

SAP CONNECTION

December 2022



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PNSAS INTERAGENCY UPDATE

SAP Article

A Collaborative Analysis of Trends in Referrals to the Pennsylvania Student Assistance Program from 2013 to 2018 was published in the November edition of the Journal of School Health. The article highlights SAP PDE4092 data evaluation (2013-2018) done by Penn State PRO Wellness. Check it out to see referral demographics, trends, and implications for SAP moving forward. It is also posted on the PNSAS website on the home page. Click [here](#) for the full article.

SAP BACK TO BASICS

Wellness: Self-Care Over the Holidays

The holiday season has started. Staff feels stressed, students are acting out, referrals are flooding in, and you feel overwhelmed. Possibly even more stressful are those of us who aren't hearing about students but know the needs are out there. You think about your teams, staff, districts, schools, students, and families when you aren't at work and you're beginning to feel overwhelmed or stressed. Does this sound like you? If so- THAT IS NORMAL! When we are faced with work stress, life stress, decreasing sunlight, and the holiday season all feelings are normal and valid. A study by the American Psychological Association found that 38% of people feel their stress levels increase during the holiday season. For individuals who are struggling with a mental illness, 64% report symptoms increasing during the holiday season. Stress can lead to increased risk of illness, substance misuse, and higher rates of depression and anxiety.

While stress can lead to undesirable outcomes, there is support available. In addition to utilizing supports available widely through Texting PA to 741-741, or using the 988-crisis line, we want to also focus on self-care to decrease symptomatology and increase coping skills.

When we think self-care sometimes, we think about big things like getting pedicures, massages, vacation, or going out to dinner. What if we changed our view of self-care? When we say self-care, we are referencing any intentional action that is done to take care of our own mental, emotional, spiritual, or physical health. Think about all the things you do during the day that help you maintain your feelings of calmness, balance, and wellbeing. During the holiday season it can be hard to focus on those strategies. Not sure what your body's signs are that you're stressed? Check out this Listening and Responding to Stress in Your Body resource from the [Compassion Resilience Toolkit](#).

What can you do to support yourself during the holiday season?

There are many ways you can continue your self-care during the holiday season. One of the main ones is through focusing on your boundaries. This can be hard, especially with family and friends, but with practice gets easier.

Some additional ideas include:

- Make sure your expectations are realistic. Ask yourself if you are expecting too much from yourself or from someone else. Not sure? Ask yourself how the expectations are making you feel- if they are not helpful, think about ways to modify them.
- Practice saying “no”. Boundary setting is hard, and we often think if we say no, we are letting people down. However, knowing that we can’t say yes to everything helps us set helpful boundaries. Tips for Setting Compassionate Boundaries can be found in the Compassion Resilience Toolkit.
- Limit holiday pressure from others. Do you find yourself comparing yourself to others? Try and remind yourself that images on social media and mainstream media don’t reflect real life. Think about times you posted things on social media that were not reflective of the whole story. If you can’t stop comparing yourself, taking a break from social media can be helpful. Take time to enjoy other activities that aren’t related to the holidays.
- Practice self-compassion. Allowing ourselves to feel our feelings without labeling them as good or bad can be hard. By practicing self-compassion, we learn to provide support to ourselves that we would provide to others we care about. Activities such as this self-compassion exercise can be helpful. If you need additional support or want to explore this further, Dr. Kristen Neff specializes in self-compassion and her website provides meditations and activities to practice this skill.
- Access sunlight. The days are shorter, and sunlight can be harder to find during the holiday season. Making sure you are accessing light is important for your physical and mental well-being. This can include being directly outside, sitting by a sunny window, or using an artificial light source to support vitamin D production. Meta-analysis of Vitamin D studies on mental health show naturally occurring Vitamin D (think sunlight) supports better mental wellbeing and lower levels of sadness and anxiety.
- Limit Access. Limiting access to you is an important part of boundary setting. You are not a 24/7 convenience store – make sure to prioritize “you” time that does not include email access and phone access. Outside of being on call for crisis, think about not keeping your phone beside you when you sleep, turning off notifications, or removing email access from your phone.

Regardless of what you do to take care of you, remember that self-care is a necessary part of our wellbeing and is not selfish.

Self-care is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation. ~ Audre Lorde
An empty lantern provides no light. Self-care is the fuel that allows your light to shine brightly. ~ Unknown



RESOURCES AND NEWS

Know the Risks of Marijuana- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

Marijuana use comes with real risks that can impact a person’s health and life. Marijuana is the most commonly used illegal substance in the U.S. and its use is growing. Marijuana use among all adult age groups, both sexes, and pregnant women is going up. At the same time, the perception of how harmful marijuana use can be is declining. Increasingly, young people today do not consider marijuana use a risky behavior.

But there are real risks for people who use marijuana, especially youth and young adults, and women who are pregnant or nursing. Today's marijuana is stronger than ever before. People can and do become addicted to marijuana.

Approximately 1 in 10 people who use marijuana will become addicted. When they start before age 18, the rate of addiction rises to 1 in 6.

- **Marijuana Risks:** Marijuana use can have negative and long-term effects:



Brain health: Marijuana can cause permanent IQ loss of as much as 8 points when people start using it at a young age. These IQ points do not come back, even after quitting marijuana.



Mental health: Studies link marijuana use to depression, anxiety, suicide planning, and psychotic episodes. It is not known, however, if marijuana use is the cause of these conditions.



Athletic Performance: Research shows that marijuana affects timing, movement, and coordination, which can harm athletic performance.



Driving: People who drive under the influence of marijuana can experience dangerous effects: slower reactions, lane weaving, decreased coordination, and difficulty reacting to signals and sounds on the road.



Baby's health and development: Marijuana use during pregnancy may cause fetal growth restriction, premature birth, stillbirth, and problems with brain development, resulting in hyperactivity and poor cognitive function. Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and other chemicals from marijuana can also be passed from a mother to her baby through breast milk, further impacting a child's healthy development.



Daily life: Using marijuana can affect performance and how well people do in life. Research shows that people who use marijuana are more likely to have relationship problems, worse educational outcomes, lower career achievement, and reduced life satisfaction.

Marijuana Addiction

Contrary to popular belief, marijuana is addictive. Research shows that:

- 1-in-6 people who start using the drug before the age of 18 can become addicted.
- 1-in-10 adults who use the drug can become addicted.

Over the past few decades, the amount of THC in marijuana has steadily climbed; today's marijuana has three times the concentration of THC compared to 25 years ago. The higher the THC amount, the stronger the effects on the brain—likely contributing to increased rates of marijuana-related emergency room visits. While there is no research yet on how higher potency affects the long-term risks of marijuana use, more THC is likely to lead to higher rates of dependency and addiction.

About Marijuana

Marijuana refers to the dried leaves, flowers, stems, and seeds from the *Cannabis sativa* or *Cannabis indica* plant. Marijuana is a psychoactive drug that contains close to 500 chemicals, including THC, a mind-altering compound that causes harmful health effects.

People smoke marijuana in hand-rolled cigarettes, in pipes or water pipes, in blunts, and by using vaporizers that pull THC from the marijuana. Marijuana can also be mixed in food (edibles), such as brownies, cookies, and candy, or brewed as a tea. People also smoke or eat different forms of marijuana extracts, which deliver a large amount of THC and can be potentially more dangerous.

Rise of Marijuana Use

Today, marijuana use is on the rise among all adult age groups, both sexes, and pregnant women. People ages 18-25 have the highest rate of use.

Marijuana and THC remain illegal at the federal level, even though many states have legalized its use. In states where legal, marijuana is a fast-growing industry with sales to individuals over 21 in retail stores, wineries, breweries, coffee shops, dispensaries, online, as well as grown at home.

[View and share the following marijuana videos and resources](#)

For more information click [here](#).

HHS Releases New National Guidelines for Improving Youth Mental Health Crisis Care

Thursday, November 10, 2022

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), released a new report, *National Guidelines for Child and Youth Behavioral Health Crisis Care*, which describes the urgent need to improve crisis response services for children, youth, and families and provides guidance on how communities can address the existing gaps in care for youth.

“America’s youth deserve appropriate, well-informed and effective behavioral health crisis services. All too often, children and youth experiencing a behavioral health crisis face hospitalization or justice system involvement, instead of receiving the home-based care and community-based services that are in many circumstances best for de-escalating and stabilizing a crisis,” said Miriam Delphin-Rittmon, Ph.D., HHS Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Use and the leader of SAMHSA.

The *National Guidelines for Child and Youth Behavioral Health Crisis Care* offers best practices, implementation strategies, and practical guidance for the design and development of services that meet the needs of children, youth, and their families experiencing a behavioral health crisis. Additional technical guidance is provided in a companion report produced by SAMHSA in conjunction with the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors, *A Safe Place to Be: Crisis Stabilization Services and Other Supports for Children and Youth*. This report is part of a 10-paper compendium “From Crisis to Care” that will be released in the coming weeks. As the national guidelines outline, the need for developmentally and culturally appropriate crisis response services for youth is crucial, and yet while many crisis response systems have robust services in place for adults, there are often considerable gaps in capacity to serve youth and families.

SAMHSA’s guidelines recommend that youth in crisis from mental health and substance use disorders receive care in the least restrictive setting possible, and if it is safe, at home and in the community. Whenever possible, hospitalizations and justice system involvement should be safely reduced or prevented.

As with adults, the guidelines recommend that crisis services for children and families ensure that youth and families have:

- **Someone to Talk To: Crisis Call Centers**, including the new national [988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline](#), offering 24/7/365 access to counselors with specialized training to respond to youth and families
- **Someone to Respond: Mobile Response Teams**, to respond to crises at homes, schools and elsewhere in the community, keeping youth in their homes when safe to do so
- **A Safe Place to Be: Crisis Receiving and Stabilization Services**, including in-home services, at crisis care facilities, emergency departments and hospital settings

According to SAMHSA's recommendations, crisis response systems should partner with agencies across the continuum of care for children and youth: including schools, family and peer support, community organizations, child welfare and foster care, juvenile justice, pediatricians and other primary care providers, and law enforcement when appropriate.

The guidelines further recommend that crisis care providers be trained to respond to the diverse needs of all youth, including those of different age ranges, races and ethnicities, sexual and gender identities, immigration status, homelessness and intellectual or developmental disabilities. They also recommend that clinicians and peers reflect the diverse communities they serve.

Anyone seeking treatment for mental health or substance use issues should call SAMHSA's National Helpline at [800-662-HELP \(4357\)](tel:800-662-HELP) or visit findtreatment.samhsa.gov.

If you or someone you know is struggling or in crisis, help is available. Call or text [988](tel:988) or chat 988lifeline.org. For more information click [here](#).

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

SAP Trainings: PA Approved SAP Training Providers deliver these trainings and are available both in person and virtually in certain locations throughout the state. [Click here](#) to access the training calendar.

PA Parent and Family Alliance

Upcoming and archived webinars, tip sheets, and resources are located on their [website](#).

The Pennsylvania Care Partnership: offers several different trainings and webinars throughout the year. Click [here](#) for more information.

Center for Safe Schools: Stay tuned for The Third Thursday series. If you missed any of last years' trainings, they are recorded and available by clicking [here](#).

2022-2023 Equity Speaker Series : [Click here for courses](#)

December 6, 2022 - 3:30 - 4:45PM: Transgender

December 15, 2022: Youth Mental Health First Aide training (8-5pm). This will be an in person training to be held at PMHCA/Youth MOVE PA Office, 2551 Walnut street Harrisburg , Pa 17103 [Register here](#).

PA Student Assistance Professionals (PASAP) Conference:

At the Penn Stater Hotel and Conference Center

February 26 - 28, 2023 The Penn Stater Hotel and Conference Center, State College, PA.

Registration is now available! Click [here](#) to view the agenda. Click [here](#) for more information on registration.

Not a member of PASAP? Click [here](#) for information on individual and different group memberships.

Center of Excellence LGBTQ+ Behavioral Health Equity

The Center of Excellence on LGBTQ+ Behavioral Health Equity provides behavioral health practitioners with vital information on supporting the population of people identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, two-spirit, and other diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions.

Through training, coaching, and technical assistance we are implementing change strategies within mental health and substance use disorder treatment systems to address disparities effecting LGBTQ+ people across all stages of life.

The Center of Excellence hosts webinars for health practitioners focused on the best and latest practices to decrease behavioral health disparities impacting LGBTQ+ children, youth, young adults, adults, and older adults. CEUs and CMEs are available for both foundational and advanced topics. To access all past webinar recordings, visit their [session recordings page](#). [Sign up for an account or log in](#) to Ideas@TheInstitute to view recorded webinars.

GRANTS

PA School Grants

The PA Department of Education administers several grants each year, including Safe Schools Targeted Grants and others. Keep checking to see if there are any new opportunities available. Click [here](#) for more information.

Federal Grants

The United States government offers several grants. Go to Grants.gov to check on availability. Click [here](#) for more information.

Non-Federal Grant Programs

There are a large number of nonprofit organizations and for-profit businesses that also provide grants or other types of funding assistance.

[Candid](#) maintains a comprehensive database on U.S. and global grant-makers and their funding opportunities. It also operates research, education, and training programs designed to advance knowledge of philanthropy at every level.

Candid's [Funding Information Network](#) facilitates access to grant resources and publications to under-resourced entities and populations.

State and regional directories can also be found with some research. Try using the [Community Foundation Locator](#) to find a grant-making foundation in your region. You may also use your preferred web search engine to find your state's grant or foundation directory. Local libraries may have access to subscription-based search engines or the Foundation Center Cooperating Collections, so visit your library to work with them for assistance.