

February 13 Meeting – Talking Points

Attendees:

- Advocates: Megan, Ann
- Aspire: Janice, Kristen, Brendan, Brynn
- BHN: Courtney, Jhianina, Dawn, Lindsey
- BMC: Jaime
- CHA: Vanessa, Ellie
- Eliot: Mikaela
- Riverside: Brianna, Katharine, Stacia
- MAMH: Joan, Lina, Jess, Susan

Discussion of Group Sessions (Joan to cue up – 30 minutes total).

- **Grantee partnered with Elementary School(s)**
 - o This clinician has worked on two groups since starting in Fall 2024, both in the same elementary group.
 - o The first is a second-grade boys group called “Big Feelings.” This group was created by collaborating with school admin to identify students who needed more Tier II support through identifying their feelings. They have had seven sessions so far with four students in it. They use SecondStep as part of the curriculum and try to make it fun. All participate students are active participants which is great.
 - o The second group is a first grade called “Friendship” group. The need for this group was identified by a first-grade teacher who wanted support navigating conflicts in the classroom specifically for three students. The group tries to promote healthier friendships. The group is still new and the clinician is working on figuring out what works best.
 - o Some challenges have been centered are logistics. Sometimes they end up having to cancel groups when crises take over.
 - o The previous clinician also held some groups focused on one or two grade levels. They ranged from 1 – 3 months in duration.
- **Grantee partnered with Elementary School(s)**
 - o The main group that this clinician hosts is Basketball Fridays which has been running since January 2023. This is an incentive/reward-based group for students who stay out of troubles throughout the week. The clinician teaches the group basketball skills right before school starts as an incentive for good behavior. The clinician has seen growth in teamwork and social skills in these groups.
 - o Challenges center around students becoming overly competitive so had to redirect. Sometimes parents had a hard time getting students there on time.
 - o This clinician also hosted social skills group during lunch for 30 minutes but it was hectic during that period, so they now have those groups at other times.
- **Grantee partnered with High School(s)**
 - o This clinician has run four groups: Anxiety Coping, Healthy Relationship, and Expressive Art, and School Avoidance.
 - o These groups came from the staff who identified students for it.
 - o The group for school avoidant kids (who come in but don’t go to class) is called SKIP. These students get detention, the clinician will go to the detention to teach parts of DBT. It is a two week group that teaches DBT and provide lessons on mindfulness, meditation, and figure out why students are skipping.

- They are also working on a Seeking Safety group for students with experience with trauma and/or substance use. It is being run through the CBHC, so it is insurance based. They have had a harder time finding students for it and due to space constraints will have to run it remotely after school.
- With their groups, they have been collecting data to see improvement.
 - For example, for the anxiety group, they administered the GAD7 before and after. Six students. All six had improved scores.
 - For the school avoidance group, they are looking at attendance before and after, but it is tricky to have the data be equitable. However, 7 of 8 students said that they agree that they learned skills to stay in class.
 - For the school avoidance group, they have had students who are newcomers or don't understand the language so they have utilized interpreters at these group sessions. Find that students feel uncomfortable not understanding the language and feel like they fall behind.
- It can be a challenge to get appropriate referrals and even get referrals at all and the timing with school schedules is challenging.
- **Grantee partnered with High School(s)**
 - This clinician and family partner ran a group in Fall 2024 for caregivers of students who were struggling with school avoidance. This group was open to the whole district and all grade levels so that parents could catch it earlier.
 - School Avoidance Alliance provided a training, and the clinician and family partner team created a curriculum based on that. They also received extra grant funding for guest speakers. Those speakers included a Director of SEL at Cape who discussed how they manage school avoidance at her district, a prescriber, and a lawyer who spoke about if and how courts get involved with too many school absences.
 - They also allowed for time for parents to connect with each other and had parents at different grade levels to help each other out.
 - They provided interpreters for caregivers who need them, and this allowed them to build a relationship with that family.
 - Tried to recruit in the Spring of last year and but counselors were overwhelmed so it was hard to get recruitment. Ended up with 12 parents and 10 of whom showed up consistently. The groups lasted for 8 weeks in the evenings to accommodate parents.
- **Grantee partnered with Elementary School(s)**
 - This clinician does routine check ins with a group of children to work on relationships skills and coping skills. The students get earned breaks and review what worked well and didn't.
 - Tried to get a parent group going but it was hard to recruit parents.
- **Grantee partnered with Elementary School(s)**
 - They are working on hosting parent information group virtually and in-person to provide myth busting for parents to better understand the program.

Discussion of Group Sessions Sustainability

- **For those doing group sessions, do you envision utilizing them as a billable service?**
 - Some grantees are looking at what sort of funding they will be able to get to sustain the PBHUC model and that will dictate what makes sense for billing.
 - One grantee mentioned that it can feel overwhelming to go through billing hoops. Ex: consent, insurance info, etc. which would potentially delay starts of the groups. Billing would impact easy flow of students to and from groups.

- Another grantee mentioned that the comprehensive intake packets are a barrier because of the commitment to fill them out.
- A school partner talked about the scheduling piece can be very challenging. Groups have to be scheduled around academic block and scheduling is almost a full-time job. Afterschool can be better with late buses but there could also be barriers.
- Another grantee discussed that at schools, Tier II services seem to be the weakest link which is why there is interest in building out that programming which groups are a good example of that.
 - A school partner discussed that the tiered language is important but there is also a need to look at how you identify students for these tiers. Most districts don't have universal screening and instead use a referral which has a lot of subjectivity. However, districts may not have staffing to roll out universal screenings.

Logistics

- Future Learning Community Meetings (Joan)
 - March's Learning Community will feature a presentation by John Crocker on school absenteeism and school avoidance.
 - Thank you all so much for meeting with us to discuss sustainability plans. We are pulling together key themes and the April meeting will be on those themes. Grantees will get a chance to hear from each other about your post-grant sustainability plans and ask each other questions.
- Data (Lina)
 - Data for July – December 2024 are due on March 28. Let us know if you have any questions (Lina).
- Post-Zoom Survey (Lina)
 - Please fill out the survey after the meeting that will pop up in your browser. It helps us tailor these meetings. It is brief, each question is optional, and it is anonymous.