Title: Partnering Effectively with Schools: An Interdisciplinary Task

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Background: Each day, millions of youth attend school with significant behavioral health concerns that negatively impact their school performance. Consequently, psychologists are increasingly coordinating evidence-based mental health services and programming with school staff and across educational systems. However, achieving integration and collaboration is fraught with challenges, including differences in language, culture, expectations, and even goals. To overcome these barriers, education and behavioral health professionals must be trained to negotiate the needs of multiple systems while delivering effective services.

Aim 1: Enhance educators' ability to address complex behavioral health difficulties through consultation and interdisciplinary training in behavioral health.

Aim 2: Provide behavioral health staff and trainees with interdisciplinary training and experience in educational systems, school consultation, and school-based services.

Methods: Mentored experiences were delivered within the context of a school-community behavioral health partnership, which delivers an array of tiered services including educator training & workshops (Tier 1), behavioral health consultation (Tier 2), and a school-based clinic (Tier 3). Training and weekly supervision in school partnerships were offered to behavioral health staff and trainees, and change in interdisciplinary skills were assessed via a cross-walk of standards for effective school-mental health service delivery.

Results: Educators' consultation requests were concerned with students' classroom functioning (89%), mental health (82%), and comorbidities (71%). Interdisciplinary training was also requested to help educators better understand students' emotional regulation and crisis response.

Analyze Interventions Provided: Future analyses will assess the extent to which behavioral health trainees reported growth in skill needed for interdisciplinary collaboration, as well as perceived barriers in collaboration between educators & behavioral health psychologists.

Conclusions: To facilitate success for children with complex behavioral health needs, professionals from traditionally disparate behavioral health and education systems must make proactive efforts at effective collaboration. Opportunities to link training to standards in interdisciplinary collaboration between schools & behavioral health will be discussed.