

Patient-Centered Care in School-Based Health Centers

March 18, 2025

12pm Eastern Standard Time



School-Based Health Alliance

Transforming Health Care for Students

Our **Focus**

The School-Based Health Alliance Works to Support & Grow SBHCs

Policy



Establishes and advocates for national policy priorities

Standards



Promotes high-quality clinical practices and standards, including for telehealth

Data



Supports data collection and reporting, evaluation, and research

Training




Provides training, technical assistance, and consultation

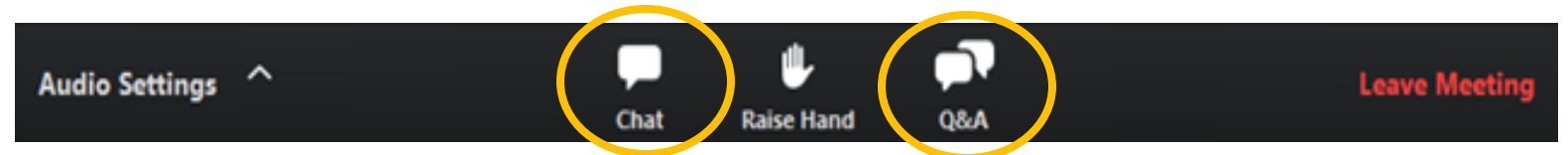
We support the improvement of students' health via school-based health care by supporting and creating community and school partnerships.

www.sbh4all.org

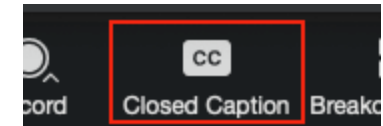
REMINDERS

 **All attendees are in listen-only mode.**

 **To ask a question during the session, use the “Chat” or “Q&A” icon that appears at the bottom of your Zoom control panel.**



 **To turn on closed captioning, click on the “CC” button.**



 **Please complete evaluation poll questions at the end of the presentation.**

 **The recording, slides, and resources will be shared via email.**

Learning objectives

Participants will be able to...

- Identify healing-centered approaches to fostering safety, trust, and belonging for students experiencing acute and chronic stress.
- Explore evidence-based tools, interventions, and resources to ensure patient-centered care in school-based health centers.

Today's Speakers



Mandy LeBlanc
Contractor
School-Based
Health Alliance



Donnie Greco
Associate
School-Based
Health Alliance



**Addie Van Zwoell,
MJ, MSW, LCSW**
Director
School-Based Health
Alliance



Jacquelyn Christenson, PHD
Senior Vice President
School-Based Health Alliance

The Healing-Centered Approach

- A healing-centered approach focuses on **holistic well-being**, recognizing that individuals thrive when their emotional, mental, physical, and social needs are addressed together.
- Moves beyond viewing challenges as personal struggles and instead acknowledges the importance of community and shared experiences in fostering growth and recovery.
- Healing is not just about reducing difficulties; it is about building strengths, restoring hope, and creating meaningful opportunities for growth.

“What’s wrong with you?” → “What happened to you?” → “What’s right with you?”

(Ginwright, 2018)

Core Elements of Healing-Centered Approach



(Ginwright, 2022)



Why Healing-Centered Approaches Matter

- Students bring life experiences that shape their health, behavior, and engagement.
- Healing-centered approaches focus on well-being and connection rather than deficits.
- School-based health centers play a crucial role in helping students overcome challenges and thrive.
- Research shows that supportive environments improve mental health outcomes and academic success.



(Ginwright, 2018)

A Place to Grow

- Every student is like a plant in a garden, each with unique needs, strengths, and potential for growth.
- Some students may need more sunlight (support), water (resources), or enriched soil (a nurturing environment) to thrive.
- As educators and health providers, we act as gardeners, tending to the conditions that help students grow, rather than just focusing on past struggles.
- Healing-centered approaches nurture connection, helping students bloom in their own time and way.





Risk Factors

Individual

Family

School / Work

Community

Circumstances
/ Life Events

Protective Factors



Safety, Challenge, and Threat

Pay attention to:

- Sleep
- Calm, alert state
- Healthy stress responses

Calm, alert = Safety

Stress response (healthy) = Challenge

Stress response (toxic) = Threat



(Adapted by J. Christensen from Lillas, 2022; Lillas and Turnbull, 2009)

**Green Zone =
Engagement & Learning**



**In Stress Response =
Needs Support, No Learning**



So, what can health centers do?

Supporting Staff

Notice. Pause. Reflect. Act.

- **Notice** your own body state (“What is happening in my body?”)
- **Pause & Reflect** on your own experiences that may induce stress responses
 - Are you hungry, tired, over-stimulated, over-whelmed, etc.?
 - Identify strategies in your toolbox to “get back to **green**.”
- **Act** (e.g., get a snack, take a break, talk to someone, tag team, etc.)

(Adapted from Lillas, 2022; Lillas and Turnbull, 2009)

So, what can health centers do?

Building Trusting Relationships

Greet Students
by name

Use nonverbal
cues to show
you're listening

Be consistent

Give choices
when possible

Have clear
routines and
expectations

Use visual cues

Give students
control when
possible

Show genuine
interest

So, what can health centers do?

Shifting How We Respond

- Instead of labeling behavior as “difficult” or “challenging,” recognize it as communication.
- Shift from “compliance/non-compliance” → “What stress response is behind this behavior?”
- Approach with curiosity instead of judgement
- Consider their individual difference and antecedents that may result in stress responses

Sample shifts in thinking:

"This student is disrespectful."

"This student may not feel heard or understood."

"They refuse to talk."

"They might not feel safe opening up yet."

"They just want attention."

"They need connection."

"This tantrum is uncalled for."

"This is a stress response. I wonder what they need?"

So, what can health centers do?

Policies, Partnerships, & Space

Align staff training and health center policies

- Train all staff on healing-centered approaches (e.g., Mental Health First Aid)
- Examine policies and procedures to align with healing-centered framework

Partner with the school and community organizations

- Support school activities (e.g., community wellness fair)

Adapt the space

- Warm lighting, comfortable seating, inclusive posters, and sensory-friendly spaces.
- A space where students feel safe, welcome, and encouraged to seek help.

What does your health center do to make the physical space more welcoming for students and their families?

So, what can health centers do?

Screening & Assessment

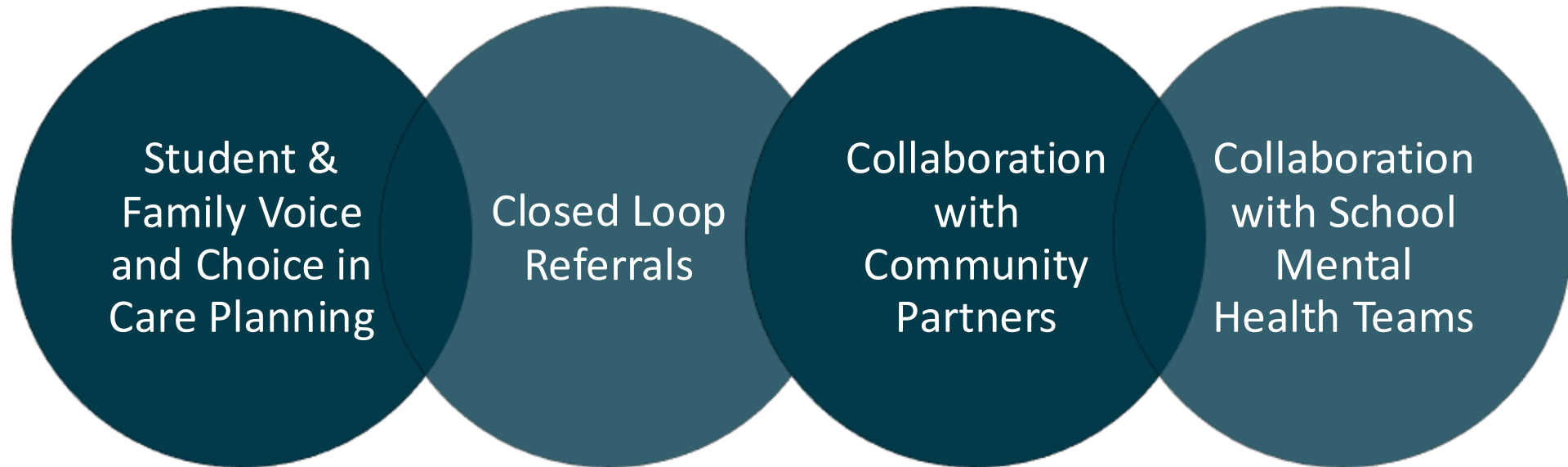
Consider the whole child – including their relationships and environment – during assessment and treatment

Domains for screening and assessment

- Social influences on health (e.g., PRAPARE, I-HELP, etc.)
- Mental health screening (PHQ-2/9, GAD-7, etc.)
- Risk assessment and history (ACE Questionnaire, PEARLs, Bright Futures, HEADS, etc.)
- Strengths (SDQ, CYRM-28, etc.)

So, what can health centers do?

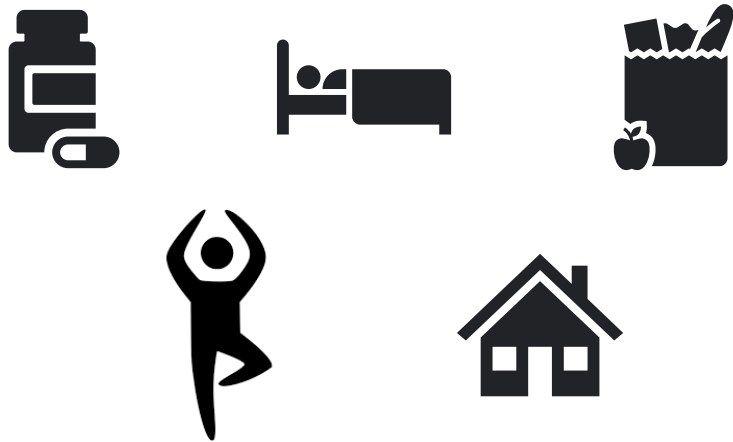
Care Coordination & Partnerships



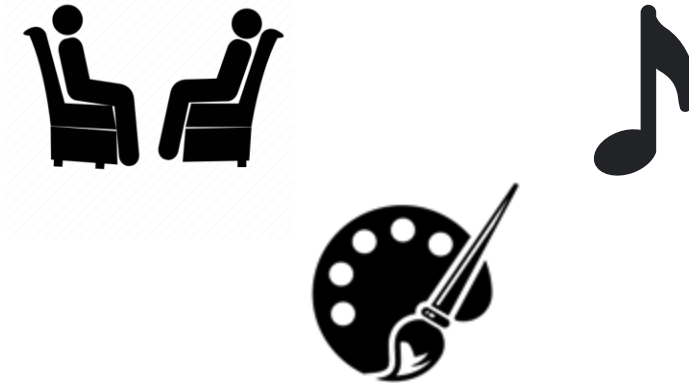
So, what can health centers do?

Thinking Holistically about Treatment Approaches

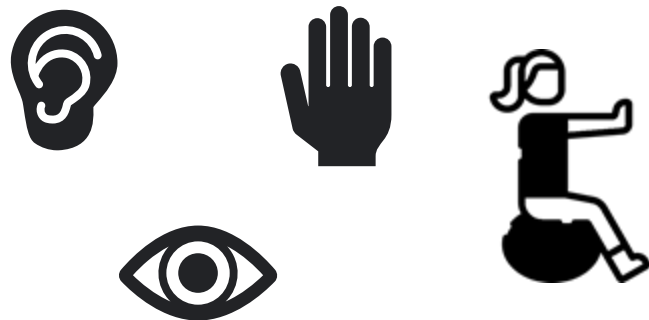
Physiological Regulation Approaches



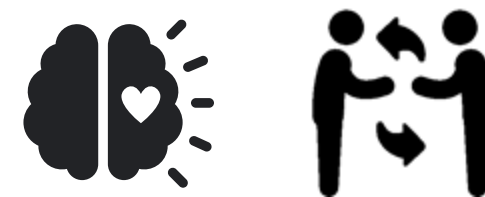
Reflective & Meaning-Making Approaches



Sensory-Based Approaches



Cognitive/Social Approaches



***Healing happens in relationships, in
community, and through individual growth.
Let's be the adults who create those spaces for our
students.***

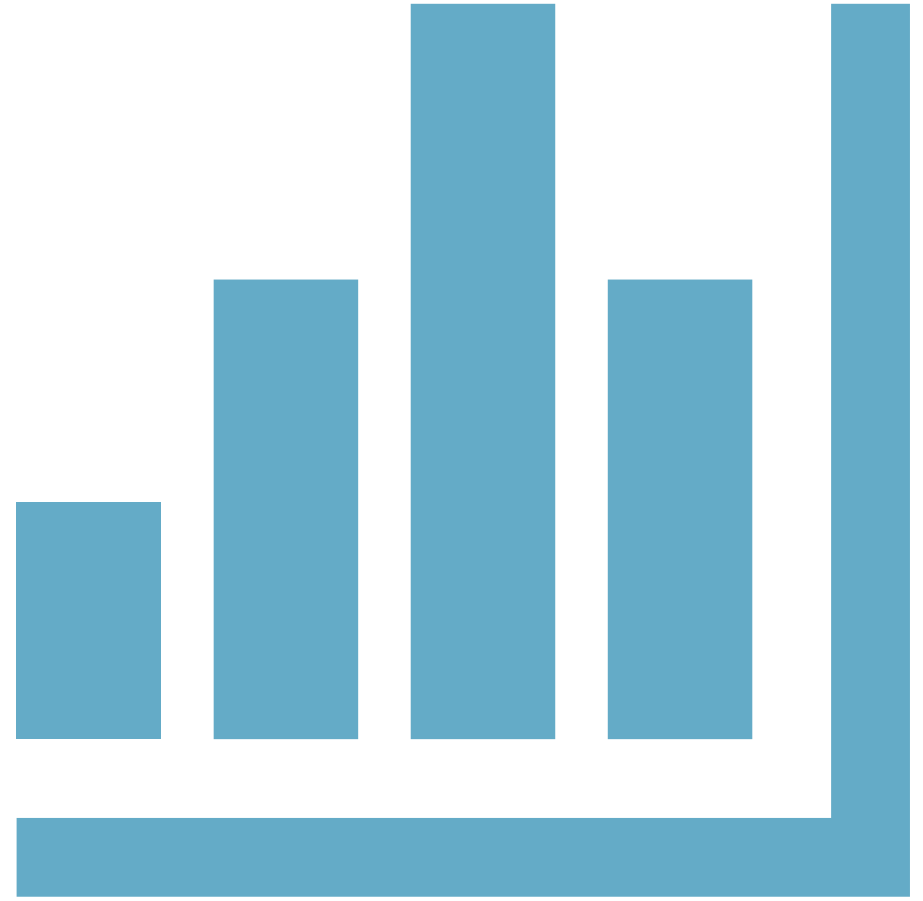


Questions?



**We look forward to your
feedback.**

Please complete our Zoom poll.



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*Bureau of Primary Health Care (BPHC) – National Training and Technical Assistance Partner (NTTAP)

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Crisis-Ready: Using Telehealth to Support Health Centers and Schools During Climate Emergencies (10.24)

Creating and Sustaining Adolescent-Centered Health Programs (06.24)

Healthy Eyes, Healthy Lives: Community Approaches to Children's Vision and Eye Health (10.24)

School-Based Health Centers 101: Partnerships and Pathways to Expand Students' Access to Healthcare (09.24)

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Resources



E-Library



BPHC-NTTAP





2025 National School-Based
Health Care Conference

June 29 -
July 1, 2025

Westin Washington, DC Downtown
Hotel (formerly the Renaissance
Downtown Hotel) in Washington, D.C



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