



Ohio Department of
Mental Health

LEGISLATIVE FORUM ON MENTAL HEALTH AND SCHOOL SUCCESS

CREATING A SHARED AGENDA

OCT. 9, 2003



RECOMMENDATIONS

A Statewide Effort Should Be Undertaken in Ohio to Disseminate Knowledge About Links Between Mental Health and School Success and the Importance of School-Based Mental Health (SBMH) Services.

- Reduce stigma for children in Ohio who need mental health services.
- Promote a better understanding of children's mental health needs, the risks of suicide, and mental health barriers to learning.
- Educate school personnel in Ohio (board members, administrators, teachers, and other staff) about the impact of children's mental health concerns on academic performance and school success.
- Educate the public in Ohio about the need for SBMH services.

The Educational and Mental Health Systems in Ohio Must Challenge Existing Ideas and Practices of "Traditional" Education and Mental Health Services.

- Identify and serve children in Ohio with mental health needs early, not late. Consider school-based screening for behavioral disorders.
- Provide better training for educators, mental health providers, and families, emphasizing mental health and school success.
- Improve availability of and access to SBMH services for all children in Ohio who need care.
- Improve quality and community-relevance of mental health efforts in Ohio's schools.
- Encourage schools to incorporate awareness of mental health in the local health education curriculum for all children (K-12th grade).
- Identify funding and policy barriers that interfere with children's mental health service delivery and with mental health—education collaboration.
- Increase collaboration between education, mental health, and alcohol and drug prevention/treatment at the state and local levels.

Educators, Mental Health Professionals and Families in Ohio Should Work Together to Shape and Implement Policies and Practices That Comprehensively Address Children's Well-being.

- Increase family involvement in school mental health and educational programs in Ohio, including policy making on the state and regional levels.
- Empower and support parents to be involved, in partnership with the schools and mental health providers, in promoting the mental health and school success of their children.
- Actively encourage parent involvement in advocacy and support groups.
- Actively solicit and appreciate student input in program planning.
- Improve collaboration between SBMH services and community-based services in Ohio.