

Mental Health Services in the Las Cruces Public Schools

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Demographics of the Las Cruces Public Schools

Enrollment – 2014-2015 School year: 24,710 (10-01-2014)

25 Elementary schools

8 Middle schools

4 Comprehensive high schools

2 Early college high schools

1 Preparatory institute

School Counselors

Elementary schools – One counselor per campus

Primary job functions:

1. Brief individual, group, and crisis counseling.
2. Classroom guidance lessons on topics such as bullying and career education.
3. Parent consultation, community referral, and interagency collaboration.

Middle Schools – Two counselors per campus

Primary job functions:

1. Brief individual, group, and crisis counseling.
2. Academic guidance and advisement.
3. Classroom guidance lessons on topics such as bullying and career education.
4. Parent consultation, community referral, and interagency collaboration.

High Schools – Four counselors per comprehensive campus

Primary job functions:

1. Academic guidance and advisement.
2. Brief individual, group, and crisis counseling.
3. Classroom guidance lessons on topics such as bullying and career education.
4. Parent consultation, community referral, and interagency collaboration.

School Based Health Centers

Our four comprehensive high schools and the Rio Grande Preparatory Institute has a School Based Health Center. These centers are operated by community partners. Approximately 70% of the services provided are for mental health. Our community partners are: La Clinica De Familia, Ben Archer Health Center, and the Community Foundation.

Special Education Mental Health Services

Providers:

1. Social Work – Eighteen (18) Master’s level practitioners.
2. School Psychologists – Six (6) Doctoral level and thirteen (13) Master’s level practitioners.

Primary job functions:

1. Provide long-term individual, group, and crisis counseling to special education students with significant emotional and behavioral challenges. Services are prescribed on each student’s Individualized Education Program (IEP).
2. Conduct mental health assessments and/or psychological evaluations.
3. Parent consultation, community referral, and interagency collaboration.

Services Provided:

School Year	Total Students Served	Emotionally Disturbance	Autism
2012-2013	784	215	177
2013-2014	832	183	204
2014-2015	856	192	234

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Collaboration with Community Mental Health Agencies

Services that have been most utilized:

1. Behavior Management Services (BMS) – Families and Youth, Inc. (FYI)/La Frontera
2. Mobile Crisis – Southwest Counseling Center/La Frontera
3. Inpatient Assessment – Mesilla Valley Hospital
4. Classroom-based presentations – La Piñon Sexual Assault and Recovery Services
5. Counseling referrals - Families and Youth, Inc./La Frontera

What has worked:

1. The mobile crisis service, developed under Southwest Counseling Center and continued with La Frontera, has worked well under both agencies.
2. Mesilla Valley Hospital has been consistently responsive to our referrals.
3. La Piñon has provided numerous high quality educational programs for our students.
4. Behavior Management Services - under FYI, this program worked well.
5. Counseling referrals and collaboration – under FYI, the referral process and collaboration worked well.
6. Treatment Foster Care –we have had good collaboration with the Bair Foundation and La Frontera.

What is not working:

1. Behavior Management Services - under La Frontera, this program essentially disappeared. Very few of our students are receiving this service. Many families have complained to our providers about the service being discontinued or severely limited.
2. Counseling referrals – under La Frontera, many families have complained about difficulty getting appointments and experiencing frequent changes in therapists and other providers. Some families have complained that they felt unsupported by La Frontera and that they were concerned that their child was not receiving quality care.
3. Collaboration – under La Frontera, there has been limited collaboration regarding outpatient counseling services.

What we need from community agencies:

1. Continuation of the mobile crisis service.
2. Expansion of Behavior Management Services.
3. Expansion of community-based counseling services for children and adolescents.
4. Improved collaboration between mental health counseling agencies and the schools. In particular, we hope to establish a collaborative relationship with La Clinica De Familia as they take over the community mental health counseling services from La Frontera.