The TWITR Project: A Model Rural Mental Health Program

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Fact: 1 in 5 children ages 13-18 have, or will have a serious mental illness.¹

- 20% of youth ages 13-18 live with a mental health condition.¹
- 11% of youth have a mood disorder.¹
- 10% of youth have a behavior or conduct disorder.¹
- 8% of youth have an anxiety disorder.¹

Impact:
- 50% of all lifetime cases of mental illness begin by age 14 and 75% by age 24.¹
- The average delay between onset of symptoms and intervention is 8-10 years.¹
- Approximately 50% of students age 14 and older with a mental illness drop out of high school.¹
- 70% of youth in state and local juvenile justice systems have a mental illness.¹

Suicide:
- 3rd Suicide is the 3rd leading cause of death in youth ages 10-24.¹
- 90% of those who died by suicide had an underlying mental illness.¹
Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSA) - Mental Health

HPSA Designated Type

HPSA Type
- HPSA Geographic
- HPSA Population
- HPSA Geographic High Needs

Source: Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Bureau of Health Professions (BPHPR); October, 2015.

Note: Alaska and Hawaii not shown to scale.
Mental Health Needs in Rural Schools

School District Student Density
- 0 - 6031
- 6031 - 22628
- 22628 - 64214

Licensed Specialist in School Psychology (Total: 156)
- 0
- 1 - 2
- 3 - 6
- 7 - 12
- 13 - 18
- 19 - 32

TTUHSC Service Line

Source: Department of State Health Services, Texas Education Agency

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How TWITR Works

ISD Faculty Referral

CIS Staff Referral

Completed Referral Packet to Licensed Professional Counselor

Referral back to faculty with Behavioral Plan/Recommendations

Student Assessment(s)

Referral to Psychiatrist

Referral to Pediatrician

Referral to other appropriate resources
Location of Schools

2013
• Plainview
• Crosbyton
• Idalou
• Ralls
• Shallowater
• Abernathy

2014 (added)
• Littlefield
• Brownfield

2015 (added)
• Lubbock Cooper
• Levelland
TWITR Outcomes

- Number of School Staff Trained = ~1,610
- Number of students impacted = ~21,174
- Number of referrals = 305
- Number screened = 114
- Number triaged = 108 (all by telemedicine)
- Number removed from school = 16
- Other outcomes = reduction in truancy (17%), reduction in student discipline referrals (25%), increase in student overall GPA (3.6%).
A Double Thanks to You