

ARKANSAS

School-Based Mental Health Services & The School Nurse

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SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICES

Creating and Sustaining a Healthy School Culture

- Around 20% of youth present with emotional/behavioral disorder
- Around 10% present experience significant impairment
- Less than 50% receive adequate or any services
- Over 75% of youth who receive services, receive them in schools

Role of School Nurse & Mental Health Services

“School nurses are uniquely qualified to holistically address the mental and emotional needs of students from physical, psychological, and social perspectives.”

(Shannon, Bergen, & Matthews, 2010, p.177)

30% of students who visit the school nurse present with mental health concerns as their primary issue.

School nurses spend 31-38% of their time dealing with mental health problems.

37% of school nurses have a case load of more than 10 students with mental health problems.

(Foster et al., 2005; Stephan, Wissow, & Pichler, 2010 ; Wilson et al., 2008)

Students who visit the school nurse report that physical AND psychosocial reasons play a role in their visit.

Initial Complaint:

Headache (26%)

Infection (17%)

Dizzy or tired (12%)

Stomachache (12%)

Psychosocial Factors:

Not sleeping well (62%)

Stress (47%)

Poor eating (34%)

Depression (31%)

School Problems (25%)

Relationship Problems (20%)

(Schneider, Friedman, & Fisher, 1995)

80% of children with recurrent abdominal pain also have an anxiety disorder and 40% also have depression.

(Campo et al., 2004; Shannon, Bergren, & Matthews, 2010)

Many Nurses Report:

- ▶ Not enough time, too many schools, too many students!
- ▶ Not enough resources or support in my building!
- ▶ I don't know mental health providers who I can refer to and who can help me do this work!
- ▶ I don't know anything about mental health assessment or intervention!

(Stephan, Wissow, & Pichler, 2010; Wilson et al., 2008)

DATA....

- ▶ Among 78 school nurses surveyed at NASN 2010 conference:
 - 31% students present with MH as a primary problem
 - Most frequent problems: anxiety, social skills, inattention, hyperactivity
 - Least frequent problems: Suicidal and homicidal thoughts/behaviors, substance use
- ▶ Limited training reported on how to effectively identify, address/intervene and refer out for MH concerns
- ▶ Perceived competence in MH intervention predicts perceived competence in making appropriate referrals

Questions

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