



Quick Tips for Mental Health

quick tips...

Essential information and/or interesting facts from Special Education Services, Alabama State Department of Education.



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SCHOOL-BASED MENTAL HEALTH (SBMH) SERVICES

The *Alabama Department of Mental Health* and *Alabama State Department of Education* have identified the need for a deliberate strategy aimed at improving service quality within and continuity between the two departments. The aim is to achieve greater integration of mental health services between the mental health centers and the public schools and to increase the utilization of evidence-based practices. The integration of these services will foster continuity of care and ensure sustained gains in academic and developmental domains for children, youth, and their families.

The goal of the School-Based Mental Health Services (SBMH) collaboration between the *Alabama Department of Mental Health* and its providers and the *Alabama State Department of Education* and Alabama's local education agencies is to ensure that children and adolescents, both general and special education, enrolled in local school systems have access to high quality mental health prevention, early intervention and treatment services. To be effective, comprehensive mental health services in schools must be provided by an on-site master's level mental health professional in collaboration with teachers, administrators, and families.

The SBMH programs are designed to ensure that mental health needs of children and adolescents in the public schools are identified early on and addressed in a competent manner through a school, family, and community mental health partnership.

SBMH services with the ultimate goal of optimal social-emotional health for school-aged children and adolescents include:

- High quality services that build on existing school programs, services, and strategies,
- A continuum of care in a school setting-mental health education and promotion through intensive intervention,
- Authentic parent/family engagement,
- Meaningful children and youth involvement,
- Culturally and linguistically competent service provision, and
- Data-driven planning, evaluation and quality improvement.

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