Behavioral Health Resources for Schools

Evidence-Based Practice: Multisystemic Therapy (MST)

Multisystemic Therapy (MST) is an intensive, family- and community-based intervention for serious juvenile offenders in which therapists meet youth offenders and their families weekly at home or school for three to five months. The intervention focuses on individual, family, peer, school, and community risk factors that contribute to juvenile antisocial behaviors. MST requires concrete, measurable effort from both youth and families, and builds on strengths in youths' lives while altering problematic interactions with family and peers (Henggeler 2016, McCart 2016). Adaptations of MST have been applied to child health and psychiatric problems, youth substance abuse, problem sexual behavior, and child abuse and neglect [1].

Evidence Rating

Scientifically Supported

There is strong evidence that MST reduces the likelihood of recidivism and incarceration for serious juvenile offenders more than treatment as usual. MST can also reduce delinquent or antisocial behavior and alcohol and drug use among juvenile offenders. MST can improve participating youths' functioning at school, work, and increase positive peer relationships . MST may also improve family functioning and reduce out-of-home placements[1].

In Nebraska there is now a total of 7 teams and 22 therapists providing MST in counties indicated by the shaded area on the map.

Schools can assist families in referring for MST through one of the following providers:

- **Mid-Plains Center**: Serving Central Nebraska and Lincoln Area (308)385-5250
- **Good Life Counseling**: Serving the Northeastern Region.
  (402) 371-3044/Norfolk; (402) 562-0400/Columbus
- **Paradigm, Inc.** (402) 991-8093 **and Boys Town**: 800-448-3000 Serving the Eastern Regions

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[1] *County Health Rankings and Roadmaps*– **Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2018** http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/take-action-to-improve-health/what-works-for-health/policies/multisystemic-therapy-mst-for-juvenile-offenders