

Mental Health in Schools: Moving Beyond the Emergency

In the wake of the pandemic, student mental health has been called a crisis.

Schools have scrambled to do what they can to address the problem using emergency tactics.

The feds recently awarded about \$95 million across 35 states to increase access to school-based mental health services and “strengthen the pipeline of mental health professionals in high-needs school districts.”

And, as the COVID-19 relief funds disappear, some schools are looking to Medicaid to fund personnel to provide mental health services.

Unfortunately, all efforts that narrowly focus on adding a few more mental health services fall far short of meeting the needs that are present in too many schools.

It is time to redirect some of the energy devoted to emergency tactics so that student/learning support staff can build a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system for addressing learning, behavior, and emotional problems.

Here are some resources for considering how to do this:

> *Rethinking Student and Learning Supports* <https://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/fall22.pdf>

> *Student/Learning Supports: A Brief Guide for Moving in New Directions*
<https://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/briefguide.pdf>

For more in depth presentations, see the following free resources:

> *Addressing Barriers to Learning: In the Classroom and Schoolwide*

> *Improving School Improvement*

> *Embedding Mental Health as Schools Change*

all three can be accessed at

https://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/improving_school_improvement.html

As always, send all comments and questions, as well as requests for resources, TA, and coaching to Ltaylor@ucla.edu .

