

# SAP CONNECTION

February 2022



Prepared by: PA Network for Student Assistance Services (PNSAS)

[www.pnsas.org](http://www.pnsas.org)

## PNSAS INTERAGENCY UPDATE

### PA Interactive Gaming Report 2021

The Pennsylvania Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs (DDAP), Penn State University (PSU), and the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board (PGCB) released the first-of-its-kind report analyzing the impact of Interactive Gaming, also referred to as online gambling or iGaming in Pennsylvania. The findings of this report were generated from a survey of more than 1,100 individuals across Pennsylvania throughout 2020-21 and indicate:

- Approximately 1 in 10 Pennsylvanians engage in interactive gaming.
- The most popular interactive gaming is sports betting and nearly half of all who participate in interactive gaming are engaged in sports betting.
- Nearly half of all those who engage in interactive gaming exhibit at least one problem gambling behavior.

### Life Unites Us Campaign

The Pennsylvania Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs (DDAP), in partnership with Penn State Harrisburg's Douglas W. Pollock Center for Addiction Outreach and Research, The Public Good Projects (PGP), and Shatterproof, announced findings from the first year of the Life Unites Us campaign, an evidence-based approach to reducing the stigma of opioid use disorder (OUD). Life Unites Us launched in September 2020 and utilizes social media to spread stories of individuals and their family members battling OUD, hosts webinars sharing tools and information to effectively reduce stigma, and maintains an interactive data dashboard detailing the campaign's progress.

In the first 12 months of the campaign, nearly four million Pennsylvanians were reached with information and messaging to encourage stigma reduction. More than 200 individuals in recovery, as well as their family members, recorded testimonials that were shared on the campaign's website and social media channels. A survey of Pennsylvanians conducted one year after campaign launch found several trends, including greater willingness to live with someone and continue a relationship with a friend struggling with OUD. Pennsylvanians also indicated higher willingness to provide naloxone to friends and family of people with OUD, and openness to having opioid treatment centers located near their homes.

## 2022 PSA Contest for Youth Suicide Prevention



Prevent Suicide PA is pleased to share information about the voting process for this year's entries to the high school PSA contest. Participating in the voting process is a great opportunity to engage staff and students in a dialogue around suicide prevention, the importance of positive messaging and youth voice, and encouraging help-seeking. The 2022 PSA contest page can be accessed at <https://psa.preventsuicidepa.org/>.

There are two mechanisms for voting.

### **School Vote**

School voting is open from January 26 – February 25. We would love for your school to have a voice and raise awareness, as well as display the work that was created by the students throughout Pennsylvania. More information can be found on the PSA website (link above)

### **Public Vote**

The public voting is open from Wednesday, February 2 – February 25. This voting is open to anyone and can be shared widely. Contest winners will be announced in early March, and winners will be honored in the spring. All the PSAs on the website are available for public use to support awareness efforts in schools and communities. The winners and honorable mentions from past years of the contest can be viewed at <https://psa.preventsuicidepa.org/previous-contests>.

## **SAP BACK TO BASICS**

### **Aligning SAP with Multi-Tiered Frameworks**

Schools throughout Pennsylvania are continuously striving to meet the growing needs of students. This happens in a variety of ways, whether it's identifying a new staff training opportunity, seeking out additional community partners, or implementing a new small-group intervention. Sometimes, the way to improve upon existing efforts is not necessarily to add more initiatives or strategies to what is already in place, but rather to think about how existing efforts can be made more efficient. SAP is required in all schools, and there have been ongoing statewide efforts over the past decade to support schools in implementing multi-tiered decision-making frameworks such as Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS). Given that these efforts have a common goal of identifying and supporting the needs of students, it makes sense that teams would begin to question whether there is a way to align or integrate them.

### **How to Determine if Your Teams are "Ready"**

A [guidance document](#) was recently developed to assist schools in thinking about aligning their efforts. It provides questions for teams to consider, resources to assist teams with specific action steps, and examples of strategies from schools that have had success in navigating this process. If you're asking yourself, "how do I know if this process makes sense for my SAP team?" then consider the following:

- **Assess fidelity.** Before starting to think about how to align your SAP team with multi-tiered approaches, it is essential to assess where your teams are at. Schools that have had success in aligning their efforts started by ensuring they had a strong and well-functioning SAP team, or they looked to strengthen SAP once they achieved fidelity with implementation of PBIS or MTSS at the universal level. Starting with a solid foundation is essential.
- **Identify the "why."** There are many potential reasons for schools to align SAP with their multi-tiered efforts. A primary reason is often to increase efficiency, whether by reducing time spent in meetings, improving communication, or streamlining referral pathways and access to supports. Start by talking to your team members about potential goals, prior to deciding whether to move forward. If your school is not yet engaged in multi-tiered approaches, there may not be a need to work toward alignment.

- **Find the champions.** This process takes teamwork, so consider who should be at the table. An enthusiastic and cohesive group will be important to establish a shared vision, create an action plan, and divide and conquer tasks in moving toward long-term goals. Leadership support is also essential to help guide this process and address barriers that arise.
- **Build on your strengths.** Each school and team is unique in their strengths, needs, and resources. To move forward most effectively in meeting your goals for alignment or integration of efforts, it is important for your team to have an awareness of these. That awareness may come from internal discussions, external feedback, or engaging in more formalized processes like needs assessment and resource mapping.
- **Practice patience.** This process takes time and lots of work. However, if your team decides that alignment makes sense, know that time invested in this process will likely lead to time saved in the long-run once your team meets its goals. Break down those goals into concrete and realistic action steps with reasonable timelines, and celebrate small successes along the way.

### Getting Started

If your team is just beginning to discuss the alignment process, or even if they have already taken some initial steps forward, the following questions may be helpful:

- Which initiatives (e.g., SAP, MTSS, PBIS) are currently being implemented with fidelity and in which buildings?
- What do team structures, roles, and responsibilities look like at each tier?
- What internal and external resources support alignment and integration, and has the LEA engaged in a formal resource mapping process?
- What are the referral mechanisms and procedures, including routing processes?
- What are the SAP, MTSS, and/or PBIS-related training needs of the following groups?
  - Current team members
  - General staff
  - Parents and families
  - Students
  - Community members

If your team is looking for additional support for the initial phases of this process, reach out to your [PNSAS Regional Coordinator](#) and/or your local facilitator from the [PaPBS Network](#) or [PaTTAN](#).

### Key Resources:

- [Practical Guidance for Exploring the Integration and Alignment of the Student Assistance Program \(SAP\) with a Multi-Tiered Framework of Support – August 2021](#)
- [Practical Guidance Brief Overview Document](#)
- National Implementation Research Network: [Initiative Inventory and Process Tool](#)
- National Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavior Interventions and Support: [Technical Guide for Alignment of Initiatives, Programs and Practices in School Districts](#)
- Pennsylvania Network for Student Assistance Services: [Student Assistance Program Best Practice Guidelines for Fidelity](#)
- SAP/PBIS Integration Comparison/Contrast Analysis Tool from or the Planning for SAP/PBIS Alignment and Merger from the [2017 SAP and PBIS Integration Practical Guidance Document](#)
- National Center for School Mental Health: [School Mental Health Quality Guide: Needs Assessment and Resource Mapping](#)

## **RESOURCES and NEWS**

### **Center for Mental Health in Schools & Student/Learning Supports at UCLA**

#### **Mental Health in Schools: We Won't Argue Against Adding More Counselors, BUT ...**

News Headline: *Plan to increase mental health staff in schools – 250 million would add 10,000 clinicians across state.*

While the numbers for smaller states will be less dramatic, the tendency is the same in many states, namely, to add a few more “mental health” staff. At first glance, adding 10,000 appears like a lot, but there are a little over 10,000 schools in the state cited in the article. COVID-19 certainly has underscored that schools must play a greater role in addressing mental health concerns. The question is: *How best to do it?*

As in the past, we see folks simply drawing on old and simplistic ideas, such as hiring another student support staff member for a school (e.g., a counselor, psychologist, social worker).

There are also some efforts to:

- use schools as an integrated component of the mental health services delivery system.
- increase the emphasis on mental health education.
- expand the school’s focus on social and emotional learning.

*All of these are relevant, but insufficient to fully embed mental health in schools, especially given everything schools need to do in the wake of COVID-19.* And the way MTSS, PBIS, and Community Schools are being adopted and how relief funds are being used related to mental health concerns tend to perpetuate approaches that are too limited for effectively dealing with the multifaceted and complex problems schools have and continue regularly to experience.

Given the relatively small pool of resources available to so many schools and the range of students in need, this is a critical time for schools to:

- rethink how they are addressing barriers to learning and teaching.
- improve their approach to reengaging disconnected students and their families.

The essential goal is to transform student/learning support so that the sparse resources available can be deployed in more potent ways to address the wide-range of factors interfering with school learning and teaching. The focus of such system (re)building is on:

- unifying the district's student/learning supports.
- weaving in whatever resources the community and those at home can add.

For more information click [here](#).

### **SAMHSA: Updated Data Visualizations (poster/fact sheets)**

These data visualizations on underage drinking have been updated with the latest statistics from SAMHSA’s 2020 National Survey on Drug Use and Health.

- [\*Be Prepared to Have the Difficult Conversation\*](#) This data visualization illustrates the correlation between alcohol use and other substance use to inform parents/guardians and communities.
- [\*Getting Ahead of a Problem\*](#) This data visualization illustrates the drinking habits of adolescents to inform parents/guardians and communities.
- [\*Take Action to Prevent Underage Alcohol Use\*](#) This data visualization illustrates the steady decline of alcohol use amongst adolescents, informing parents/guardians and communities that taking action against underage drinking is effective.

## **SAMHSA: N-MHSS**

N-MHSS is the only source of national and state-level data on the mental health services delivery system reported by both publicly and privately operated specialty mental health treatment facilities. They include:

- Public and private psychiatric hospitals
- Nonfederal general hospitals with separate psychiatric units
- U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers
- Residential treatment centers for children and adults
- Community mental health centers
- Outpatient, day treatment, or partial hospitalization mental health facilities
- Multi-setting (non-hospital) mental health facilities

N-MHSS complements the information gathered through the National Survey of Substance Abuse Treatment Services (N-SSATS).

See the annual report by clicking [here](#).

## **LGBTQ+ Trauma: A Fact Sheet**

The LGBTQ+ TA Center recently shared a new resource about responding to trauma that affects the behavioral health needs and recovery journeys of LGBTQ+ people. This new, introductory resource provides a one page overview of trauma, resilience, and the elements of a trauma-informed approach. It includes specific examples of how trauma may impact LGBTQ+ people, both as individuals and as people with a shared history. This resource is written for behavioral health service providers, but it is perfect to share with ALL who would benefit from a basic understanding of trauma from an LGBTQ+ lens.

## **TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES**

### **Alcohol is STILL a Drug: An Exploratory Webinar Series**

Tuesday, February 1, 2022, at 11:00-11:30 AM

Alcohol is STILL a drug. The opioid crisis, increase in stimulant misuse, and marijuana legalization dominate the news—yet alcohol remains the number one substance causing health, social, legal, and financial problems throughout the United States. While this series will focus on the hopefulness of recovery from alcohol use disorder, we'll also take a deep dive into what we know about the full impact of alcohol overuse and the ways it affects every person in the United States. All sessions in this series will be held on the first Tuesday of each month.

### **Health at Every Size® The Way to Healing from Diet Culture and Body Dissatisfaction—Webinar**

Wednesday, February 2, 2022, at 11:00 AM

This webinar will explore how diet culture has influenced the way society thinks about health and self-image, and how the Health At Every Size movement is dismantling those ideals to shift beauty standards and create equal access to healthcare for bodies of all shapes and sizes.

### **Tools for your Trade: Brain Injury and Behavioral Health—Webinar**

Wednesday, February 2, 2022, at 12:00 PM

Brain injury and related behavior challenges can have dramatic, lifelong impact on employment, family dynamics and quality of life. Learn about two new customized tools to guide behavioral health and community providers in supporting better outcomes for individuals with brain injury and behavioral health needs.

### **Alcohol Use Disorders and Treatment in African Americans—Webinar**

Thursday, February 3, 2022, at 11:30 AM

Biological factors associated with alcohol will be reviewed as well as the etiology and epidemiology of alcohol use disorder. The webinar will discuss elements of the diagnosis of alcohol use disorder along with treatment modalities emphasizing Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT). In addition, the presenter will explore the issue of alcohol use in African Americans and the fact that despite lower alcohol use, African Americans experience more alcohol-related problems.

### **Resources for School-Based Behavioral Health Professionals During COVID-19—Webinar Series**

Friday, February 4, 2022, at 3:00 PM

This is a four-part virtual training series on working with youth, parents, and other professionals during a global pandemic. This series will focus on mental health in uncertain times, thinking outside the box to support people virtually and in-person, and resource development for providers. Participants will gain resources, tools, and contacts to use while developing professional skills.

- Session 1: Friday, February 4, 2022—Identifying Burn Out, Grief/Loss, and Crisis While Providing Support for Others
- Session 2: Friday, February 11, 2022—Supporting Passionate Parents and De-Escalating Parents in Crisis
- Session 3: Friday, February 18, 2022—Connecting With Children and Teens in These Uncertain Times
- Session 4: Friday, February 25, 2022—Creating a Sense of Community and Finding Resources in Your Area

### **Center of Excellence LBTQ+ Behavioral Health Equity**

**Discussion on Gaps in Behavioral Health Services for Black and African American LGBTQ+ People** and what providers can do to fill those gaps. Panelists will share personal and professional experiences and offer practical tips for behavioral health providers to integrate into their practices.

Wednesday, February 16 at 3:30-5:00 PM

Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

### **Providing Culturally Responsive MH Services to Latinx LGBTQ+ Folx**

Tuesday, February 22, at 1:00-2:30 PM

This webinar will give context to the intersectionality of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and gender identity faced by Latinx LGBTQ+ communities. The presenter will explore Latinx culture while examining how LGBTQ+ identities and mental health is perceived within the culture. The presenter will also share knowledge to assist with transitioning from rejecting behaviors to affirming, culturally responsive best practices when providing mental health care to the Latinx LGBTQ+ community.

Register here: [Non-credit Registration](#) ,[CEU Registration](#) ,and [CME Registration](#)

**SAP Trainings:** available both in person and virtually in certain locations throughout the state. These trainings are delivered by PA Approved SAP Training Providers.

For a complete listing click [here](#) to access the training calendar.

**The Pennsylvania Care Partnership:** offers trainings and webinars throughout the year.

Click [here](#) for this year's events.

**PA Parent and Family Alliance:** Access archived webinar on SAP geared towards caregivers and other webinars for families. They provide tip sheets and resources as well as family support groups and individual support to parents and caregivers.

Click [here](#) to access their website.

### **PA Association of Student Assistance Professionals Conference**

Join PASAP for the 2022 Virtual PASAP Conference, February 27-April 10, 2022.

Free registration for all members, non-member rate is \$50.00.

For conference details and registration, [click here](#).

### **National Drug and Alcohol Facts Week**

The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)

Join a week-long national health observance highlighting the science-based facts about drugs, alcohol, and addiction.

March 21–27, 2022

Click [here](#) to register your event.

### **Health Equity Summit**

Hosted by PA Department of Health Office of Health Equity and the American Lung Association

April 6-7, 2022 in Pittsburgh

Learning Objectives:

- Explore how social determinates of health and equity impact individual and population health.
- Discover innovative solutions used nationally and in Pennsylvania to reduce health inequalities in both rural and urban settings.
- Determine and commit to steps organizations, communities and individuals can take to increase health equity and eliminate health disparities.

For more information click [here](#).

## **FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES**

### **PCCD Substance Abuse Education (SAEDR) – Category 1, Youth Focus**

E-grant application due February 24, 2022

PCCD will accept applications for two-year projects with budgets not to exceed \$150,000 over two years. There is no cash or in-kind match requirement under this funding announcement. All projects should be designed to be self-sustaining upon the conclusion of the two-year funding period.

Funding is available for nonprofit organizations to serve youth with research-based or evidence-based approaches to prevention, intervention, training, treatment, and education services to reduce substance use or provide resources to assist families in accessing these services. Nonprofit organizations may partner with a local government unit but are not required to do so. Available funds are awarded through PCCD and will support the implementation of community-based, accessible, research-based approaches and practices in prevention, intervention, treatment, training, and education that reduce and/or eliminate youth substance abuse. Funds will also support resources that assist families/loved ones in accessing these services. The objectives and anticipated impacts of the funding initiative vary by focus and include, but are not limited to:

- Increase the number of projects implemented by a county opioid task force or coalition.
- Increase the number of available services related to reducing substance use among youth.
- Increase family engagement to reduce and eliminate negative behaviors.
- Improve youth and family decision-making regarding substance use.
- Decrease substance misuse in the service area.

Click [here](#) for more information.