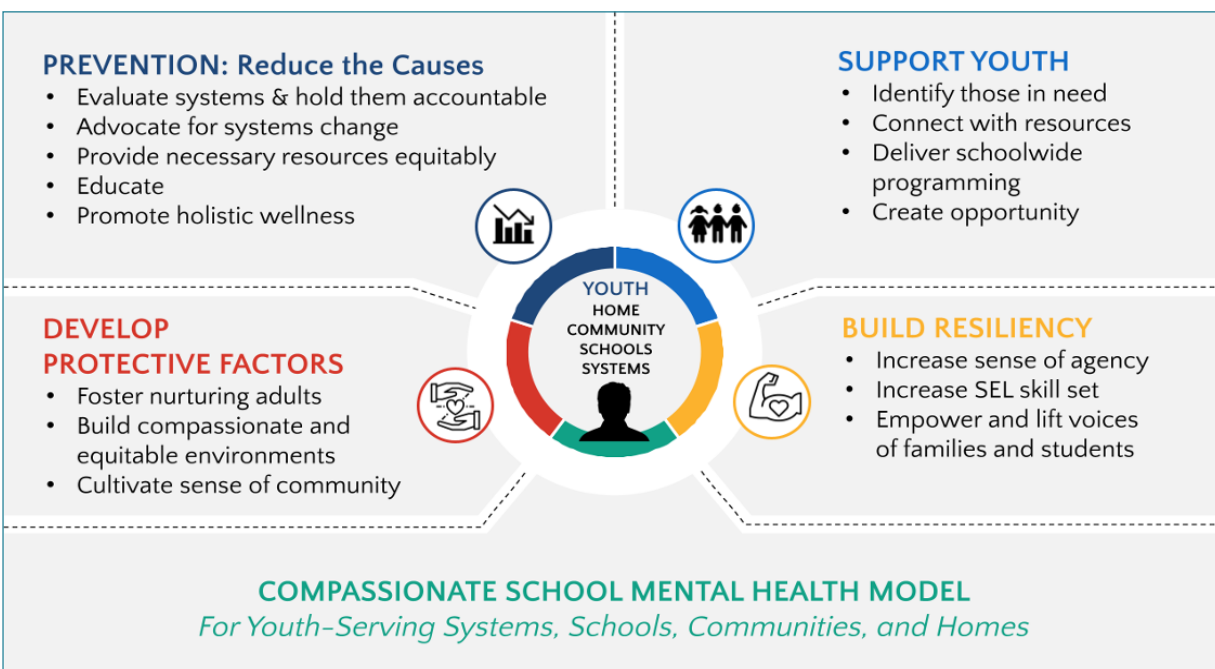




Best Practices for Collaboration on School-Based Mental Health Supports for Schools and Healthcare Centers Using the *Compassionate School Mental Health Model*

The New England Mental Health Technology Transfer Center’s Childhood-Trauma Learning Collaborative introduced the *Compassionate School Mental Health Model* in *A Compassionate School Response to Mental Illness Guide*. Through work with [the Healthcare workers and Educators Addressing and Reducing Trauma \(HEART\) Collective](#), we have expanded upon the model to explain the value of partnering with agencies,

organizations, and healthcare centers that can provide wraparound services and more intensive levels of care for youth and educators. Using this model, we have suggested strategies to support school-based mental health and children’s well-being by establishing and strengthening connections with school communities to comprehensive primary care services available at community-based healthcare centers.





Prevention: Reduce the Causes

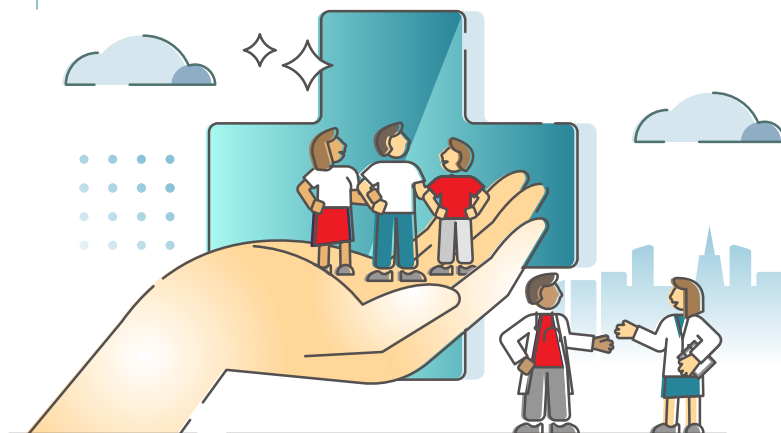
Healthcare centers and schools can:

- Collaborate on education campaigns to promote holistic, healthy living to reduce health-related trauma and chronic illness.
- Work together to provide preventive health screenings at no or low cost to students, with easy access follow-up from local healthcare workers or providers.
- Jointly identify their communities' characteristics, health needs, educational needs, and existing resources.
- Work together to create joint policies, procedures, and action plans to facilitate smooth collaboration, e.g., clear policies and procedures related to staffing and workflow for clinical staff at school sites, clear expectations about how services are paid for and billed to Medicaid or insurers, clinical space and data sharing policies, and memoranda of agreement when necessary.
- Influence policy together at the local, state, and national level to educate policymakers about the necessity of:
 1. Identifying and treating trauma and its effects among students, families, educators, and school communities;
 2. Addressing the role of the social determinants of health in the causes of trauma; and
 3. Developing thoughtful and sustainable policy to strengthen trauma recovery and resiliency among children, families, and communities.

Support Youth

Healthcare centers and schools can:

- Provide literature to families about behavioral health services and supports available in the school, community, and [online](#).
- Design and implement coordinated [behavioral health crisis response](#) strategies for the school community while respecting children and families' privacy, culture, and values.
- Support each other in [becoming trauma-skilled](#) (meaning *all* staff, regardless of role, are trained and regularly use trauma-informed practices and policies). Staff can recognize the signs and symptoms of trauma, stress, and potential behavioral health disorders, and participate in training such as [Mental Health First Aid](#) as necessary.
- Use validated and reliable [mental illness and suicide-risk screening tools](#) clinically indicated within primary care services. Community-level data are shared regularly with healthcare staff and school communities for population health surveillance and to identify potential opportunities to improve community health or offer health promotion and illness prevention strategies.
- Partner with the department in their state that oversees foster children to ensure they are receiving appropriate, community-based primary care services.
- Establish and strengthen the inclusion of, and collaborations with, community stakeholders. This includes leveraging healthcare center and school resources to provide joint support for
 1. Trainings in cultural responsiveness and humility,
 2. Establishment of organizational policies and practices to support equity and diversity at all levels, and
 3. Strategies to recruit and retain members of the workforce that are a reflection of the population served.





Build Resiliency

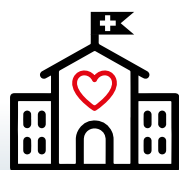
Healthcare centers and schools can:

- Communicate regularly within and beyond the organization and school communities to:
 1. Advertise each other's resources;
 2. Celebrate individual and joint accomplishments;
 3. Provide opportunities to include the lived experiences of children and families; and
 4. Facilitate interagency/community communication on the community's needs, strategies to reduce barriers to access, and ways to promote health and educational equity.
- Ensure that youth and family voices are included in educational support and treatment planning as often as possible and as appropriate.
- Ensure that school-based clinicians adapt [Patient-Centered Medical Home \(PCMH\) principles](#) to the school setting whenever possible to offer person-centered, culturally appropriate, and strengths-based services.
- Develop/provide families with resources to strengthen social-emotional health and build developmentally and culturally appropriate coping skills for children and families.

Develop Protective Factors

Healthcare centers and schools can:

- Develop/provide resources on [nurturing caregiving techniques](#) to all parents of young children, promoting appropriate literature on [evidence-based parenting techniques](#), resources for special populations (e.g., recent immigrants, children with incarcerated parents, children whose military parents are deployed), and community-based resources for parenting support.
- Collaborate on identifying community strengths and resources for promoting resiliency and community health, including food banks, job and employment supports, technology and library resources, recreational spaces and organizations, educational support and advancement opportunities, and culturally and linguistically responsive supports and services within and beyond school communities.
- Collaborate with community organizations on parenting education programming, resource development on educational opportunities, and health promotion activities for children, families, and school communities.
- Sponsor health fairs or other community events to promote healthy living strategies, [preventive health guidelines](#) and screenings, and connections to community/healthcare center providers for primary health care.



Healthcare workers and
Educators Addressing
and Reducing Trauma
HEART
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SAMHSA
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