

Elev8 New Mexico

*\$2.5 Million for Behavioral Health for 6th-12th Grades
in C-D-F Schools with School-Based Health Centers*

2013 Legislative Session







DEVELOPING LIVES

Elev8 New Mexico is an Initiative of Youth Development, Inc.

Behavioral Health Investment Saves Lives, Costs

- Behavioral health care for New Mexico's adolescent students is underfunded. A \$2.5 million recurring investment in behavioral health will save lives and costs.
- When students are anxious or traumatized by violence at home or in their neighborhoods, troubled by substance abuse or bullied, they cannot do well in school and risk dropping out.
- Left untreated, mental health and substance abuse disorders cost more than \$3 billion annually (*Behavioral Health Needs and Gaps in New Mexico 2002*).
- In fact, nearly 10% of New Mexico's budget is impacted by substance abuse issues through effects on other publicly funded systems like health, child welfare, public safety and justice.
- Each \$1 invested in mental health services saves \$10 in other social, governmental and economic costs. Investments in school-based health centers can actually **reduce public costs** associated with primary and emergency treatment and **increase levels of engagement** of students in schools by addressing critical non-academic barriers to academic achievement.

Why Now? To Support Improved Learning

-  Allocating \$2.5 million in **recurring** General Funds for behavioral health **is an investment** in sustained student learning.
-  One in four adolescents suffers some sort of behavioral health problem that can impair school attendance, homework completion and time with family and friends.
-  When treated for behavioral health problems, students do better academically and gain skills to overcome their problems. They can better focus on studies and feel connected to school.
-  Treating students at school removes the stigma. The pressure to miss class and work is removed for both the student and family. School-based health centers can respond quickly and efficiently to needs and uniquely understand adolescents.

Suicide is the 3rd leading cause of death for youth in New Mexico.

In 2007, 14% of adolescents taking the New Mexico Youth Risk and Resiliency Survey said they had attempted suicide. 19% had seriously considered killing themselves in the previous 12 months.

*From New Mexico
Epidemiology
September 2010*

www.elev8kids.org

What's at Risk?

Truancy leads to crime.

The cost of for each inmate in New Mexico is \$30,000.

Escalating emergency room visits.

\$4 billion is spent nationally, each year, on unnecessary emergency room visits.

13-year-olds are especially at risk.

First use of alcohol typically begins around age 13. By their senior year, 64 percent of high school students say they have been drunk at least once; 33 percent say they have been drunk in the past month. (The George Washington University Medical Center)

Approximately 20% of adolescents have a diagnosable mental health disorder. (Columbia University)

Young people overall have higher rates of mental health disorders.

They get into trouble more often than adults and require careful assessment for mental health disorders. These disorders must be treated appropriately. (The George Washington University Medical Center)

The gains young people make during treatment may be undercut when they return to an unhealthy home. They do not always have access to age-appropriate support groups. This explains why they have higher relapse rates than adults and typically require three or four treatment episodes before achieving recovery. (The George Washington University Medical Center)

Many mental health disorders first present during adolescence. (Columbia University)

Students Trust School-Based Health Care

- 85% of students report they are likely to follow school-based health center advice and 72% report they have changed behavior after a school-based health center visit.
- **Columbia University's National Center on Poverty, part of the Mailman School of Public Health, recommends that states** "provide funding to replicate comprehensive school-based health centers throughout the state, particularly those that provide mental health services. Access to on-site, school-based mental health services in school-based health centers increases the likelihood that adolescents will receive mental health services."

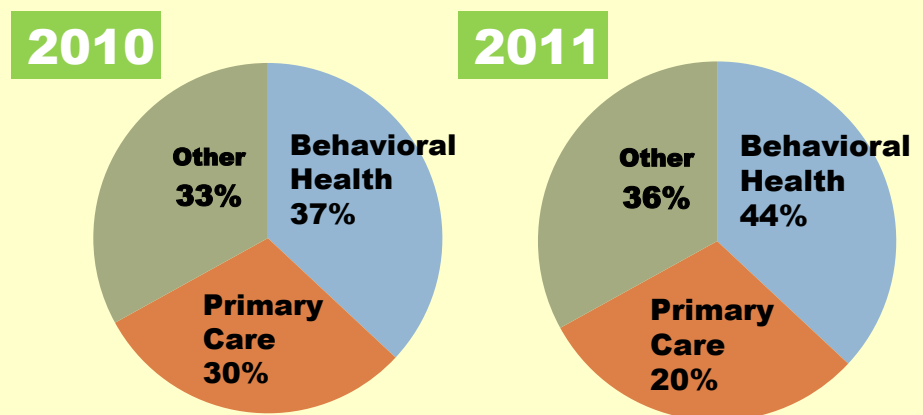
What Can Legislators Do?

1. Recognize that behavioral health is an *essential and critical complement* to education reform in middle and high schools in New Mexico.
2. Include **\$2.5 million** in quality behavioral health supports utilizing standards and benchmarks for school-based behavioral health center services in HB 2 General Appropriations Act of 2013.

How will Dollars Flow?

Funding will flow to the Office of School and Adolescent Health at the Department of Health for school-based health centers in C, D and F middle and high schools to increase behavioral health access and hours. Each center will receive roughly \$44,000 to increase screening, early identification, one-on-one therapy and groups.

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH NEEDS ARE INCREASING AT YDI-ELEV8 NEW MEXICO COMMUNITY SCHOOLS



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