

Hennepin County School Mental Health Program – 2005 to 2025

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Mental Health Need

- Significant gap between mental health needs and available services
- Urgent need to improve access: 1 in 5 children have a diagnosable mental health disorder, yet 70-80% receive no or inadequate levels treatment
- Low income, urban communities as high as 40%; averaging only 4 session and less than 9% still in care after 3 months
- Youth needing mental health services are not accessing established sites for care
- Wait times; kept appointment/show rate at urban community mental health centers: 38-53%
- **50% of adults with MH illness had symptoms before 14 years old.**

Barriers to Mental Health Care

Financial/Insurance

Burden of accessing care

- Childcare
- Transportation
- Employment concerns

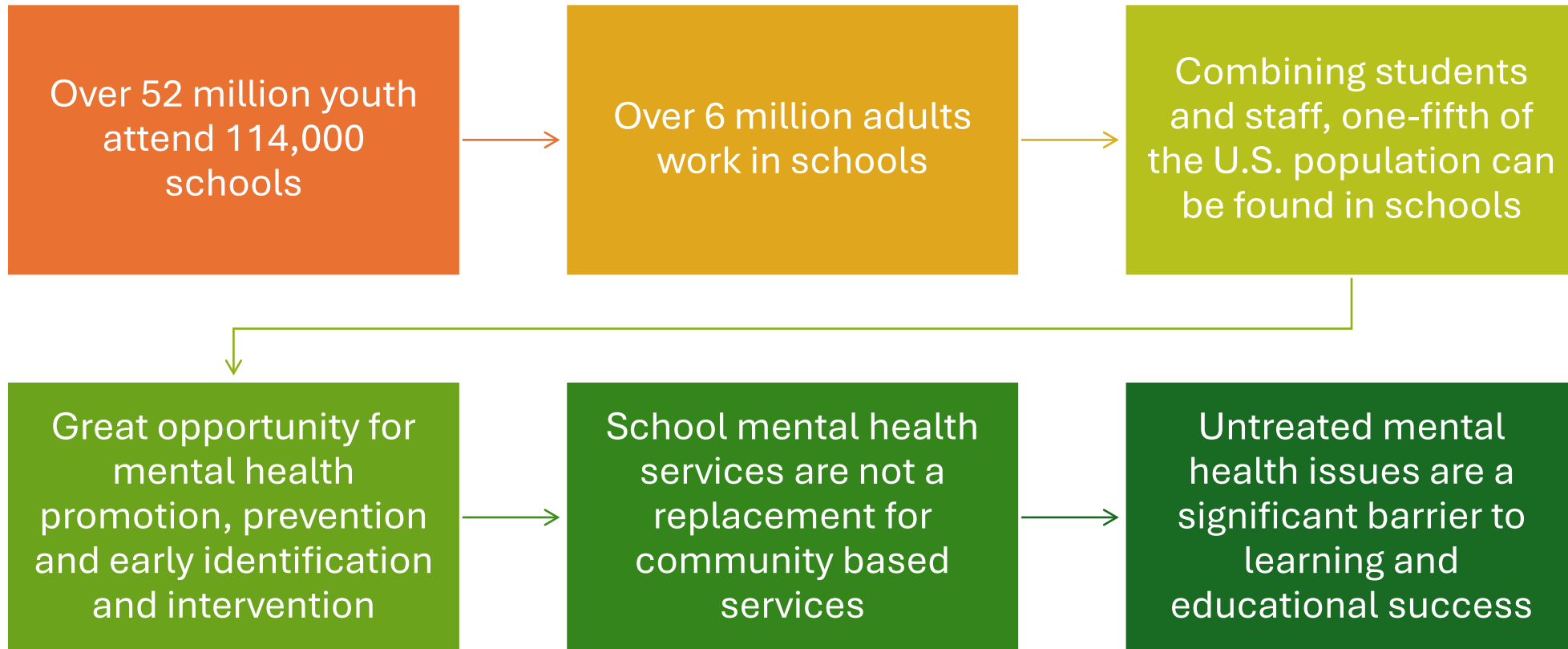
Mistrust/Stigma

Past Experiences

Waiting List/Intake Process

Stress

Why Schools?



Building on what schools already do...

- School can and often do provide programs and supports focused on:
 - School Climate and Culture
 - Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)
 - Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and/or Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)
 - Response to Intervention (RtI)
 - Student Support Staff (school psychologist, school nurses, school counselors, school social workers)

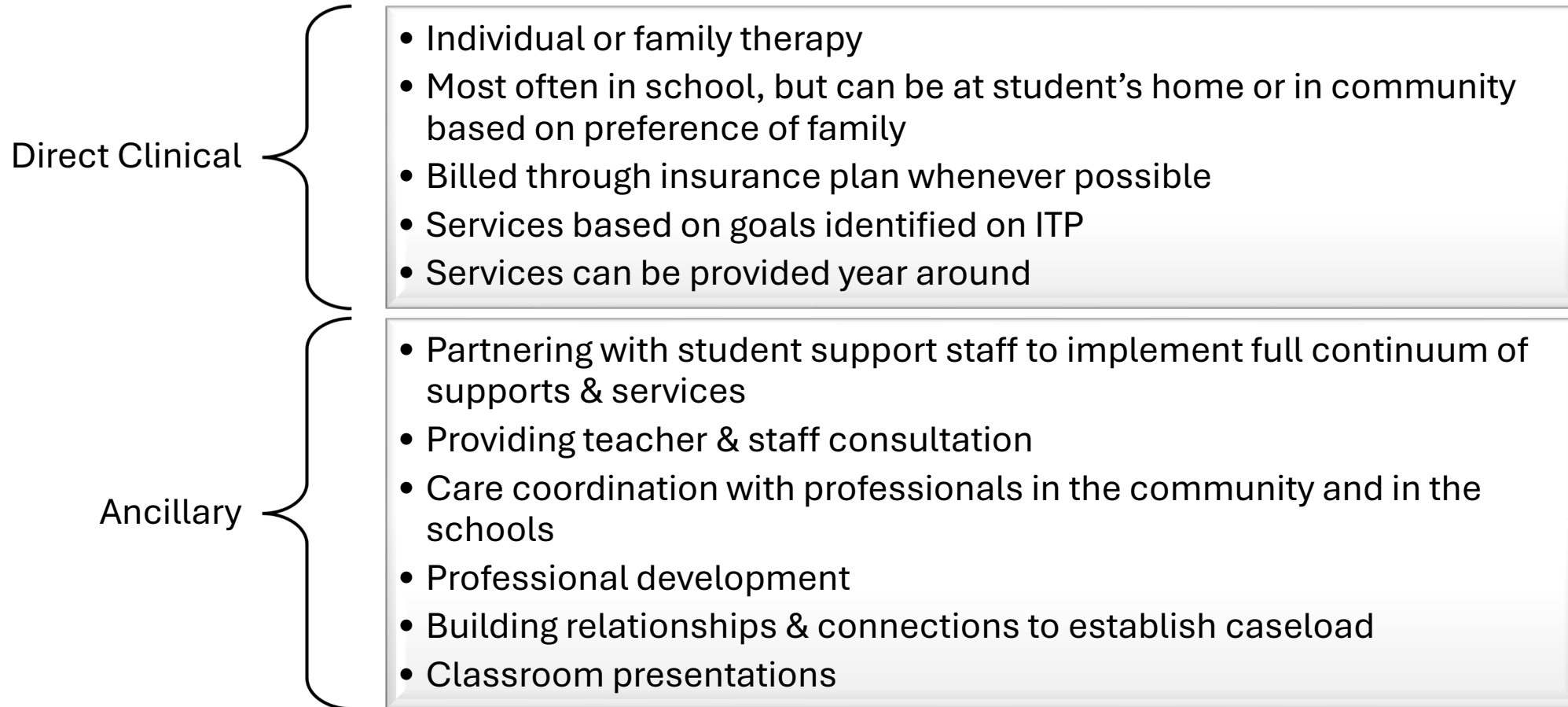
School Mental Health Goals

- **Improve access to and engagement in children's mental-health services**, particularly for families with transportation, financial or cultural barriers
- **Improve symptoms and functioning** for children experiencing mental health difficulties
- **Improve school outcomes** – increase attendance and decrease suspensions
- **Integrate with a broad continuum of mental health services and supports** into school and build capacity of school staff

Brief History of SMH in MPS and Hennepin County

- MPS Program began in Winter 2005 (with planning in 2004)
- Started in 5 schools with 2 different agencies
- Currently in 64 schools with 10 different mental health agencies (~\$7.4 million per year) serving about ~2000 students
- Across Hennepin County – 22 mental health agencies in 220 schools with ~230 FTEs of mental health professionals (~\$25 million per year), ~7000 students

School Mental Health Services



Brief Evaluation from MPS ESMHP

Access and sustained engagement in treatment

- 85 % of students seen once face to face; 70% within 10 days; 50-65% 1st time receiving services
- Average 17 visits per school year and average of 25 over multiple years
- BIPOC students were significantly more likely to access SMH services than Caucasian students

Improved mental health functioning

- Parents and teachers report decreases in the emotional and behavioral problems on the Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ)
- Study by the University of MN found that school mental health services reduced suicided attempts

Improved school functioning

- Decrease in school suspensions for students receiving mental health treatment
- Principals and school social workers reported reduced office referrals and student suspensions

What School Staff Had to Say

92% felt that mental health clinicians were well integrated in the schools

88% said they were more mindful of mental health needs because of MH services available in their building

98% said students more likely to receive MH care

80% strongly agreed onsite services increased ability of clinicians to help students

School setting made services more welcoming to parents especially low-resourced families

What Parents had to Say

Collaborative work between clinicians, school staff and families helps caregivers feel more connected to school

76% said students' relationship with school staff either improved a little or a lot

75% said students' interest in school increased

88% said my child has greater sense of belonging to the school community

75% said their children were more involved in school

Contact Information

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