

ASSOCIATION OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DISTRICTS (AESD) STATEWIDE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (BH-SAP)

The **Washington State Behavioral Health Student Assistance Program (BH-SAP)** aims to expand school-based behavioral health services statewide. BH-SAP expands behavioral health support systems **through a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) framework** with increased staffing capacity at regional and local levels. Originally referred to as the Behavioral Health COVID Response Project and piloted with federal ESSER relief funding, the BH-SAP is now supported through a strategic investment of state funds and strives to diffuse this resource via regional and local capacity building for future sustainability.

EXPANDING ACCESS AND REACH



9
ESDs



63
Districts



100
Schools



72
Student Assistance
Professionals



2,703
Students received
intervention

Tier 1 Spotlight *Tier 1 Services are provided to the whole school or all students at specific grade levels. When evidence-based practices are implemented with fidelity, Tier 1 supports meet the needs of 80% or more of students.*

1,507 Awareness
Events across **60**
districts

This year's Statewide Awareness Campaigns included: *Suicide Prevention, Bullying Prevention, Substance Use Prevention, and Mental Wellness*

56 Behavioral Health
Leadership Clubs

SAPs coordinate peer leadership or behavioral health promotion clubs to encourage youth engagement, empowerment, and peer leadership.

367 evidence-based
lessons with **2,260**
students

Targeted grade levels and classrooms received the following curricula: *21st Century Skills Academy, Character Strong, Friends for Life, Kelso's Choices, Life Skills, ReThink Ed, Second Step, teen Mental Health First Aid, and The Know.*

Tier 2 Spotlight *Tier 2 Services typically consist of group-based interventions provided to students who are at risk. When evidence-based practices are implemented with fidelity, Tier 1 and 2 meet the needs of 90% or more of students.*

302 Groups conducted
with **1,394** students

The most common group was *TRAILS to Wellness "Coping with COVID"* (n=152 with 722 students). Built to address the heightened levels of stress, anxiety, and social isolation, this programming enables school mental health professionals to provide their students with a range of effective coping and self-care skills.

IMPACT ON STUDENTS AND SCHOOLS

School Partners overwhelmingly (99%) reported that having a **Student Assistance Professional (SAP)** available in their school was **very important or of the highest importance**. 99% reported services were **helpful for students and** 93% believe their school(s) **improved the ability to respond effectively** to students' behavioral health needs because of this program. 90% agree the SAP services **increased students' self-regulation and social skills** and the program **positively influenced school climate**.

In just one of many positive accolades received, a school partner shared how SAPs address barriers to improve school engagement: *“Several students have made connections with our SAP that have been influential in their academic progress and social emotional well-being. These were students who weren't coming to school at all, nor did they see a purpose beyond their current struggles. Our SAP has been able to give students strategies for self-awareness and regulation, given them confidence and a person in our building that they trust.”*

Marked improvements for students with existing behavior problems:

74% decreased arrests (N=43)

66% decreased physical fighting (N=308) and
69% decreased hitting/hurting others (N=375)

65% decreased suspensions (N=335) and 57%
decreased being in trouble at school (N=873)

Elevated help-seeking and self-regulation:

47% of all students gained healthy strategies to
calm down when experiencing negative
emotions

44% improved help-seeking abilities

35% gained trusted adult (“I have at least one
adult at school I can confide in”)

High satisfaction with services:

96% of students reported the program was
somewhat or very helpful

95% reported being happy they participated

80% of students with low school attendance
reported being more likely to attend school

Large reductions in substance use for those who used at baseline:

88% decreased prescription misuse (N=41) and
83% decreased other drug/substance use (N=46)

70% decreased tobacco use (N=122) and 53%
decreased e-cigarette use (N=461)

67% decreased excessive alcohol drinking (N=136)
and **62%** decreased any drinking (N=269)

Improved mental and emotional wellness:

43% of students lowered anxiety symptoms
(“can't stop or control my worrying”).

41% lowered depression symptoms (“feel
unhappy, sad, or depressed”).

38% increased self-worth (reduced feeling
“worthless or inferior”).



FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

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