

**School Practitioner Community of Practice**  
(A network for sharing & exchange)  
January 12, 2022

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(Scroll down to read about the above and for hotlinks to resources)

**Note:** Go to <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/> for links to other Center resources.

This resource is from the  
Center for MH in Schools & Student/Learning Supports, UCLA

*So please feel free to share with anyone you think might benefit (e.g., forward our resources to individuals and share on listservs and websites).*

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For those who have been forwarded this and want to receive resources directly,  
send an email to [Ltaylor@ucla.edu](mailto:Ltaylor@ucla.edu)

For previous postings of community of practice discussions, see  
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/practitioner.htm>

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**For discussion and interchange:**

**A Personal Request from a Parent: *How Would You Respond?***

*I would like resources for my 13 yr old son. He is in special education with a behavioral diagnosis, emotional disturbance, and other health impairments.*

**What resources do you recommend giving students who want to better understand the problems they are experiencing?**

Currently, we share the following sources for lists of books written for children and youth:

- > Magination Press – <https://www.apa.org/pubs/magination>
- > Scholastic books for children on social and emotional learning, learning disabilities, etc. – <https://www.scholastic.com/parents/school-success/school-life.html>
- > 7 Young Adult Books for Social Emotional Learning (Grades 6-12) from Childhood 101 – <https://childhood101.com/young-adult-books-social-emotional-learning/>
- > 44 Children's Books About Mental Health from the Child Mind Institute – <https://childmind.org/article/best-childrens-books-about-mental-health/>
- > Mental health books for children and teens and their parents – from NAMI – <https://namimainlinepa.org/mental-health-books-for-children-and-teens-and-their-parents/>
- > 12 Kid-Approved Middle Grade Books That Tackle Mental Health – from Brightly <https://www.readbrightly.com/kid-approved-middle-grade-books-mental-health/>

There also is growing interest in using games, apps, and online sites to promote mental health and social/emotional development. For example, see:

- >“*Take This* <https://www.takethis.org/> – This mental health nonprofit focuses on using games to decrease stigma and increase support for mental health.
- >*Common sense education* provides a top picks list of emotional intelligence apps and games <https://www.common sense.org/education/top-picks/emotional-intelligence-apps-and-games> – The listed apps and games are intended to help students with everything from anger management to emotion identification to meditation.
- >*Tech & Learning* <https://www.techlearning.com/how-to/15-sitesapps-for-social-emotional-learning> – Describes 15 sites/apps for social-emotional learning.

### **For discussion and interchange:**

#### **>About Bibliotherapy for Youngsters**

From: *Bibliotherapy for youth and adolescents – School-based application and research*  
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/08893675.2013.764052>

“Bibliotherapy in the elementary, middle, and high-school classroom is used to foster healthy social and emotional growth in children and young adults to develop insight, a deeper understanding of self, solutions to personal problems, development of life skills, or enhanced self-image. The focus of this article is on how bibliotherapy can be used to address students' specific issues ranging from mild behavioral issues to physical and psychosocial conditions....

Why would a teacher choose to use bibliotherapy with their students? Nine potential reasons have been proposed for the use of bibliotherapy including the following:

1. showing an individual that he or she is not the first or only person to encounter such a problem;
2. showing an individual that there is more than one solution to a problem;
3. helping a person discuss a problem more freely;
4. helping an individual plan a constructive course of action to solve a problem;
5. developing an individual's self-concept;
6. relieving emotional or mental pressure;
7. fostering an individual's honest self-appraisal;
8. providing a way for a person to find interests outside of self; and
9. increasing the individual's understanding of human behavior or motivations....”

**Is this topic being discussed in your locale?**

Please let us know so we can share the info widely. Send to [ltaylor@ucla.edu](mailto:ltaylor@ucla.edu)

### **For discussion and interchange:**

#### **>Surgeon General's report on youth mental health: What schools can do** <https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/surgeon-general-youth-mental-health-advisory.pdf>

While headlines in the media framed this report as highlighting a mental health crisis in, its emphasis is on *actions that can prevent and ameliorate problems*.

The report delineates actions for young people; family members and caregivers; educators, school staff, and school districts; health care organizations and health professionals; media organizations, entertainment companies, and journalists; social media, video gaming, and other technology companies; community organizations; funders and foundations; employers; federal, state, local, and tribal governments.

Here is an excerpt from the section on *What Educators, School Staff, and School Districts Can Do*  
“...The experiences children and young people have at school have a major impact on their mental health.

At school, children can learn new knowledge and skills, develop close relationships with peers and supportive adults, and find a sense of purpose, fulfillment, and belonging. They can also find help to manage mental health challenges. On the other hand, children can also have highly negative experiences at school, such as being bullied, facing academic stress, or missing out on educational opportunities (for example, due to under-resourced schools). Mental health challenges can reveal themselves in a variety of ways at school, such as in a student having trouble concentrating in class, being withdrawn, acting out, or struggling to make friends. In light of these factors, below are recommendations for how schools, educators, and staff can support the mental health of all students:

- >Create positive, safe, and affirming school environments. This could include developing and enforcing anti-bullying policies, training students and staff on how to prevent harm ...
- >Expand social and emotional learning programs and other evidence-based approaches that promote healthy development ...
- >Learn how to recognize signs of changes in mental and physical health among students, including trauma and behavior changes ...
- >Provide a continuum of supports to meet student mental health needs, including evidence-based prevention practices and trauma-informed mental health care. Tiered supports should include coordination mechanisms to get students the right care at the right time ...
- >Expand the school-based mental health workforce. This includes using federal, state, and local resources to hire and train additional staff, such as school counselors, nurses, social workers, and school psychologists, including dedicated staff to support students with disabilities ...
- >Support the mental health of all school personnel. Opportunities include establishing realistic workloads and student-to-staff ratios, providing competitive wages and benefits (including health insurance with affordable mental health coverage), regularly assessing staff well-being, and integrating wellness into professional development ...
- >Promote enrolling and retaining eligible children in Medicaid, CHIP, or a Marketplace plan, so that children have health coverage that includes behavioral health services ...
- >Protect and prioritize students with higher needs and those at higher risk of mental health challenges, such as students with disabilities, personal or family mental health challenges, or other risk factors (e.g., adverse childhood experiences, trauma, poverty) ...”

### **Center Comments about the Report to Add to the Discussion:**

Schools clearly can make a major contribution to mental health. For this to happen, however, the work must be framed as doing much more than the current emphasis on enhancing access to mental health services and adding social emotional learning to the curriculum. The efforts must be embedded into a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system for addressing barriers to learning and teaching, and the system must be prioritized as a primary and essential component of school improvement policy and practice.

See our recent discussion in

- >*Schools and Mental Health: A Position Statement*  
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/fall2021.pdf> .

#### **Are mental health concerns being discussed in your locale?**

If so, what's being discussed?

If not, why not?

Please let us know what's happening so we can share the info widely.

Send to [ltaylor@ucla.edu](mailto:ltaylor@ucla.edu)

## **For discussion and interchange:**

### **>About multitiered system of supports/response to intervention (MTSS/RtI)**

From: *Urban Secondary School Administrators and Faculty Perceptions of Multitiered System of Supports/Response to Intervention* <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/01926365211060798>

"Multitiered System of Supports promises a school-wide early warning system, high-quality instruction, and evidence-based interventions. However, research has focused mainly on the elementary level. This study examined the beliefs and perceptions of over 300 administrators and teachers currently implementing Multitiered System of Supports in secondary schools using survey research. ...

This study provided an exploration of the secondary administrators, professional support staff (social workers, guidance counselors, school psychologists), general and special education teachers' Perceptions of Multitiered System of Supports/Response to Intervention Beliefs, Multitiered System of Supports/Response to Intervention Skills, and Practices in a large urban school district. ...

In general, middle and high school special education teachers and administrators perceive their Multitiered System of Supports/Response to Intervention beliefs, skills, and practices to be more adept than their general education, guidance counselors, and school psychologists. Some school districts across the country have school psychologists as the leads in this federal mandate.... Professional guidance counselors and specifically school psychologists in large urban districts must become proactive collaborators and leaders in the problem-solving process at the secondary level, not just the elementary level.

Secondary principals and central office administration may want to consider incorporating the definition of the school psychologist's role as a member of the problem-solving team and include approaches to problem-solving appropriate strategies and interventions to meet the needs of struggling students throughout their job descriptions.

From the current study data, general education teachers do not consider themselves interventionists but instead consider themselves content specialists. To mitigate this barrier, administrators, and those in charge of designing and providing professional development should rethink how to deliver Multitiered System of Supports/Response to Intervention professional development. Small group intervention instruction modeling with the teacher's students would be the best recommendation. For example, administrators may recommend that professional development be directly brought to the teacher and students in the classroom....

Furthermore, it would make sense to have the secondary special education teachers provide that modeling to the secondary general education teachers. For example, this could be implemented through co-teaching models where special and general education teachers are paired in inclusive general education settings. This co-teaching model would expose general education teachers to universal design for learning, differentiation and explicit instruction, and high leverage practices, as well as the use of evidence-based interventions. This reconfiguration of content-equivalent, separate class special education teachers would provide positive results for all students and, most importantly, academic, and behaviorally struggling students and students grappling with mental health concerns. Based on the current study, many secondary general education teachers, particularly those with several years in the education system, need to witness students being successful when Multitiered System of Supports/Response to Intervention is implemented with fidelity to become advocates of the Multitiered System of Supports/Response to Intervention framework as a way of teaching. ...

The special and general education teacher-preparation professors could model effective collaboration. Pre-service teachers and beginning administrators should be exposed to data and related problem-solving case studies early in their coursework. ...

Lastly, policy implications include requiring an Multitiered System of Supports/Response to Intervention endorsement for teachers and administrators, ...

No longer is it acceptable to conclude that the problem lies with the middle or high school student; secondary educators and administrators must be accountable for all aspects of the students' learning. Administrators should understand the urgency of this initiative, assist with removing the secondary school structure barriers, and facilitate activities to enhance trust among different staff positions.

## Center Comments about MTSS to Add to the Discussion:

**Building on MTSS:** The COVID-19 pandemic and growing concerns about social justice mark a turning point for how schools, families, and communities address student and learning supports. Those adopting the prevailing MTSS framework have made a start, as have the initiatives for community schools, integrated student supports, and school-based health centers. Given the growing challenges, however, SEAs and LEAs need to develop and implement a more transformative approach to addressing barriers to learning and teaching and reengaging disconnected students. The multi-tier model can readily be expanded to guide development of a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of student/learning supports.

Strategically, given limited resources, developing a comprehensive system involves deploying, redeploying, and weaving together all available school and community resources used for student and learning supports to equitably strengthen interventions and fill critical gaps. Our prototype for unifying and developing a comprehensive and equitable system to address barriers and reengage students not only stresses a full continuum of integrated intervention subsystems that interweaves school-community/home resources, it organizes classroom and schoolwide efforts into a circumscribed set of student/learning supports domains (see references below).

A system of student and learning supports requires more than conceiving a continuum of intervention: it is necessary in addition to organize interventions cohesively into a circumscribed set of well-designed and delimited domains that reflect a school's daily efforts to provide student and learning supports in the classroom and schoolwide.

### A Few Related Resources from the Center

- Adelman, H., & Taylor, L. (2016). *Rethinking MTSS to better address barriers to learning*. Center for Mental Health in Schools at UCLA. <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/essamtss.pdf>
- Adelman, H. & Taylor, L. (2017). *MTSS: Strengths and weaknesses*. Center for Mental Health in Schools at UCLA. <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/mtss.pdf>
- Adelman, H.S. & Taylor, L. (2017). *Addressing barriers to learning: In the classroom and schoolwide*. Los Angeles: Center for MH in Schools & Student/Learning Supports at UCLA. [http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/improving\\_school\\_improvement.html](http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/improving_school_improvement.html)
- Adelman, H.S. & Taylor, L. (2020). *Restructuring California schools to address barriers to learning and teaching in the COVID 19 context and beyond*. Palo Alto: PACE. <https://edpolicyinca.org/publications/restructuring-california-schools-address-barriers-learning-and-teaching-covid-19>

### Is the idea of transforming student/learning supports being discussed in your locale?

If so, what's being discussed?  
If not, why not?

Please let us know what's happening so we can share the info widely.  
Send to [ltaylor@ucla.edu](mailto:ltaylor@ucla.edu)

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For information about the

### National Initiative for Transforming Student and Learning Supports

go to <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newinitiative.html>

Equity of opportunity is fundamental to enabling civil rights; transforming student and learning supports is fundamental to promoting whole child development, advancing social justice, and enhancing learning and a positive school climate.

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## >Links to a few other relevant shared resources

Embedding Mental Health into School Improvement Policy and Practice  
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/embedding.pdf>

Countering LD and ADHD False Positive Diagnoses: Another Pandemic Challenge  
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/winter2022.pdf>

Moving Upstream to Improve Children's Mental Health Through Community and Policy Change.  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10488-019-01001-5>

How to Help Families and Staff Build Resilience During the COVID-19 Outbreak  
<https://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/how-to-help-families-and-staff-build-resilience-during-the-covid-19-outbreak/>

Where Do We Go Next? Youth Insights on the High School Experience During a Year of Historic Upheaval. America's Promise Alliance and Research for Action.  
<https://www.researchforaction.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/where-do-we-go-next.pdf>

National Trends in Mental Health Care for US Adolescents  
<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapsychiatry/fullarticle/2763444>

Supportive Relationships and Active Skill-Building Strengthen the Foundations of Resilience  
<http://www.developingchild.harvard.edu>

When Kids Refuse to Go to School  
[https://childmind.org/article/when-kids-refuse-to-go-to-school/?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=newsletter&utm\\_campaign=publ\\_ed\\_nl\\_2022-01-04&utm\\_content=cta2\\_when-kids-refuse-to-go-to-school](https://childmind.org/article/when-kids-refuse-to-go-to-school/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=newsletter&utm_campaign=publ_ed_nl_2022-01-04&utm_content=cta2_when-kids-refuse-to-go-to-school)

COVID-19, Remote Learning, and Students' Social-Emotional Development  
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/socemo.pdf>

International Students and the Added Challenges of the COVID-19 Pandemic  
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/international.pdf>

Racial Diversity in Schools: Some of the Benefits <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/div.pdf>

A Look at China's Efforts to Promote Education Equity and Reduce Academic Pressure on Students and Their Families <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/chinajin.pdf>

## A Few Upcoming Webinars

For links to the following and for more webinars, go to the Center's Links to Upcoming/Archived Webcasts/Podcasts – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/webcast.htm>

1/12 What Matters to K-12 Job Seekers and Educators Now <https://www.edweek.org/events/webinars>

1/12 Transitioning Back to School During COVID-19 for Anxious Youth

1/13 Cultivating Caring Communities and Students' Belonging: Best Practices for Engaging and Supporting Underrepresented Student Populations

1/13 Understanding Special Education : IDEA - The Big Picture

1/13 Student centered learning <https://www.edelements.com/webinars>

1/13 Assessing Equity in Your Student Activities

1/13 Examining the Evidence: What We're Learning From the Field About Implementing High-Dosage Tutoring Programs <https://www.edweek.org/events/webinars>

1/15 Tech tools for school counselors

1/18 Working Smarter, Not Harder with Data <https://www.edweek.org/events/webinars>

1/19 Strategies, Ideas and Lessons for Early Career Principals to be Successful

- 1/20 Stronger Together: Integrating Social and Emotional Supports in an Equity-Based MTSS
- 1/20 Understanding Special Education : IDEA - The Big Picture
- 1/20 Creating a Safe School and Community Environment for Youth
- 1/20 The Nuts & Bolts of Sustainability: Essentials for the Longevity of School Mental Health Initiatives
- 1/24 Best Practices For Youth Engagement
- 1/25 Don't Get Caught on the Chopping Block! Become Indispensable to Your School District
- 1/27 Understanding Special Education : IDEA - The Big Picture
- 1/27 Supporting the Education of Unaccompanied Students Experiencing Homelessness
- Webinar recording: Unpacking the Impacts of Structural Racism on Youth  
<https://preventioninstitute.us17.list-manage.com/track/click?u=5f4bf5a36bd9f72789255d49a&id=17f472fea9&e=b6757fd9d7>



**Invitation to Listserv Participants:**

Everyone has a stake in the future of public education. This is a critical time for action. Send this resource on to others. Think about sharing with the growing number who are receiving it. AND Let us know about what we should be including.

Send to [Ltaylor@ucla.edu](mailto:Ltaylor@ucla.edu)

**THE MORE FOLKS SHARE, THE MORE USEFUL AND INTERESTING THIS RESOURCE BECOMES!**

**For new sign-ups – email [Ltaylor@ucla.edu](mailto:Ltaylor@ucla.edu)**

**Also send resources ideas, requests, comments, and experiences for sharing.**

**We post a broad range of issues and responses to the Net Exchange on our website at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newnetexchange.htm> and on Facebook (access from the Center’s home page <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/>)**