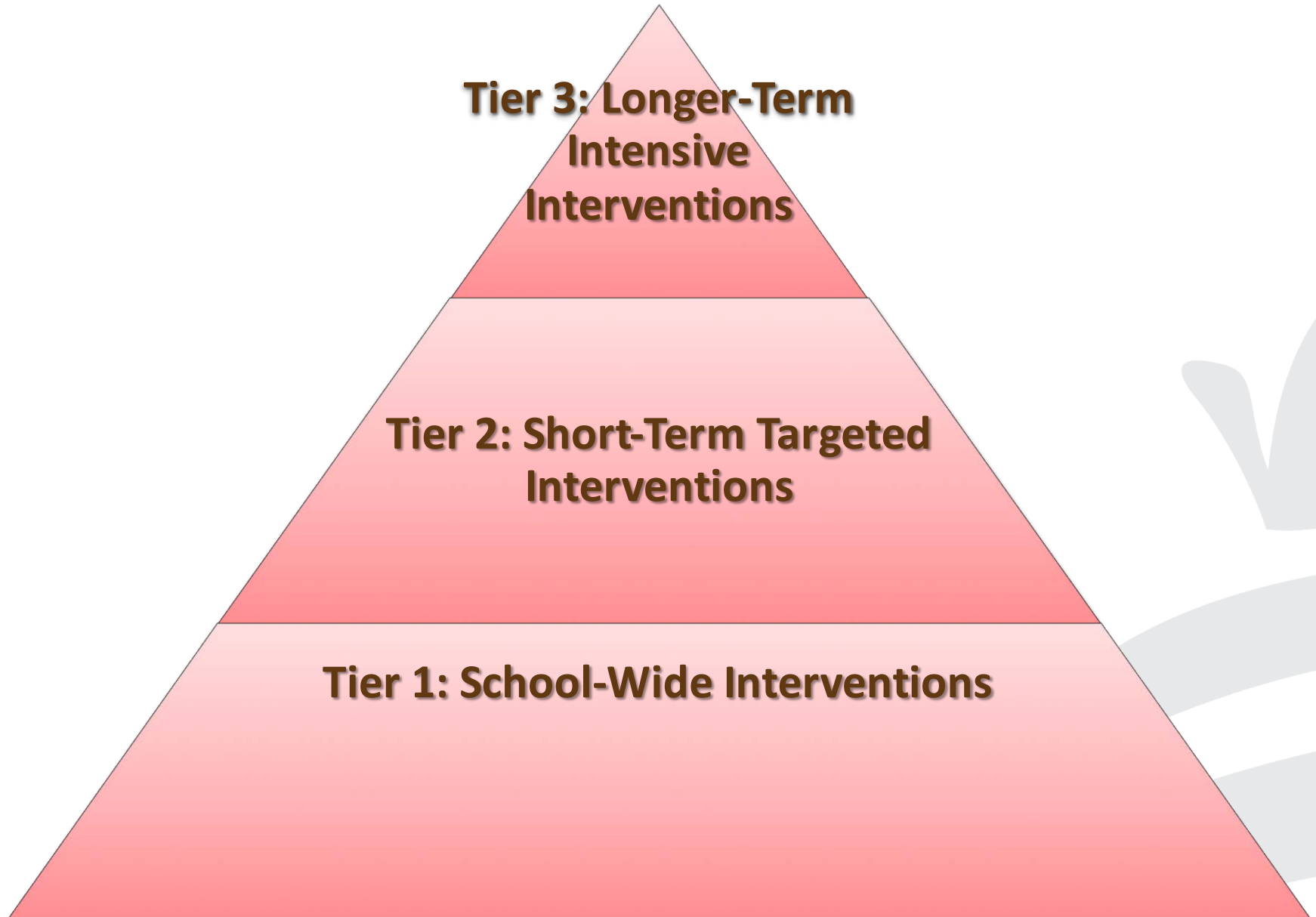
HOW WERE YOUTH ENGAGED IN THE PLANNING FOR THIS SERVICE? ARE THERE OPPORTUNITIES TO FOR YOUTH TO BE INVOLVED IN THE EVALUATION OF THIS SERVICE? IS THIS SERVICE CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE?



Mental health services are built from a positive school climate and delivered in a **tiered intervention** framework.




Mental Health Services by Tier



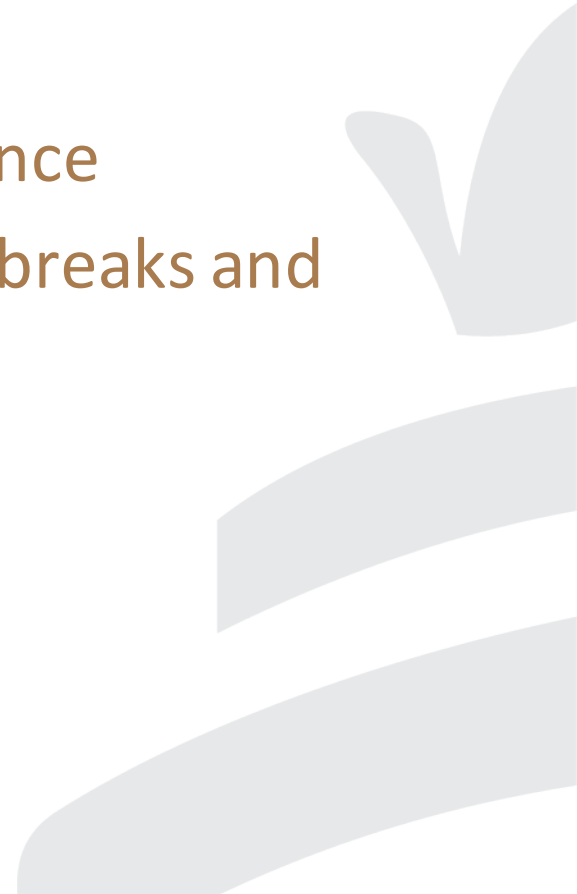
School Climate & Tiered Services

HOW DOES THIS SERVICE CONNECT WITH OVERALL SCHOOL CLIMATE INITIATIVES? CURRICULUM AND CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES? MORE INTENSIVE SERVICES?

Mental health services are leveraged through strong school staff and community provider partnerships.




Why partner with community?

- Access unique and additional funding
 - HIPPA v. FERPA
 - Increase cultural & linguistic competence
 - Continuity of services through school breaks and beyond graduation
 - Link to family services
 - Link to social services
- 

Partnerships

HOW ARE COMMUNITY PROVIDERS CONNECTED WITH THIS SERVICE? HOW DO SCHOOL STAFF WORK WITH COMMUNITY PROVIDERS TO ENSURE CONTINUITY OF CARE?



Mental health **training and consultation** is offered to teachers, administrators, and other school staff.

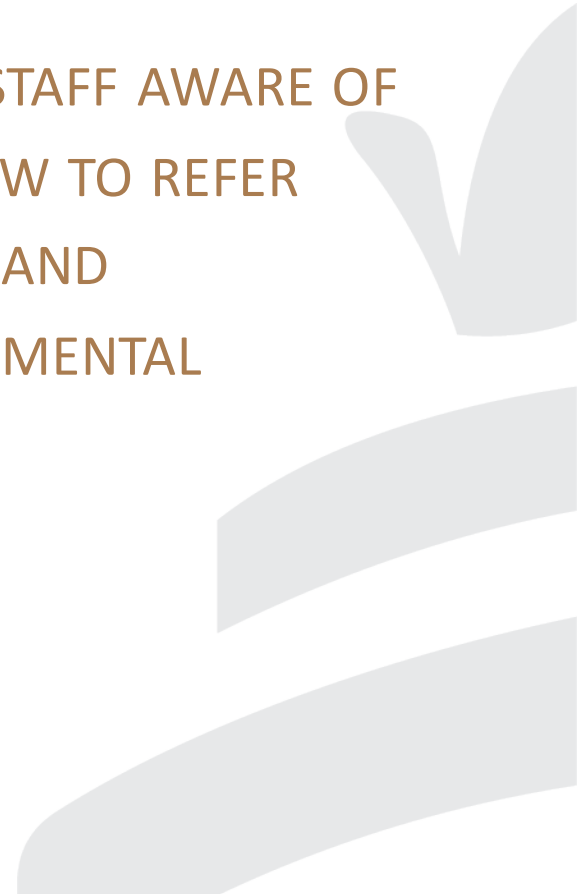


Available Adult Trainings

- Kognito Interactive
 - Eliminating Barriers to Learning
 - Trauma-Informed Schools
 - Youth Mental Health First Aid
 - Typical or Troubled
 - School Climate Trainings: Single School Culture, PBIS, Restorative Practices
- 

Training and Consultation

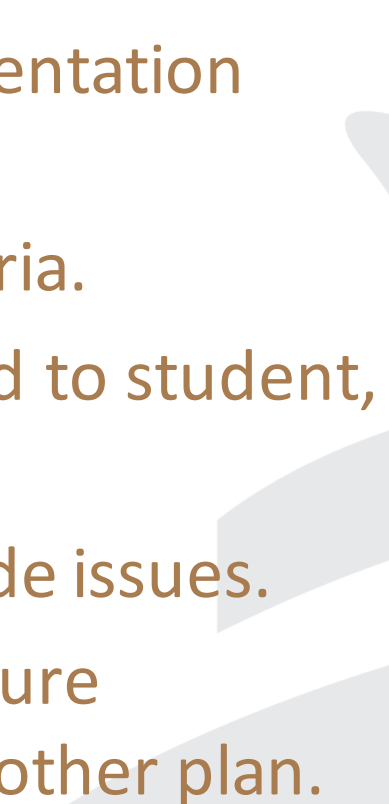
ARE TEACHERS AND OTHER SCHOOL STAFF AWARE OF THE SERVICE? DO THEY KNOW HOW TO REFER STUDENTS? IS TEACHER TRAINING AND CONSULTATION OFFERED AROUND MENTAL HEALTH/SCHOOL CLIMATE?



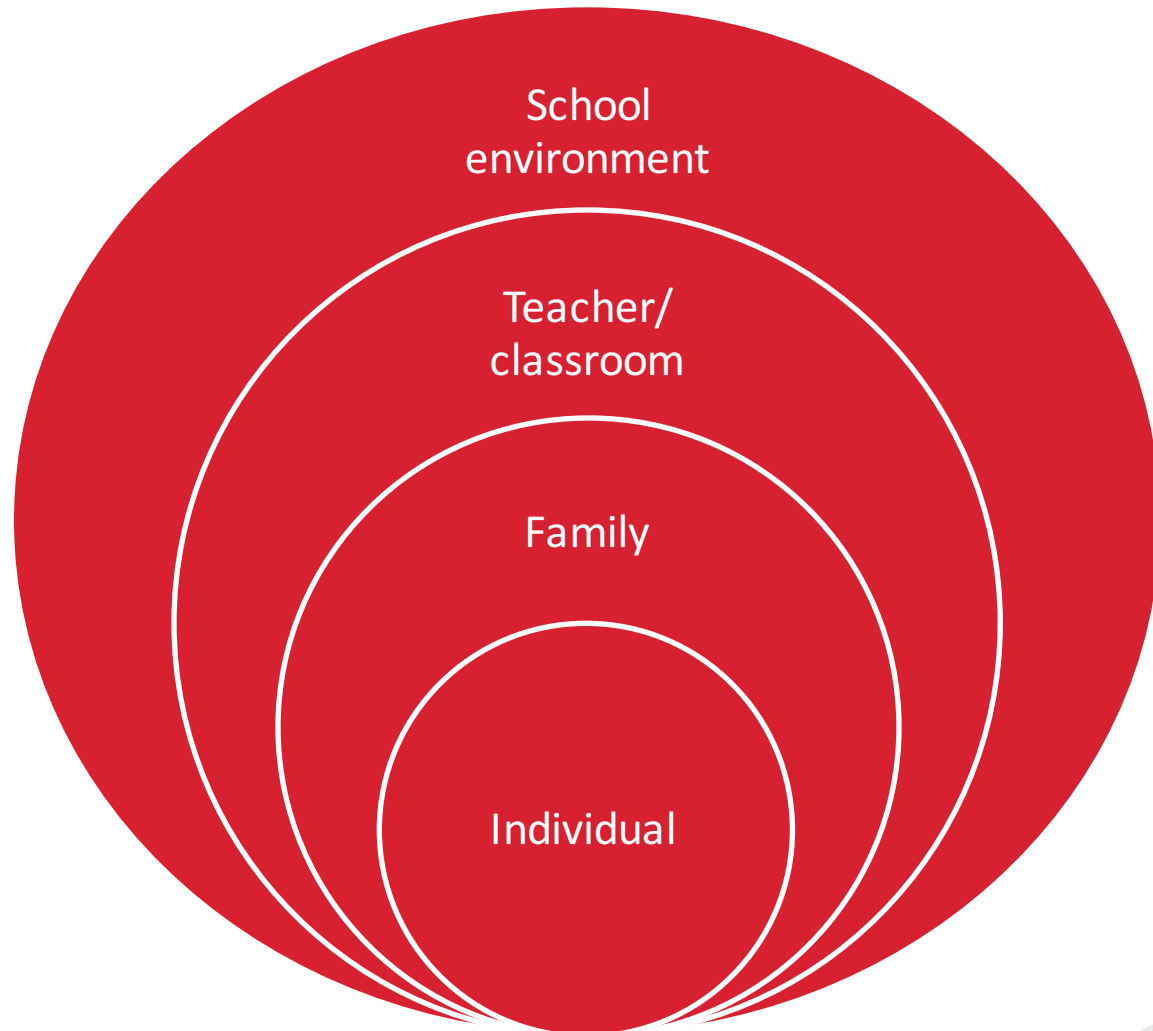
Mental health services
are coordinated through
a **school-site team.**



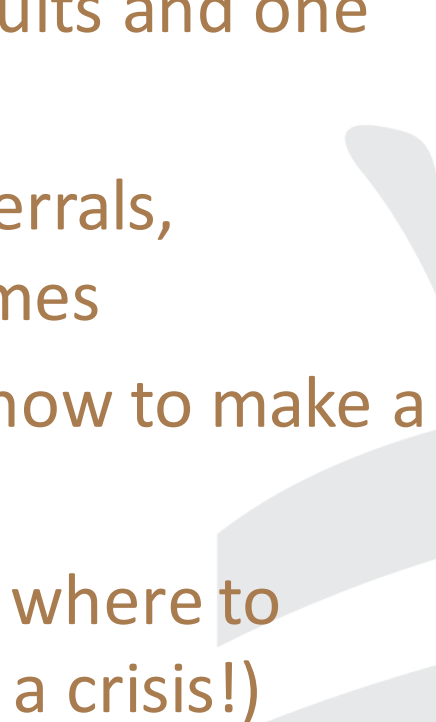
Multi-Disciplinary Teams

- Include school and community-based support, health and mental health staff.
 - Conduct meeting in a case presentation format.
 - Establish confidentiality and documentation procedures.
 - Refer students based on broad criteria.
 - Individualized interventions assigned to student, teacher, family, team members.
 - Carve out time to discuss school-wide issues.
 - Establish follow up processes to ensure interventions worked or to make another plan.
- 

What happens after a student is discussed in SAP?




Referral systems

- Coordinate referrals through one person, program or team
 - Develop at least 2 forms—one for adults and one for youth/self-referral
 - Create a system to track status of referrals, interventions, provider(s) and outcomes
 - Educate everyone on campus about how to make a referral and what happens next
 - Ensure the school community knows where to refer in a crisis (and what constitutes a crisis!)
- 

Coordination of Services

HOW DO STUDENTS ACCESS THIS SERVICE? HOW IS THIS SERVICE COORDINATED ON CAMPUS AND WITH OTHER SUPPORTS AVAILABLE?



*A quick reminder about
making time for self-care...*



Questions?

Thanks for being here today!

Please be sure to sign in to receive copies of the presentation and handouts.

Janine Saunders, jsaunders@schoolhealthcenters.org
(510) 268-1038

Join Us in Sacramento May 5-6, 2016

***Advocating for Equity
in Education & Health Care***



www.schoolhealthcenters.org