Why is a community-based clinician   
coming to the school?

# Frequently Asked Questions

## about School-based Mental Health Services

This year, your school will be partnering with a community based mental health agency to offer services to students at your school. The goal of the project is to expand access to mental health services. Your school will work with the agency to identify students who might need services, and counseling happens at the school, during the school day. This service will not cost the school anything; the community based agency will work with the families to bill Medicaid or private insurance for these services.

How is this different from what our school psychologist and social worker do?

The clinician from the community-based agency will work as a team with your school mental health professionals. They will be able to add capacity to provide mental health services to students. They also may have more flexibility to work with students on issues that are primarily manifesting at home rather than school.

What are the steps to refer a student to   
in-school counseling with a community-based agency?

Let your school based mental health team know if you think that one of your students might benefit from counseling. The team will contact the student’s family to explain why the student was referred. Once the school has made contact with the family and the family has confirmed interest in services, the school will pass the referral on to the community-based agency.

When the community-based agency receives a referral, what do they do with it?

After receiving a referral, the agency will reach out to the family and set up an intake appointment in the home or at school. The clinician will work with the family and the student to create goals and a treatment plan for the student.

Can the clinician see a student who   
is already receiving services from   
another agency?

Possibly. Depending on the situation, Medicaid/insurance will sometimes pay for multiple services. When a student is referred, the clinical partner will follow up and determine whether the student can receive additional school-based services.

Will the clinician work with parents as well?

Yes. Clinicians will make an effort to communicate with parents and if they feel it is necessary, they may make home visits.

I think a student needs home-based or other services beyond seeing the clinician at school—are you able to provide those?

If a clinician feels that a child needs additional services, they will refer the child for whatever they feel is needed. Sometimes, these referrals will stay within the agency and other times they will be referred to other agencies, depending on availability and need. The clinician will continue to see the child if they are placed on a waiting list and will communicate with the school about the status of the referral.

What if a parent or guardian doesn’t want their child to be seen by the clinician?

Unfortunately, families are sometimes uncomfortable with having their child seen by a clinician. There are many reasons that a family might make this decision and we are not able to require that a family accept these services. If you feel that a family who has previously turned down these services has changed their mind, let your school-based team know.

Do you continue to see students over   
school vacations?

Yes! If the family wishes to continue services during break, the clinician will continue to see them at the home, in the community, or at school.