Frontline School-Based Stakeholders and the Mental Health Literacy Needs of Adolescents: A Program Evaluation by Sherrie Page Guyer, DNP, MSN, RN



SCHOOL of NURSING

Purpose

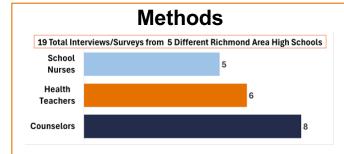
 To evaluate a mental health literacy curriculum used for adolescents in a school setting

Background

- In 2023, the CDC reports that:
 - **40%** of high school students felt persistently sad or hopeless
 - 29% experienced poor mental health
 - 20% seriously considered attempting suicide
 - 9% of high school students attempted suicide
- •Virginia SOLs require 1 semester total of mental health education in either 9th or 10th grade
- •There is no standardized best practice curriculum for Mental Health Literacy (MHL) Education
- •School Nurses are often the initial access point to identify concerns, determine interventions, and link families to school and/or community resources (NASN)







- Stakeholder meetings included at least one school nurse, counselor, and health teacher for a total of 19 completed expert stakeholder feedback forms
- •Qualitative thematic analysis on data derived from semi-structured focus group interviews/surveys

Main Themes Identified by School Stakeholders

- 1. Virginia's MHL SOLs need strengthened
- 2. Students need more MHL Education than is allotted for in the school schedule
- 3. Context Matters
- 4. School-wide coordination of MHL and a culture that supports positive mental health is vital
- **5.** School stakeholders crave guidance on navigating the multiple access to care barriers that exist beyond the school setting

Implications

- Work with schools to implement more MHL education, including touchpoints beyond 9th and 10th grade
- Context Matters: Encourage a school-wide supportive culture and coordination of MHL that includes: (1) a school-based behavioral health team with nurse representation; (2) administration; (3) parents; (4) students (5) identity relevance reflected in MHL curricula and in the school community
- Work with local and state governments to impact policy changes to address gaps in MHL education
- Clear pathways for help and referrals outside of school are needed
- Develop ways to measure impact of MHL education

Project Team

- DNP Advisor: Regina DeGennaro, DNP, APRN, CNS, AOCN. CNL
- Second Reviewer: Richard J. Westphal, PhD, RN, PMHCNS-BC, PMHNP-BC, FAAN
- Clinical Research Data Specialist: David Martin, PHD
- Practice Site Mentors: Sarah Jaynes-Gobble, MEd and Catie-Reagan King, EdD

References:

