

# Mental Health Intervention Team Grant



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# What is the MHIT?

- Focuses on K-12 students and their families by identifying students, helping families navigate mental health services, and linking them to the already existing statewide behavioral health system and resources within the Mental Health Providers network.
- Focuses additional resources on foster students in need of Mental Health Services
  - Liaisons work closely with Foster Contractors
- Helps break down barriers in place for our youth to receive mental health services.
- Seeing kids as individuals, NOT comparing them to others or trying to group them in sections. They are people first.



# Monitoring

- Schools identify one or more ‘indicators of concern’, which impact school success, to track:
  - Academics
  - Attendance
  - Internalizing Behaviors
  - Externalizing Behaviors
- Liaisons are ‘the bridge’ – sharing educationally appropriate information with providers and classroom, helping families navigate waivers and paperwork, and scheduling services.
- Communication between the MH Professional and school is permitted through both an MOU and if the parent agrees, a release.



# What do Liaisons do?

- Communicate MHIT Program/Services to schools
- Make first contact with parents regarding MHIT Program
- Collect and send referrals
- Help families negotiate barriers to treatment
- Communicate with families to discuss needs and progress.



# Funding

- Has been in the proviso bill every year since 2018.
- 75% of funding goes to Liaison salary and benefits.
- 25% of total request (or 1/3 of the 75%) flows through the district to the Mental Health Provider.
  - Example:
    - District applies for \$50,000 for Liaison salary and fringe benefits
      - District receives \$37,500 and matches \$12,500
      - District receives a total of \$12,500 split in quarterly payments (\$3,125) as flow through money to their Mental Health Provider



# How it started

2018-2019

Legislators met with several districts and Community Mental Health Center (CMHC) leadership. The “Pilot” MHIT program and funding was approved for 9 districts and 5 CMHC partners:

**Nine pilots:** KCK, Topeka, Wichita, Parsons, Garden City,  
Consortium of Abilene- Solomon- Herington – Chapman

**Pilot CMHC:** PACES, Family Service and Guidance Center, Labette County  
Mental Health, COMPASS, and Central Kansas Mental Health

The program funded 45 Liaisons

The first year 212 Foster Students were served

Total Number of students receiving services: 1,708



# 2023-2024 School Year (6<sup>th</sup> year)

- Number of School Districts: 90
- Number of Liaisons: 182
- Progress Report: December 20, 2023
  - 5,732 students served
    - 477 Foster students served



# Things to Consider

- Some students may receive services outside of the MHIT Program because of existing relationships with therapist.
- Some students/families may not want to participate in MHIT Program.
- Every program has to be different to meet individual needs of the students, school and community.
- We must trust the professionals (MHP, Liaisons, and Guardians) to do what's best for each individual student.





# Success Stories

- Our teachers and staff have become so familiar and comfortable with referring that we never have a shortage of referrals, and we have eyes on our kids, from the quietest kid to the kid with the loudest behaviors!
- Many of my students were not getting therapy because families struggled taking them for whatever reason, now they are guaranteed the help that they need because they are able to get it at school.
- He has made a lot of improvements this year - he had several behavior referrals last year and was failing almost every class. He is now passing all of his classes, has had no behavior referrals, and is generally happy to be at school and in his classes!
- The student is displaying a decrease in agitation, attention-seeking behaviors, manipulation, lack of self-control and other disruptive behaviors. These major improvements in externalizing behaviors are occurring despite the student having an adoptive placement disruption where she returned to living in a group home. The student made the honor roll for the first time in her academic career.



# Why this matters:

- From a high school student:  
“My therapist saved my life.”





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