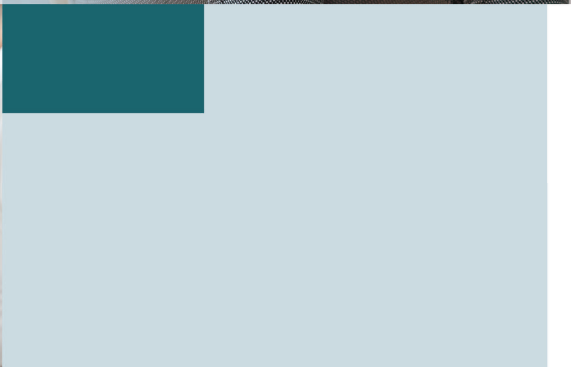
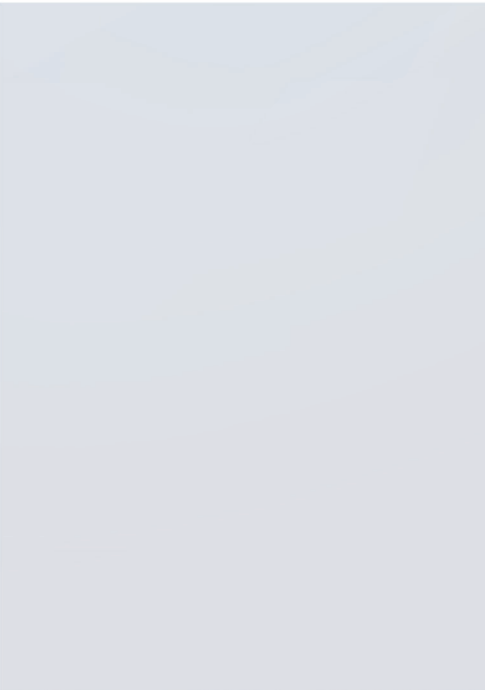


Impact of School-Based Counseling in Marathon County

2017 - 2018



**FACILITATED BY:
THE MARATHON COUNTY
SCHOOL-BASED COUNSELING
CONSORTIUM (MCS-BCC)**

School-based counseling is working in Marathon County.

The Marathon County School-Based Counseling Consortium (MCS-BCC) comprises nonprofit and for-profit mental health clinics, public school districts, and community organizations. The Consortium has been an integral facilitator of change in providing on-site mental health counseling to students in all Marathon County public school districts.

In addition to offering on-site mental health counseling to students, the MCS-BCC trains school district staff on mental health issues and strategies — and offers education for parents and youth about mental health issues and resources. Payments for mental health counseling can be billed through insurance plans, or other arrangements can be made.

By March 2018, local mental health clinics had provided access to mental health services in every public school in Marathon County.



Good mental health is a *state of balance* in our thoughts, emotions and behaviors.

What do students think?

During the 2017-2018 school year, 213 students were reported to be receiving on-site mental health counseling. This document reports students' responses to a survey about the effectiveness of their counseling. It also provides important insight and information about how we all can support positive mental health in our youth.

Demographics*

GENDER

- 61% MALE
- 38% FEMALE
- 1% OTHER

GRADE

- 36.5% KINDERGARTEN - 3RD GRADE
- 27.8% 4TH - 5TH GRADE
- 15.7% 6TH - 8TH GRADE
- 20.0% 9TH - 12TH GRADE

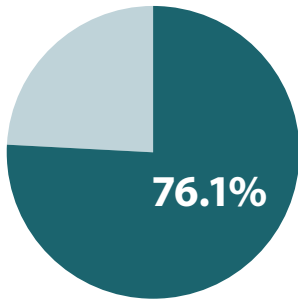
*The survey includes 115 respondents.

MENTAL HEALTH CLINICS CURRENTLY PARTICIPATING

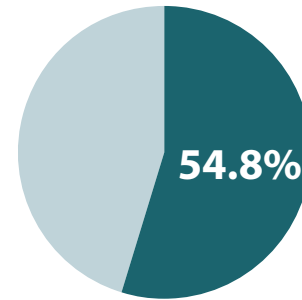
- The Achieve Center
- Bridge Community Health Clinic
- The Caring Tree
- The Center for Human Development
- The Centre for Wellbeing
- Charis Counseling
- Children's Hospital of Wisconsin – Community Services
- Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Consulting
- Compass Counseling
- Elmergreen Associates
- North Central Health Care
- Peaceful Solutions Counseling

K-3rd grade students tell us that on-site mental health counseling helps them.

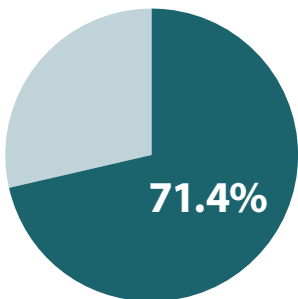
Percentage of students who reported feeling better now than they did before counseling.



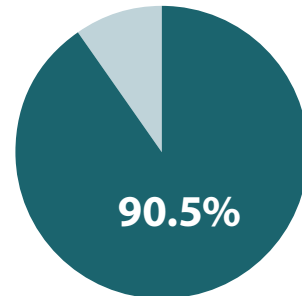
Percentage of students who reported that counseling is helping them with their peers.



Percentage of students who reported that counseling is helping them with their family.



Percentage of students who reported that if they needed similar help, they would feel comfortable going back to their counselor.



“My counselor teaches me how to act around bullies.”



What did students in kindergarten through 3rd grade find most helpful about counseling?

“We played games and did fun things which made me feel good.”

“Helping me be nice.”

“He wasn’t mean to me.”

“She teaches me how to act around bullies.”

“Talking about my feelings.”

“Helping me with problems at home, school or other places.”

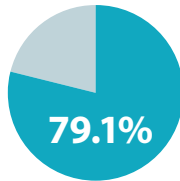
“Getting along with my brother.”

“My behavior. I don’t take pills anymore.”

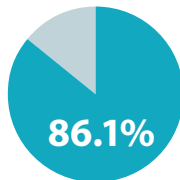
Most 4th-12th grade students in counseling report positive changes.



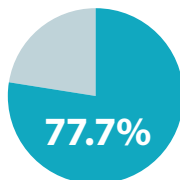
Percentage of students who reported making progress on their goals.



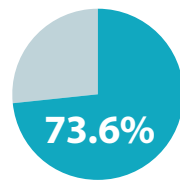
Percentage of students who reported that they have learned to better communicate their thoughts and feelings.



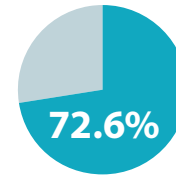
Percentage of students who reported that counseling is helping them do better in school.



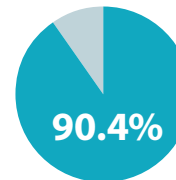
Percentage of students who reported that counseling is helping them with their family.



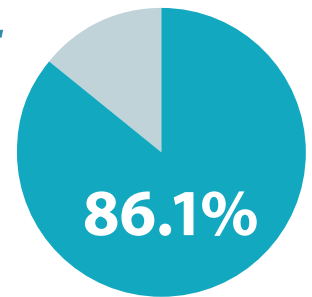
Percentage of students who reported that counseling is helping them with their peers.



Percentage of students who reported that if they needed similar help, they would feel comfortable going back to their counselor.



Percentage of students who reported that ***they feel better about their life now*** than before counseling.



What did students in Grades 4-12 find most helpful about school-based counseling?

"It helped with my grades."

"He helped me with my anger."

"Being able to open up."

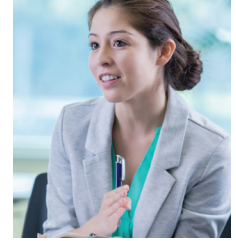
"She taught me how to use mindfulness to escape my mind and deal with my anxiety."

"I have gotten better at not cutting and biting."

"Being able to just sit down and talk to someone without judgment."

"Gave me someone outside of my peers to talk to and get some advice that I wasn't always getting from friends and family."

COUNSELORS' OBSERVATIONS



The **MOST COMMON** concerns counselors see are:

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Family/parent issues including parental divorce/separation
- Friend issues including bullying
- Trauma (sexual, verbal and physical)

WARNING SIGNS

What are some of the warning signs of mental health concerns that family members and friends should watch for?

- Withdrawn, spending more time alone, isolation
- Decreased interest in activities they once enjoyed, low motivation
- Sudden changes in behavior/dress/friendships/feelings, eating and sleeping habits
- Anger, irritability, outbursts or irrational behavior that is out of character
- Sudden drop in grades
- Evidence of self-harm, self-cutting, suicidal comments
- Impulsivity
- Overly tearful, sadness that does not seem to go away
- High level of fear/worry/anxiety that go beyond what is typical for their developmental age
- Increased negative behaviors (attention-seeking)
- Poor hygiene
- Chronic peer/social conflicts
- Vomiting unrelated to illness
- Difficulty with concentration and attention, problems with short term memory

What can parents, teachers, and community members do to help support positive mental health in our youth?

1. Spend time daily with your child (away from technology). Ask each child how their day was. Provide positive affirmations and interactions.
2. Don't try to solve problems for your children. Instead, assist them in developing a plan to fix problems by themselves.
3. Set limits and maintain appropriate consequences when necessary.
4. Be a good listener without judging. Keep shared information private unless there is a need to share with another concerned adult. However, tell the child who you are going to tell and why.
5. Work to gain the child's cooperation in seeking treatment. It's very important for parents to be supportive of counseling. Parental involvement helps treatment to be successful. Mental health issues are not a failure of the child or parents. It is a health issue that needs to be supported and addressed like any other health issue.
6. Talk to your child or student about their feelings. If you believe something is wrong or "off" bring it up to them. Don't ignore or hide the issue.
7. Talk to the school counselor if you have concerns about changes in your child's behavior. Connect with teachers, coaches, and activities directors to help you check on your child's behavior. Help your child identify at least one positive adult in their school that they can talk to and trust.
8. Keep up with regular doctor appointments.
9. Find out more. There are many websites and other resources with good information about children and mental health. We have highlighted a few on the back page.

Where can you get more information?

BOOKS

- *The Connected Child* by Karyn Purvis
- *Dinosaurs Divorce: A Guide for Changing Families* by Laurene Krasny Brown and Marc Brown
- *Don't Rant and Rave on Wednesdays! The Children's Anger-Control Book* by Adolph Moser, Ed.D.
- *Stress Can Really Get on Your Nerves!* by Trevor Romain and Elizabeth Verdick
- *My Parents Are Divorced, Too: A Book for Kids by Kids* by Melanie, Annie and Steven Ford as told to Jan Blackstone-Ford

WEBSITES

<https://childmind.org/guide/parents-guide-getting-good-care-2/>

<https://www.cdc.gov/childrensmentalhealth/index.html>

<http://www.kidsmentalhealth.org/children.wi.gov/Pages/Home.aspx>

<http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/recognizing-mental-health-problems-children>

<http://www.acmh-mi.org/>

LOCAL RESOURCES

Call 211 to obtain United Way's 211 mental health informational packet.

How to participate in Marathon County's school-based counseling program.

If you would like to explore therapy services at school for a child, please contact the student's school counselor or the student's teacher.

He or she can refer the student to an on-site licensed mental health counselor. Parents/guardians will be notified to give permission to initiate services by completing a "Release of Information" form. The "Release of Information" form lets the child's therapist talk to school staff and share information.

School-Based Mental Health Counseling is Good for Everyone

YOUTH

Your mental health matters, and it's okay to ask for help. Life is hard, from homework and peer problems to stress at home. Talking to a person whose job it is to understand feelings and worries can help you feel better.

PARENTS

Good mental health in your child allows them to feel good about life and supports their growth and development. By using therapists in the schools, you cut down on travel and missed work/missed school, saving time and money.

STAFF

Students need coping skills no matter what they are dealing with. These skills can come from therapy and aid in positive classroom behaviors and social development. You can refer students to therapy and participate in staff trainings to better help students in need.

Funded by the Advancing Behavioral Health – Wisconsin project.

