

Rising to the Challenge: **Meeting the Mental Health Needs of Students and Staff in Texas**

Texas Education Foundation Network Conference
San Marcos, Texas
April 14, 2023

Agenda



Today's Presenters



Jen Esterline, M. Ed.

*Vice President of Child
and Family Strategy*



Melissa True, M.Ed.

*Director of Mobile Mental
Wellness Collaborative*



Brian Jaklich, LCSW

*Social Work Coordinator
Harlandale ISD*



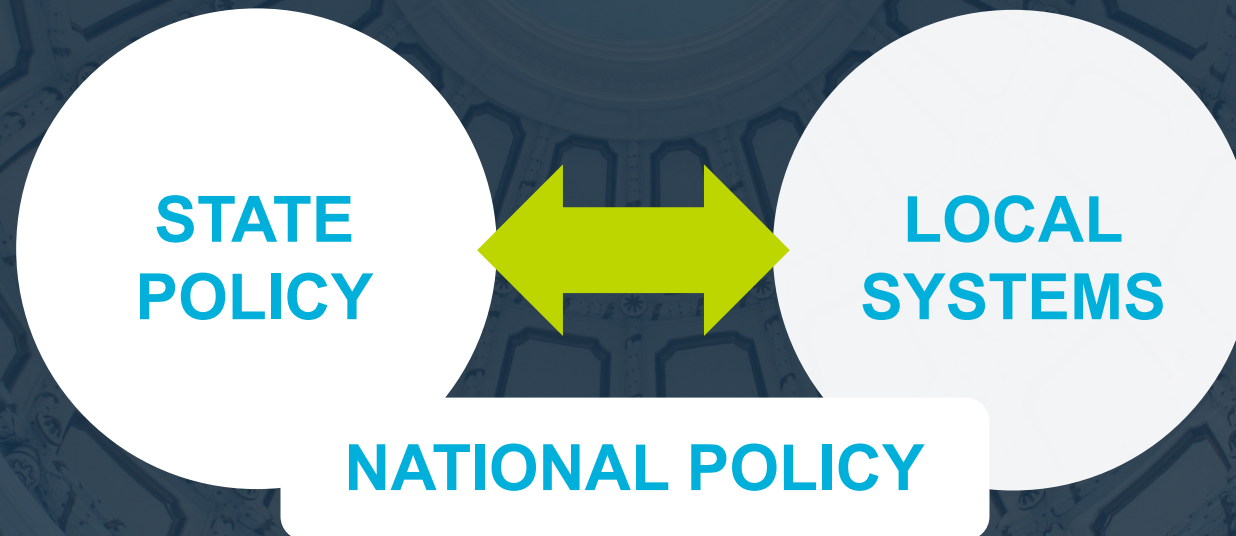
Jessica Alcala, LCDC

*YES Program Coordinator
Rise Recovery*

Vision, Mission, Core Change Strategy

Vision: We envision Texas to be the national leader in treating people with mental health needs.

Mission Statement: To provide independent, non-partisan, data-driven, and trusted policy and program guidance that creates equitable systemic changes so all Texans can obtain effective, efficient behavioral health care when and where they need it.



Why Schools?

The Important Role of Schools in Addressing
Mental Health

Mental Health Facts

Mental health problems are common and they start early.

The sooner a person gets help, the more likely they are to have a positive outcome.

Stigma is associated with mental health problems.

Professional help is not always readily accessible to families, so schools may be their only source for support.

Mental Health Prevalence in Children & Youth



1 in 5 children and youth will experience a mental health related illness.

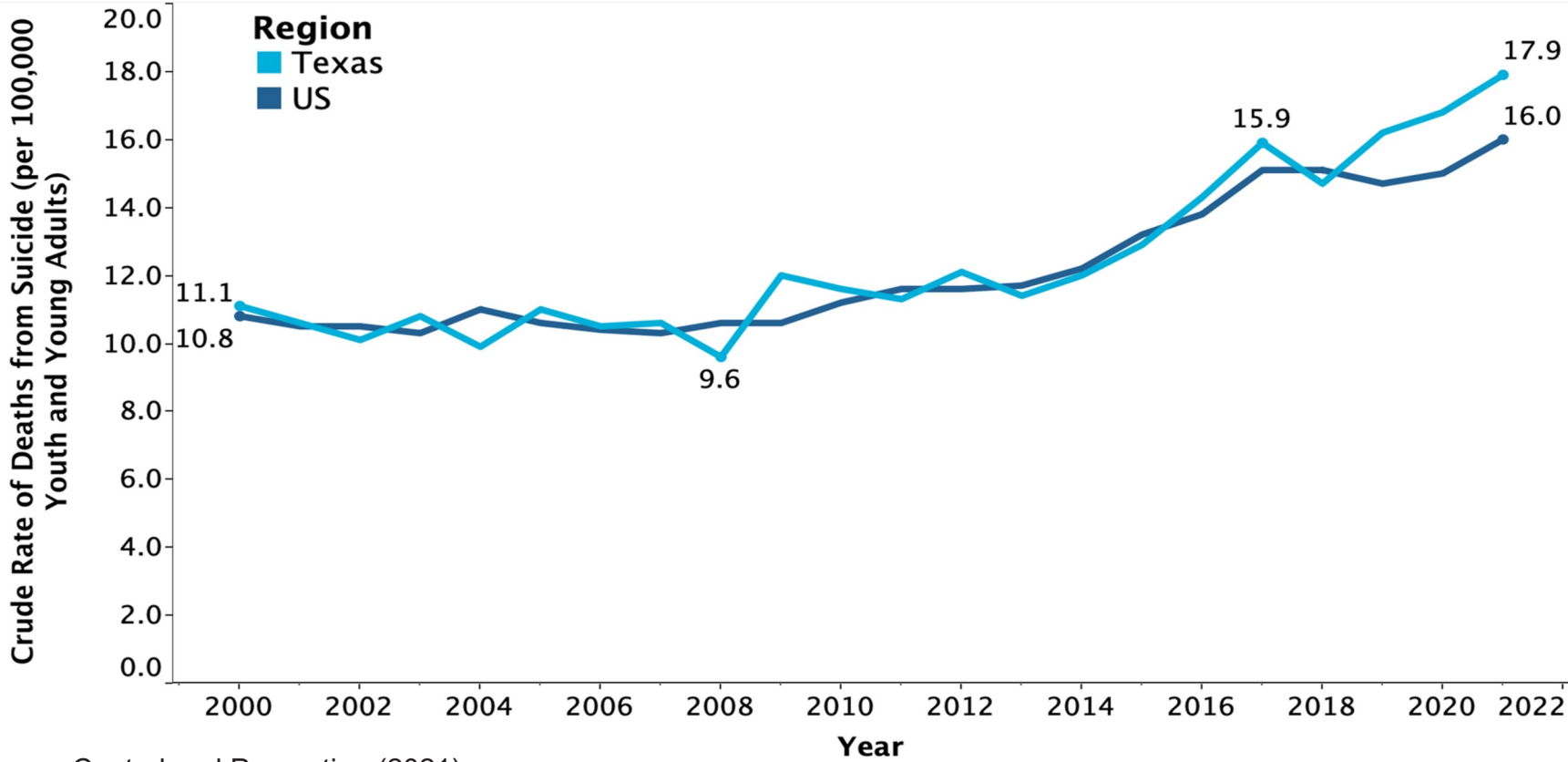
**Half of all
Mental Health
Conditions
manifest by
age 14.**



1 in 10 children and youth will have a serious disturbance that impacts daily functioning.

Historic Suicide Rates

- On average, children wait 8-10 years post-symptoms for care.
- Suicide is the **second leading cause of death** among youth.
- The Texas rate of deaths from suicide among transitional-age youth has been higher than the US rate for the past three years (12% higher than the national rate in 2021).



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2021)

Substance Abuse

- Overdose deaths in the U.S. are up 30% year-over-year.
- Drug use among 8th graders increased 61% between 2016-2020.
- Texas had 3,136 overdose deaths in 2021.
 - That number was 4,192 in 2020 during the pandemic.
- Percent of U.S. 12th graders (2020) binge drinking* in the last 30 days rose to 33.6%.
- One in eight teens have abused an illicit drug in the past year. (2021)

*Defined as 5 or more drinks in a row

Resources: CDC and National Center for Drug Abuse Statistics

What Texas School Districts Report

Students

- Dramatic decline **in academic performance** among some student groups
- Significant increase in **mental health provider referrals**
- Increase in **aggression, anxiety, depression, PTSD, grief, and loss**
- Severe **disciplinary infractions** resulting in longer **expulsions**

Adults

- Increased **absence rates** for school staff
- School staff **burnout**
- Mental health **providers at capacity**
- Parents and families of students with major infractions are **at a loss on how to help their children**

Why Schools?

Although schools are not mental health providers, they are well-positioned to minimize mental health challenges.

Schools are:

1. In **every community**, which helps overcome barriers to accessing care.
2. **Trusted** by families who often need help navigating mental health systems.
3. Perceived as **non-stigmatizing venues** for mental health services and support.

Academic goals are more difficult to achieve when behavioral, social, emotional, and mental health needs are not addressed.

Collaboration in San Antonio

School-Based Mental Health Collaborative

The SAMMWC Collaborative Model



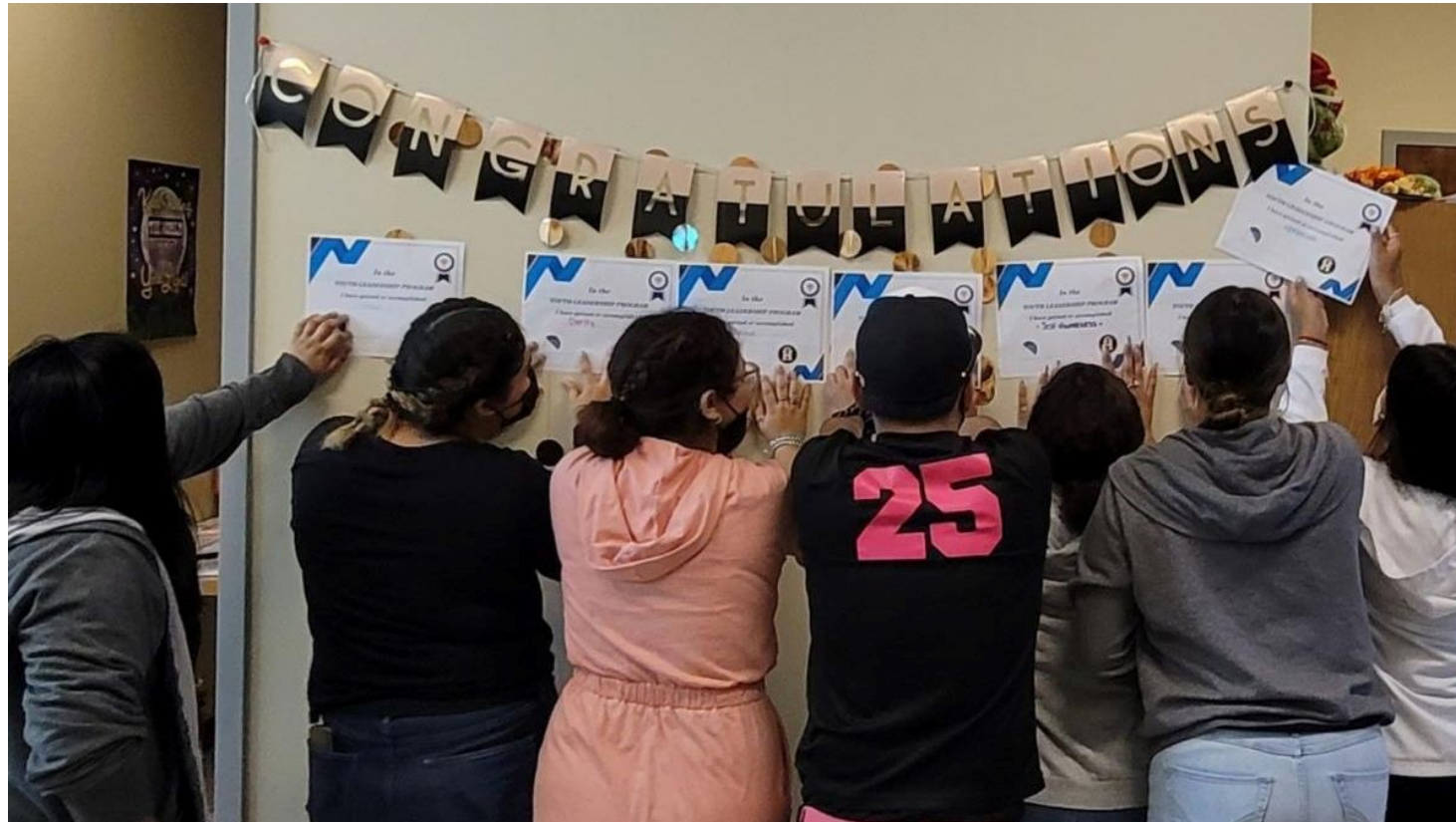
Districts We Serve

80	Texas	Edgewood ISD	Harlandale ISD	Judson ISD	SAISD *HS ONLY 21-24	South San Antonio ISD
Enrollment	5,402,928	8,383	12,078	24,517	12,901*	7,919
Hispanic	52.8%	96.4%	97.6%	59.1%	89.8%	95.8%
African American	12.8%	1.5%	.5%	20.9%	5.8%	1.2%
Emergent Bilingual/English Language Learner	21.7%	21.9%	17.5%	11.0%	22.2%	20.2%
Immigrant	2.0%	0.4%	0.3%	0.4%	1.3%	1.2%
Economically Disadvantaged	60.7%	89.0%	88.3%	68.7%	88%	90.3%
At-Risk	53.5%	72.8%	80.0%	71.1%	69.3%	81.2%

It's About Relationships

Opportunities for Leveraging Relationships

It's About Relationships



How Can You Help?

Strategies for Education Foundations to Support
Mental Health and Well-being

How Can Education Foundations Help?

- Talk to your districts about their plans to support student and staff mental health. Where do they need help with outside resources (financial and other)?
- Think about your role as public school advocates – are there ways to engage with community partners (such as community mental health providers) to help broker relationships between districts and the community?
- What are other ways that education foundations can support student and educator wellbeing? Are there some smaller initiatives that EFs could initiate that support educator wellbeing in particular for example?

Information on How Your District Can Sign Up for TCHAT

- Visit this site: <https://sites.utexas.edu/tchat/>
- Contact this person: Jenessa Trebatoski, Communications and Outreach Administrator at Jenessa.trebatoski@austin.utexas.edu

Thank You!

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 **THE HACKETT CENTER**
FOR MENTAL HEALTH

MEADOWS
MENTAL HEALTH
POLICY INSTITUTE

PASO *del* NORTE CENTER
Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute

TRAUMA & GRIEF CENTER AT
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