

M Mental Health / Bullying That Impacts Mental Health

Key findings from the JHACH CHNA:

A top issue for youth at all income levels in St. Petersburg is mental health, which includes bullying that impacts mental health. Mental health (including trauma, anxiety and depression that often goes undiagnosed or untreated, and severe bullying) is a widespread issue.

- 16% of parents report their children experiencing bullying that has impacted mental health.
- One-third of low-income parents who believe their children need mental health services are unable to access such services.
- Behavioral health professionals, educators and community leaders ranked “no access to behavioral health care” as a top issue for children all children.

Outcome-Driven Activities:

A mental health therapist in every school

Placing a mental health therapist in every school in St. Petersburg will provide for greater access to behavioral health resources. A pilot program with Suncoast Center, Inc., places mental health therapists in five of the Transformation Zone schools as a model. High need Title 1 schools will be prioritized.

Require bullying prevention curriculum at every school

While all Pinellas County Schools have access to evidence-based bullying prevention curriculum and programs, some schools have not used it to this point. The proposed solution calls for a policy that requires all schools in St. Petersburg to fully implement one of the district-approved programs. This Community Connector Group can assist district staff in tracking and monitoring implementation of a district-wide bullying prevention program.

Identify and assist isolated students

Research shows that children who are often considered to be “loners” are victims of unstable home environments and can lead to violent behavior.



PROPOSED OBJECTIVES

1. Identify local authority on national level to collaborate with the school district and/or state in establishing or expanding delivery of a level one evidence-based, school-based mental health program to children in every public school in St. Petersburg by 2020.
2. Establish a joint agreement/partnership between the school district and students general health/mental health care providers and/or place a mental health counselor (therapist) in every public school in St. Petersburg by start of the 2019-2020 school year.
3. Submit a detailed plan outlining mental health services (assessment, diagnosis, intervention, treatment and recovery) including, but not limited to bullying, desolation, distress, anxiety, self-awareness, building health relationships, dealing with autism spectrum disorder) to the district school board for approval by, 09/01/19.
4. Establish or adopt a level one evidence-based youth mental health and assistance training program to assist school personnel in identifying and understanding the signs of emotional disturbance, mental illness and substance use disorders.
5. Systematically apply a level one evidence-based bullying prevention in every public school in St. Pete by the start of 2019-2020 school year.