Communitywide Mental Health Education

Webinar Presenter: Cassie Poncelow
Webinar Date: April 5, 2018

Learning outcomes:

• Identify resources you can partner with in the community.
• Actualize a community mental health event that fits your population.
Mental Health Matters

- Community wide Mental Health event held originally in December 2015 and now happening annually in Poudre School District.

- Conference format with 30 breakout sessions an average of 400 attendees.
Poudre High School

February 2015 – November 2015
• Daughter of PHS Teacher drowns
• Junior student killed by a train
• Freshman student killed in an accident
• Sophomore student dies of illness
• Senior student hits and kills cyclist
• Brother of Senior student dies in an accident
• Major suicide attempt at school
• Daughter of teacher attempts suicide and is hospitalized for several weeks
• Daughter of teacher attempts suicide
• Two 11-year old students in PSD commit suicide

“I feel like Poudre High School is cursed.”
– PHS Teacher

How we arrived at MHM
• PHS Ambassadors – role in Mental Health Education and Climate and Culture building
• PSD Peer Summit
• PHS Mental Health Team conversation
PHS Ambassadors

• 50 Upperclassmen who mentor all PHS Freshmen and teach a 14-week curriculum on topics such as goal setting, diversity, LGBTQ+ acceptance, teen dating violence, sexual assault and suicide prevention.
• Support overall building culture and climate.

PSD Peer Summit

• Annual Peer/Ambassador event for all PSD comprehensive high schools
• History of the Peer Summit
• Shift to Mental Health education
From Stanford’s d.School and IDEO Design Firm

Mental Health Matters Logistics

- Soliciting presenters and developing a list of topics
- Developing a model
- Marketing and community connections
- Role of Ambassadors
- Role of School Counselors/District Staff
- Support for Spanish Speaking families
Share Out

What Mental Health issues are you seeing parents and teachers needing additional resources on?

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Share Out

What are some community resources that you might be able to tap into to support this type of idea?
Feedback and Data

- Feedback forms collected included session feedback, demographic information and topic suggestions for future MHM events
- 12 sessions in Spanish with 60 Spanish-speaking families in attendance
- 95% of attendees attended all 3 sessions
Feedback and Data

- 80% of attendees were not affiliated with PHS but were from across the district including Greeley, St. Vrain, Thompson Valley and North Denver
- Approx. 60% parents, 20% educators and 20% community members
- 87% of presentations scored a “5” on the “Overall Rating of this Session”
Mental Health Matters Feedback

• “I really appreciated how organized it all was. It was so nice to be greeted by student ambassadors as we came in, the signage for where rooms were and schedules were evident throughout the hallways, the students were posted everywhere to be of such great assistance, and it seemed like everything ran very smoothly transitioning from one workshop to the next.” I attended 3 sessions and all were excellent. – Community Health Provider

• “What a gift to the community last evening! Thank you for your time, caring thoughts and efforts towards putting on an excellent, **much needed**, informative evening!” – Middle School Parent

• “What I loved about tonight’s MHM event was being together with all the people in PSD and Fort Collins whom believe in mental health and work to support it every day. As a MH provider, the collective gathering of colleagues was powerful and felt very celebratory. Thank you!!” – District Mental Health Provider

Essentials

• Limit the number of sessions.
• Consider offering some sessions twice or blocked sessions for sessions that might be longer.
• Consider if CEUs or Professional Development credits might be available through your district.
• Minimal cost for the event:
  • Copies, name tags, table signs
  • Presenter Gift Bags (water, granola bar, mints, PHS item, thank you card)
  • Cookies and coffee (donated)
What’s Next for Mental Health Matters

• Created a Poudre School District Mental Health Matters Team, now supported by School Health Professionals Grant from the state
• Hosted events annually – recent events have also included a Resource Fair and Childcare
• Discussions about how to expand to support elementary educators and parents

Questions?