

School-Based Mental Health Services

Youth Mental Health: A Public Health Crisis

#1 Alaska

Suicide is the **leading cause of death** for youth ages 15-24.¹



Of all lifetime cases of mental illness, **50%** begin by **age 14** and **75%** begin by **age 24**.²



1 out of every 5 high school students in Alaska will attempt suicide.³



80% of youth with mental health diagnoses have unmet mental health needs.⁴

Barriers to Mental Health Care in Alaska



Transportation



Financial or lack of coverage



Lack of mental health services in the community



Social stigma and limited awareness



Unsure how to access services



Racial barriers and disparities

60% of Alaskans 18 years and younger rely on Medicaid for their care coverage.⁵

Limited outpatient mental health providers accept Medicaid, leaving significant gaps in access to mental health care.

Solution: School-Based Mental Health Services

Based on decades of research, other states have implemented mental health services in schools. In partnership with the Anchorage and Kodiak Island Borough School Districts, Providence Alaska and VOA Alaska **offer school-based mental health services in 18 schools** during the 2023/2024 school year.

School-based clinicians partner with school staff to provide school-wide prevention, early intervention and intensive mental health services.

Students are 6 times more likely to access and complete mental health services when offered in school,⁶ and school-based services were identified as a key need during the Department of Health's Behavioral Health Roadmap Project for Alaska Youth.⁷

Current number of Providence and VOA school-based clinicians

15

Anchorage

3

Kodiak

Your previous financial investment is resulting in real, positive outcomes for students, families and school staff.

153 crisis interventions with only 3 escalations to higher levels of care.⁸

73% of caregivers strongly agree that their **family's sense of connection has increased** since starting school-based services.⁹

1,274 consultations to staff regarding student or family concerns.¹⁰

With embedded mental health professionals in schools in Anchorage and Kodiak, **students face fewer barriers to accessing mental health care at low or no cost.**

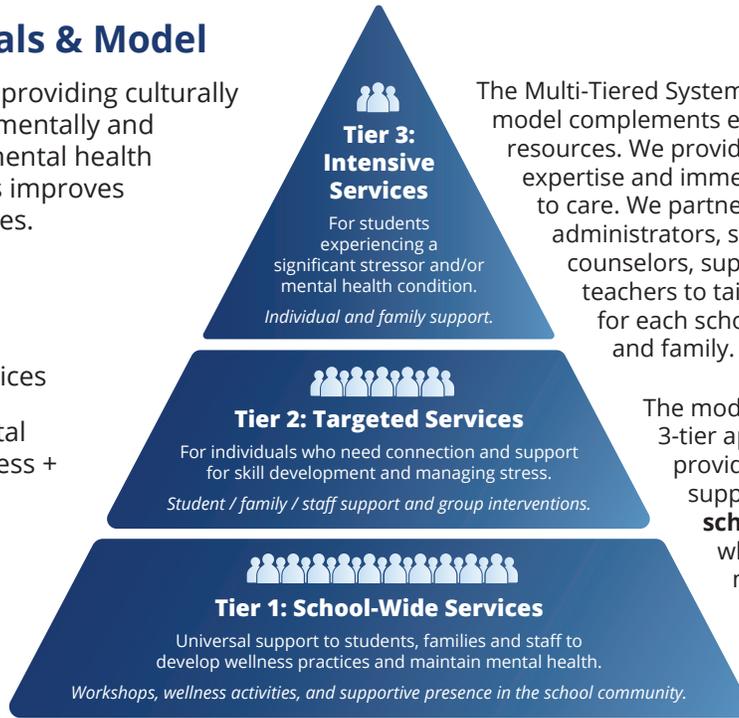
¹Alaska Vital Statistics 2021 Annual Report ²Kessler et al., 2005. ³2019 YRBS ⁴Kataoka et al., 2002. ⁵Alaska Hospital and Healthcare Association Child and Adolescent Behavioral Healthcare Improvement Project, 2022 ⁶Jaycox et al., 2010 ⁷Alaska Department of Health, 2024 ⁸Spring 2023 Clinician Data ⁹Spring 2023 Survey ¹⁰Fall 2023 Clinician Data

Program Goals & Model

Studies show that providing culturally sensitive, developmentally and age-appropriate mental health services in schools improves education outcomes.

The goals of this partnership are:

- Accessible Services
- Increased Mental Health Awareness + Understanding
- Safe + Caring School Environments



The Multi-Tiered System of Support model complements existing school resources. We provide clinical expertise and immediate access to care. We partner with administrators, school counselors, support staff, and teachers to tailor strategies for each school, student and family.

The model operates on a 3-tier approach that provides broad support to the **entire school community** while also offering more **intensive services to the students who need it.**

Outcomes

Improved mental health and well-being

Improved academic performance

Improved staff satisfaction

Improved school climate and safety

Improved family engagement

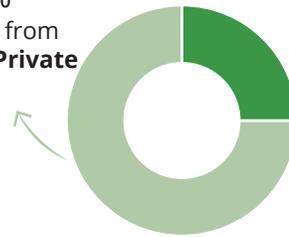
Early identification and intervention

Well-funded mental health services create the opportunity for students to be **healthier, prevent more severe symptoms, and reduce future costs** for youth, families, and the community.

Alaska lacks sustainable funding mechanisms to increase integrated mental health programs in schools. Through partnership and collaboration of government, provider, and school partners, **we can braid funding streams to fund prevention and early intervention.**

Program Funding Sources

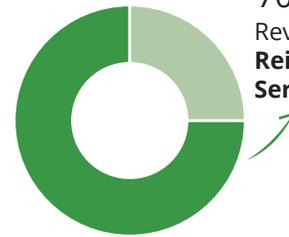
70-80% Revenue from **Grants/Private Funding**



Current State

Only 20-30% revenue from reimbursable services (Tier 3).

70-80% Revenue from **Reimbursable Services**



Future Goal

Increased sustainable funding

18 Schools, Over 11,000 Students!

I love my child, and I love bringing him to appointments, but I was missing a lot of work.

- Caregiver Interview, 2023

These kids are not accessing private therapy outside of school. Without this service these kids will not be getting anything in terms of somebody that's actually trained and knows what to do with all of their information.

- School Staff Interview, 2023

Expansion of School-Based Services

