



CIS Mental Health Overview

Communities In Schools (CIS) affiliates are increasingly asked by principals and school district administrators to provide mental health services on campuses because the need is critical and academic leaders know that meeting that need must occur if learning is to take place. CIS works to prevent emerging issues from manifesting into serious concerns and provides behavioral health interventions to students experiencing mental health challenges.

CIS surrounds students with a community of support, empowering them to stay in school and achieve in life. Because there are few accessible resources at the community level to provide support services, CIS has become the front line for thousands of students.

- According to a 2016 report by Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute, an estimated 550,000 children suffer from a serious emotional disturbance across Texas.
- Children with developing mental health problems may exhibit behavior problems, difficulty in concentration, problems with getting along with other children, challenges with rules and expectations and problems with learning.
- When untreated, mental health disorders can lead to school failure, social isolation, family conflict, criminal involvement, drug abuse, school violence and suicide.
- Most students referred to CIS for behavioral problems are often grappling with severe issues, such as depression, grief and loss, abuse and neglect.

CIS' school-based programming is by far the most accessible resource for struggling students. CIS staff are more involved than ever before in keeping campuses and students safe by implementing crisis response, campus-wide behavioral initiatives, trauma informed supports and individual, family and group counseling. CIS meets campus needs by placing mental health professionals on campuses and/or by brokering these services from partner agencies.

Partnering with CIS enables non-school based mental health agencies to smoothly deliver services on campus to maximize resources (able to serve more students). Because CIS serves full-time and is embedded at the campus level, it is highly efficient in partnering with mental health agencies to identify clients, case staff critical needs, schedule sessions and provide follow-up support/continuation of services.

Frequent mental health needs of our students include: suicidal ideation, self-harm, depression, anxiety, bipolar, ADD and ADHD, substance abuse and dependence, PTSD, adjustment disorder, bullying, grief and loss, and familial relational problems.

CIS currently provides these services free of charge to many students and families. However, with additional state resources, the 28 CIS affiliates currently delivering integrated student supports to over 93,000 students on 931 campuses in 142 school districts in Texas could expand access to increasingly necessary mental health services that would otherwise not be available for tens of thousands of students.