



Master's Programme in Public Health

Leadership and Professional Perspectives on Public Health MPHP28

Case 8

Focus topic: Promoting Mental Health in Schools, USA

Background:

Public Health—Seattle & King County (PHSKC), through Best Starts for Kids (BSK) is requesting applications from healthcare service providers and school/community partners to implement enhancements to school-based health center (SBHC) services in King County. BSK is King County's community-driven initiative to support every baby born and child raised in King County to be happy, healthy, safe, and thriving. SBHCs are funded through BSK and managed by the School-Based Partnerships Program. The Program advances evidence-based and informed, high quality, equitable, culturally-responsive healthcare to support all students to be healthy and academically successful. Core BSK investments in SBHCs provide direct student support services and are an important bridge between health and education by promoting school attendance, strong relationships, and improved academic performance. Research has consistently demonstrated that health concerns are barriers to student learning and academic success. National level data shows that 20% of children have a diagnosable mental health condition, such as anxiety, depression, or attention-related disorders. An important source of mental health support is within schools including services provided by school staff, school-based health centers, and community-based organizations operating within the school.

The Assignment

Successful applicants will propose projects for an evidence-based intervention within one school district, with the goal to expand SBHC efforts to achieve increased access to mental/behavioral health and related supports, including substance use prevention and treatment and strengths-based, inclusive, community-based services.

You should present a sustainable intervention addressing mental health in the population and propose an RBM framework to track and assess progress in relation to the overall goal. The intervention should target a specific mental health problem and age group across the school district, which should be included among the blueprinted programs on www.blueprintsprograms.org.

BSK puts an emphasis on organizational learning. They fund different evidence-based initiatives, while they coordinate them – with the aim that BSK should gain a better overall understanding of how to accomplish their mission. Hence, to be funded, it is important to describe how the project will generate and contribute knowledge to the overall aim of BSK. The proposal should also make references to relevant analyses such as stakeholder analysis, risk analysis, and how to ensure sustainability. The timeframe should be 2 years (2024-2025). The budget for this project is limited to 400,000 USD.

Expected outcome

The proposal should be presented to the BSK board in Seattle on November 24, 2023.

References

BSK website: <https://kingcounty.gov/depts/community-human-services/initiatives/best-starts-for-kids.aspx>