Public Health Models of Mental Health

Cari Michaels, Lindsey Weiler, & Clay Cook
Shifting the Mental Health Narrative
Dual Continuum Model of Mental Health

Quadrant 1
- Good mental health
- No mental illness
- Flourishing

Quadrant 2
- Severe Stress on Mental Health
- No Mental Illness
- Languishing

Quadrant 3
- Severe Stress on Mental Health
- Mental Illness
- Languishing and Mental Illness

Quadrant 4
- Good mental health
- Mental Illness
- Flourishing and Mental Illness

Mental Flourishing

**EMOTIONAL**
How we Feel

- Happiness
- Life satisfaction
- Interest in life

**PSYCHOLOGICAL**
How we Function Individually

- Positive relationships
- Self-acceptance
- Identity or purpose
- Personal growth
- Environmental mastery
- Autonomy

**SOCIAL**
How we Function in Society

- Social acceptance
- Social actualization
- Sense of community
- Social contribution
- Social coherence

Mental Flourishing = 1 Emotional + 6 Psychological or Social

Ecological Approach

Individual

Relationships

Organizations

Communities

Policy

Society

[Diagram of layers]
Mental Health and Well-being: A Socio-Ecological Model

Based on the Ecology of Human Development originally created by Dr. Urie Bronfenbrenner

to learn more visit z.umn.edu/mhecomodel
Mental Health Intervention Spectrum
Mental Health Intervention Spectrum

Fig. from Purcell et al., 2019 based on Haggerty & Mrazek, 1994
A Trauma-informed Public Health Approach
Trauma: A Ubiquitous Risk Factor For Mental Health Challenges

Trauma

- any disturbing experience that results in significant fear, helplessness, dissociation, confusion, or other disruptive feelings intense enough to have a long-lasting negative effect on a person’s attitudes, behavior, and other aspects of functioning. Traumatic events include those caused by human behavior (e.g., rape, war, industrial accidents) as well as by nature (e.g., earthquakes) and often challenge an individual’s view of the world as a just, safe, and predictable place.

Intergenerational or historical trauma

- a phenomenon in which the descendants of a person who has experienced a terrifying event show adverse emotional and behavioral reactions to the event that are similar to those of the person themself.
Examples of the Impact of Trauma
70

Percent of college students enrolled in 18 postsecondary institutions in Minnesota report having experienced at least one adverse childhood experience (ACE)

2018 College Student Health Survey Report; Health & Health-Related Behaviors. Boynton Health
Can traumatic stress be prevented or mitigated?

Yes!

Applying a trauma-informed public health approach to mental health can (a) prevent the occurrence of traumatic experiences and (b) decrease the prevalence of toxic and traumatic stress, thereby improving mental health and wellness.
The Four Rs: Key Assumptions in a Trauma-Informed Approach

**Realize**
- Realize the widespread impact of trauma and understand paths for prevention and recovery

**Recognize**
- Recognize the signs and symptoms of trauma in students and others

**Respond**
- Respond by fully integrating knowledge of trauma into policies, procedures, and practices

**Resist**
- Resist re-traumatization of students, as well as those who work and care for them

*Adapted from SAMSHA and Child Trends*
What are the principles of trauma-informed approach to promoting mental health?

**Safety**
- Throughout the institution, people feel physically and psychologically safe

**Trustworthiness + Transparency**
- Decisions are made with transparency, and with the goal of building and maintaining trust

**Peer Support**
- Individuals with shared experiences are integrated within the institution and viewed as integral to implementation

**Collaboration**
- Power differences — between individuals of authority and students — are leveled to support shared decision-making

**Empowerment**
- Student and others strengths are recognized, built on, and validated — this includes a belief in resilience and the ability to heal from trauma

**Humility + Responsiveness**
- Biases and stereotypes (e.g., based on race, sexual orientation) and historical trauma are recognized and addressed

(Adapted from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration’s “Guiding Principles of Trauma-Informed Care.”)
Trauma-informed campus environments benefit everyone: those whose trauma history is known, those whose trauma will never be clearly identified, those who were prevented from experiencing trauma, those who have yet to experience trauma, and those who may be impacted by the behavior of trauma-affected students, staff, or faculty (Davidson, 2017)
Bringing to Life the Public Health Model in Education
Higher education can be iatrogenic for some young people
Tale of Two Access Gaps

1. Access to needed experiences/supports
2. Enhancing quality of experiences/supports
Public Health Model in Education
Multi-Tiered System of Support

A framework for organizing the delivery of a continuum of supports that can be matched to the level of a person’s need AND the collection and use of data to continuously improve towards achieving specific outcomes of interest (e.g., improved mental wellness and reductions in mental health problems)
Example: MTSS

Tier 1 Universal for ALL
- Prevent
- Promote
- Solid foundation to enable interventions to work

- Mass mental health literacy campaign;
- Universal course on wellbeing for all incoming freshman
Example: MTSS

Tier 2 Targeted for SOME

- Proactive detection of students to activate early intervention
- Self-referral to brief group counseling
- Mentoring or coaching supports
Example: MTSS

Tier 3 Intensive for a FEW

- Intensive individualized support
- Increase intensity of mentoring / coaching supports
- Multi-provider collaboration
Effective Dissemination

Strategic and intentional process of communicating information to target audiences to increase their awareness, knowledge, attitudes and motivation to take action.
Effective Dissemination

Who disseminates the information

What is the content of the communication: Persuasive, Relevant

Who are the intended targets to receive the information

How the information will be strategically shared to reach the audience?
1. **Outcome**: what do we want to achieve/produce as a result of what we do
2. **Practices**: what will we intentionally do to produce the outcome
3. **Systems**: What systems of support are needed to implement the practices
4. **Data**: What data will be gathered to monitor how it’s working and make improvements
President’s Initiative
Student Mental Health