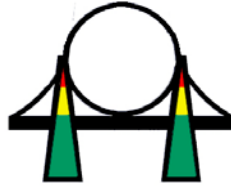


Building Bridges Integrating Mental Health in Schools



Referrals from School to Behavioral Health Care*

Schools, community behavioral health care partners and families will benefit from coordinating efforts on behalf of children's mental health and substance abuse needs. Improving access to services will allow more students and their families to receive interventions that lead to improved behavioral health, which has been found to contribute to improved academic achievement and social-emotional competence.

All 44 schools in Mesa County Valley School District #51 and the Colorado West Regional Mental Health Center in Grand Junction are using the following Referral Protocol for Schools to refer students to community behavioral health services.

The Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health, Colorado Chapter and Grand Junction office along with multiple school personnel, behavioral health staff and families participated in the development of the referral process. It is HIPPA compliant and integrated within Response to Intervention (RTI), a best practice approach adopted by Colorado Department of Education in all of Colorado's public schools.

You are encouraged to adapt this protocol for your school and community mental health center and/or other behavioral health providers to ensure a streamlined and transparent referral process.

This referral from schools is for the assessment and treatment of behavioral health issues. It includes family consent for the school to refer the student and / or family for counseling and/or psychiatric services through the identified community mental health center.

The school and community mental health center need to agree upon a process that may include:

- Identifying dedicated persons to handle requests from schools
- Selecting a dedicated fax machine
- Choosing a goal for response time between referral and family contact
- Estimating response time from the mental health center back to school referral source
- Planning for an evaluation to determine effectiveness and revise as needed

* Behavioral Health refers to both mental health and substance abuse issues

RtI Flowchart

Universal core curriculum, instruction and assessment
Student participates in general classroom with core curriculum aligned with state standards and research-based instructional strategies. Flexible grouping that targets specific skills are included so that the instructional goals of all students can be met. Differentiated instruction and universal screening assessments are in place.

Is the student making adequate academic and/or behavioral progress?

NO

YES

Universal core curriculum, instruction and assessment

Step 1: General Education Teacher(s) **conversation with parents**
Using scripts, check list, standards, screening tools

- Contact parent/guardian—log contacts, **document plan**
- Implement universal interventions, accommodations, modifications
- Anecdotal records kept of student's progress
- CUM file review

INSUFFICIENT PROGRESS

SUFFICIENT PROGRESS

If plan is successful, continue with plan or return to core and continue monitoring student progress.

Step 2: General Education Teacher(s)/PLC (**may include counselor/Psych**)

- Contact parent/guardian—log contacts
- Data-driven dialogue held with colleagues **and parent**, develop plan
- Implement and evaluate effectiveness of plan
- Anecdotal records kept of student's progress

INSUFFICIENT

SUFFICIENT

If plan is successful, continue with plan or return to core and continue monitoring student progress.

Step 3: General Education Teacher(s)/Case Manager/**mental health professional**

- Teacher(s) meet with Case Manager
- Data gathered and reviewed
- Complete recommended documentation and required forms
- **Invite parent (notify, at least)**

Step 4: RtI/FLEX—Instructional Decision-Making Team

- Develop, implement, monitor, evaluate Instructional Decision-Making Plan
- Complete required forms
- Evaluate fidelity of intervention(s)
- Repeat Step 4 with team, as needed
- **May consider CWMH referral (use protocol)**

NOT RESPONDING TO INTERVENTION
AFTER AT LEAST TWO CYCLES

RESPONDING TO INTERVENTION

If plan is successful, continue with plan or return to core and continue monitoring student progress.

Step 5: Instructional Decision-Making Team

Discuss possible special education referral and proceed with eligibility determination if appropriate.