

To: Legislative Behavioral Health Subcommittee

From : Teen Pregnancy Prevention Work Group of Dona Ana County, Las Cruces, NM

RE: School Based Health Center Services in schools rated C, D or F

The Teen Pregnancy Prevention Work Group of Dona Ana County is an advocacy organization that has a commitment to support all the comprehensive health services given at the School Based Health Centers. We presently have Department of Health sponsored SBHCs at Gadsden, Chaparral, Ocate and Las Cruces High Schools.

This is to represent a support letter for proposed funding to the DOH for supporting behavioral health services to schools rated by PED as C,D or F schools. The four high schools mentioned are either C or D rated schools.

We agree with the basic tenet that many children who have mental health issues represent those who will have learning difficulties unless their problems are ameliorated through professional care. Since we have a high poverty rate in the mentioned schools we all know that stresses from living in under these conditions can create undue pressures on families that create burdens on children that spill over to their academic lives. Today, teachers are concentrating on attempting to raise academic achievement levels and may not have the necessary time to address mental health issues that children display in the classrooms. Teachers must have someone to turn to that has the expertise in assisting children through crises or a residue of problems springing from their home environments. The care for these problems sometimes must be immediate and within easy reach for the child. Our experiences with School Based Health Centers has shown that children respond well to services located within the school environment. When mental health issues are confronted the confidentiality of dealing with the problems within the school will greatly assist the students as opposed to being sent to someone outside the school.

We have attached a summary sheet of the visits made to the four SBHCs in the Dona Ana County high schools for 2011-2012. The totals show that there were 2,995 visits made to the centers. Of this number, 1,535 or roughly one half of the total were classified as behavioral health reasons. Employees in the centers will describe cases of depression, anxiety and even suicidal ideation found amongst those coming to the centers. With this type of distribution of visits it becomes quite apparent that we need to fund these centers at a higher level than we are at the present time to provide more resources for this level of care.

Therefore, our organization highly supports legislation that will increase the DOH funding to make more mental health services available for our SBHCs.

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The Community Foundation of SNM-School Based Health Centers-9/2011 to 5.23.2012

2011-2012

School	Las Cruces	Ocate	Gadsden	Chaparral	TOTALS
Based Health Center					
UNDUPLICATED					
YOUTH	188	257	335	279	1059
GENDER					
Males					
(#/%)	47 (27%)	77 (30%)	136 (41%)	92 (33%)	352 (33%)
Females					
(#/%)	141 (75%)	180 (70%)	199 (59%)	187 (67%)	707 (67%)
ETHNICITY					
American Indian	0	1 (0)	0	0	1 (0%)
Asian	6 (3%)	1 (0)	0	0	7 (1%)
Black/African American	5 (3%)	9 (0)	0	6 (2%)	20 (2%)
Hispanic	101 (54%)	157 (61)	317 (95%)	245 (88%)	820 (77%)
Not Specified	2 (1%)	5 (1%)	0	4 (1%)	11 (1%)
White	74 (39%)	84 (33%)	18 (5%)	24 (9%)	200 (19%)
TYPE OF OFFICE VISIT					
Behavioral Health	251 (43%)	419 (49%)	662 (65%)	203 (37%)	1535 (51%)
EPSDT/Well Child-	167 (29%)	125 (15%)	155 (15%)	72 (13%)	519 (17%)

The Community Foundation of SNM-School Based Health Centers-9/2011 to 5.23.2012

2011-2012

Preventative

Family Planning	95 (16%)	115 (13%)	136 (13%)	71 (13%)	417 (13%)
Other Screening	40 (7%)	53 (6%)	1 (0)	18 (3%)	112 (3%)
Primary Care	27 (4%)	116 (14%)	62 (6%)	92 (17%)	297 (10%)
Sports Physical				88 (16%)	88 (4%)
?	2 (0)	22 (3%)		1	25 (1%)
Lab Tests		2 (0)			2 (0)
TOTAL Visits	582	852	1016	545	2995