

Illinois' Interconnected Systems Model for School Mental Health

Tier 3: Intensive Interventions

Individual Student and Family Supports

- System Planning Team coordinates decision rules, referrals for this level of services and progress monitors.
- Individual team developed to support each student.
- Individual plans may have an array of interventions and services.
- System in place for each team to monitor student progress
- Plans can range from one to multiple domains.

Tier 2: Early Intervention

Coordinated Systems for Early Detection, Identification, and Response to Mental Health Concerns

- System Planning Team identified to coordinator referral, process, decision rules and progress monitor impact of interventions.
- Array of interventions/services available
- Communication system for staff, families, and the community.
- Early identification of students who may be at risk for mental health concerns due to specific risk factors.
- Skill-building at the individual and group level as well as support groups
- Staff and family training to support skill development across settings

Tier I: Universal/Prevention

Coordinated Systems, Data, Practices for Promoting Healthy Social and Emotional Development for ALL Students

- School Improvement team gives priority to Prevention and Promotion of Mental Wellness.
- Behavioral Health Skills development for students, staff, families and communities
- Safe & Caring learning Environments that reduce barriers to teaching and learning, and engages or re-engages students in the academic process.
- Partnerships between school, home, and the community
- Decision making framework used to guide and implement best practices that consider unique strengths and challenges of each school community.

The Three Tiers Defined

Universal/Prevention: Policies and practices that target the **entire population of a school** to promote and enhance wellness by increasing social, emotional and behavioral skills and improving academic outcomes. This includes school-wide programs that foster safe and caring learning environments and engage students; are culturally appropriate; promote social, emotional, and behavioral learning; and develop connections between school, home, and community. Data review should guide the design of Tier 1 strategies. Typically 80-90% of students are expected to have their needs met with Tier I supports, thereby decreasing dependence on Tier II or III interventions. Universal approaches should reflect the specific needs of the school population. For example, cognitive behavioral instruction on anger management techniques may be part of a school-wide strategy delivered to the whole population in one school, while it may be considered a Tier 2 intervention only provided for some students in another school

Early Interventions: Policies and practices that **support intervening early after the onset of an identified concern, or addressing individual students or subgroups of students whose risk of developing mental health concerns is higher than average based on key risk factors** (e.g., exposure to violence and trauma, loss of a parent or loved one, or frequent moves resulting in multiple school placements). While the risk may be imminent or lifelong, risk factors do not necessarily indicate poor outcomes. Protective factors and early intervention can solidify a pathway towards positive outcomes. Effective interventions are implemented through the use of a comprehensive developmental approach that is collaborative, culturally sensitive and geared towards skill development and increasing protective factors for students and their families. Teachers, family members and students themselves may identify risk factors or concerns.

Treatment: Which are **interventions for the roughly 1-5 percent of youth who are identified as having the most severe, chronic, or pervasive concerns** that may or may not meet diagnostic criteria. Interventions are implemented through the use of a highly individualized, comprehensive and developmental approach that uses a collaborative team process. Typical examples of Tier 3 interventions include but are not limited to: complex function-based behavior support plans that address problem behavior at home and school, evidence-based individual and family interventions, and/or comprehensive wraparound plans that include natural support persons and other community systems to address needs in order to maintain or promote enhanced functioning across all areas of a student's life.

Adapted from the Framework for a Coordinated Mental Health System in Illinois for Children Ages 0-18, which was originally adapted from Minnesota Children's Mental Health Task Force, Minnesota Framework for a Coordinated System to Promote Mental Health in Minnesota; center for Mental Health in Schools, Interconnected Systems for Meeting the Needs of All Youngsters
These systems include early childhood, education, mental health, juvenile justice, health, human services, substance abuse, violence prevention, corrections, schools, and other relevant systems.