



Vax Outreach Learning Session #7: Tips for Partnering with Schools

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National Center for School Mental Health (NCSMH)

Established in 1995 with funding from the Health Resources and Services Administration

The **NCSMH mission** is to strengthen policies and programs in school mental health to improve learning and promote success for America's youth.



UNIVERSITY of MARYLAND
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE



www.schoolmentalhealth.org
www.theshapesystem.com



Facebook.com/
CenterforSchoolMentalHealth



@NCSMHtweets



Comprehensive School Mental Health Systems

- provide a **full array of supports and services** that promote positive school climate, social emotional learning, mental health and well-being, while reducing the prevalence and severity of mental illness
- **built on a strong foundation of district and school professionals**, including administrators and educators, specialized instructional support personnel (e.g., school psychologists, school social workers, school counselors, school nurses and other school health professionals)
 - in **strategic partnership** with **students, families and community health and mental health partners**
- assess and address the **social and environmental factors** that impact health and mental health



IMPROVING HEALTH AND
MENTAL HEALTH IN SCHOOLS

National
Quality
Initiative



Challenging comprehensive school-based health centers and school mental health systems to adopt, report, and improve standardized performance measures

NQI Goals

1. Improve quality of care and use of best business practices that promote sustainability among 50 percent SBHCs/CSMHSs
2. Increase number and utilization of SBHCs/CSMHSs by 15 percent
3. Increase state policies and programs that promote quality, sustainability, and growth of SBH services

School-Based Health Alliance

Transforming Health Care for Students

- The national SBHC advocacy, technical assistance and training organization based in Washington DC, founded in 1995
- We support the improvement of students' health via school-based health care by supporting and creating community and school partnerships

www.sbh4all.org





Why Schools

- Natural setting for reaching youth
- Close proximity for families
- Trusted environment
- Improved access and follow through with health and mental health care
 - About half of all youth who receive mental health care receive in schools
 - Youth 6 times more likely to complete mental health treatment in schools than in other community settings
 - Allows students to remain in schools and to return to class after appointments



In a nationally representative survey of **young people aged 13-19**:

- Approximately **25%** felt disconnected from peers and adults.
- More than **1 in 4** reported:
 - increase in sleep loss due to worry
 - feeling unhappy or depressed
 - feeling constantly under strain
 - loss of confidence in themselves



Mental health challenges are rising

- Mental health-related **emergency department visits are up** 24% for children (age 5-11) and 31% for youth (age 12-17).
- Twenty-two percent of parents report their child's **mental health or emotional health is worse than before the pandemic.**

<https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6945a3.htm>

https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/70/wr/mm7011a1.htm?s_cid=mm7011a1_w



Why Now? What's the urgency?

Children



Adults



55% of children felt more “sad, depressed or unhappy,” versus **25% of adults**.*

AAP-AACAP-CHA Declaration of a National Emergency in Child and Adolescent Mental Health

[Home](#) / [Advocacy](#) / [Child and Adolescent Healthy Mental Development](#) / AAP-AACAP-CHA Declaration of a National Emergency in Child and Adolescent Mental Health

The challenges facing children and adolescents are so **widespread** that we call on policymakers at all levels of government and advocates for children and adolescents to join us in this declaration and advocate for the following:

- Increase implementation and sustainable funding of effective models of **school-based mental health care**, including clinical strategies and models for payment.
- Strengthen emerging efforts to reduce the risk of suicide in children and adolescents through **prevention programs in schools....**
- Accelerate strategies to address longstanding **workforce challenges** in child mental health....



<https://www.aap.org/en/advocacy/child-and-adolescent-healthy-mental-development/aap-aacap-cha-declaration-of-a-national-emergency-in-child-and-adolescent-mental-health/>



The Context



- Students, Families, Educators, School Staff are Stressed
- Increased anxiety, depression
- Addressing lost learning time
- Staffing shortages
- Funding availability to use to support schools



Who to Reach Out to?

- State/District/School
 - Superintendents/Chief State School Officers
 - School Boards
 - Directors of School Health, Student Supports/Wellness/Mental Health, Equity
 - School Administrators
 - Parent Teacher (Student) Associations/Family Advocacy Organizations
 - State Assemblies on School-Based Health Care/Health Departments/School Based Health Centers/School Nurses/Health Technician/Health Education Teachers



What to Say?

- Start with mission/goals of schools
 - *We recognize that you are eager to engage students in learning and to support their overall health and well-being.*
- Clearly identify funding source and local partners/relationships
 - *We have funding from the US Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) to support COVID vaccine outreach for youth and families. We are partnering with XXX from your state/district, and they recommended that we reach out to you...*
- Validate their context
 - *We understand that you are (stressed, burdened, working hard to support your students and communities...) and we hope to partner in a way that meets your needs and context*
- Ask, listen, support
 - *What do you see as the biggest hurdles to schooling right now?*
 - *Do you see COVID vaccines as being part of the response to those challenges?*
 - *What would be most helpful to your school community (students, families, educators, school staff) with respect to COVID vaccines?*



What to Say?

- Emphasize the critical role of schools in supporting COVID Vaccine Outreach
 - *We know that schools are one of the more trusted hubs of communication and care for children and families in communities.*
- Ask what is already being done and how you can augment/complement existing efforts
 - *What is your state/district/school doing in schools to support COVID vaccine outreach?*
 - *What would be most helpful to support your current efforts?*



Outreach opportunities to reach students and families



Innovations From the Field



Maureen Murphy, DNP, APRN, FNP-BC

Beaumont Health Teen Health Center, MI

Innovation

- COVID-19 Pandemic - An interruption of care.... especially immunizations
- Michigan reported an overall 44.5% decrease & 65.5% decrease in adolescents compared to the previous two years (Roelofs, & French, 2020)



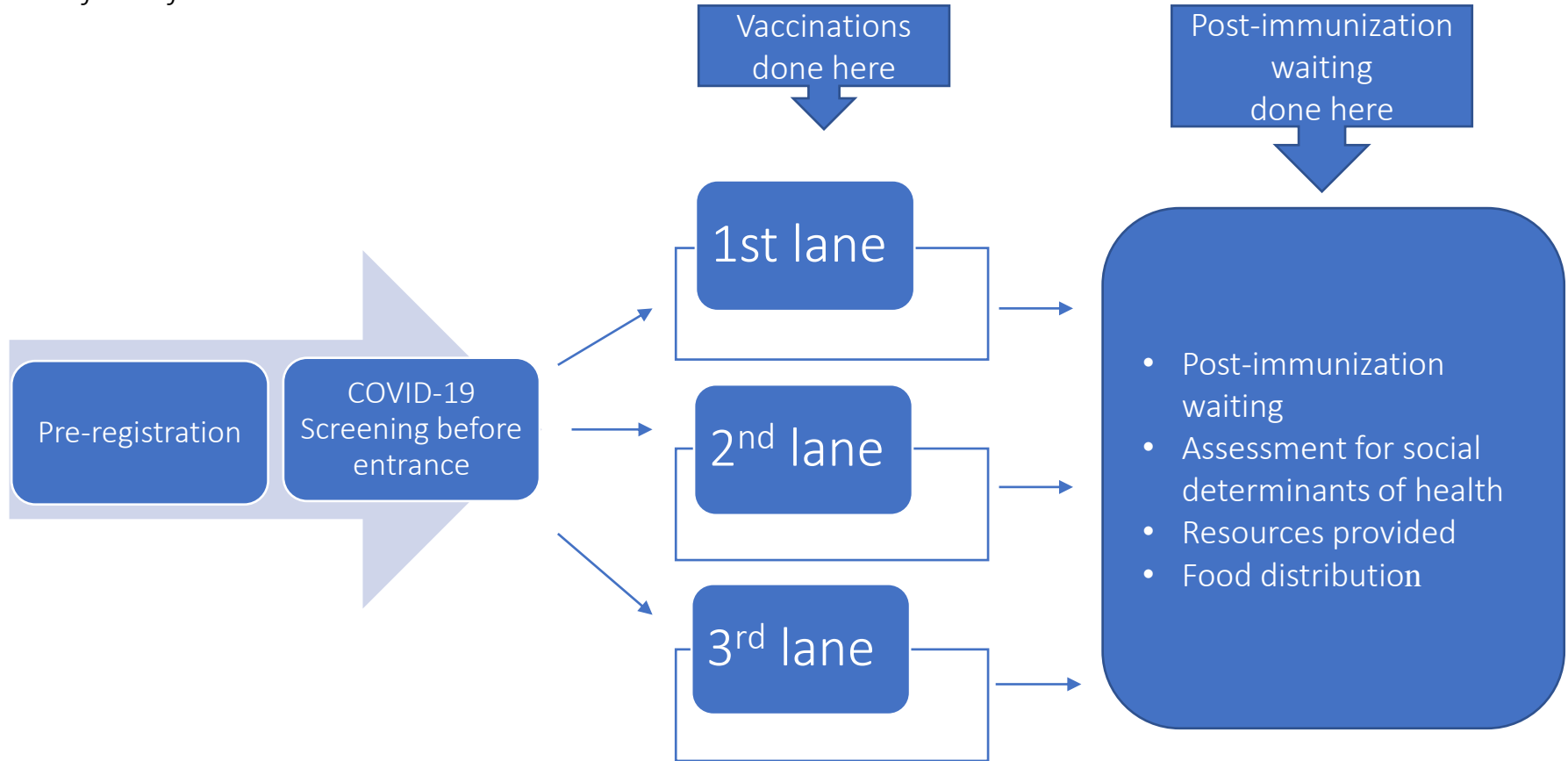
Beaumont

School-based Curbside Immunization Event

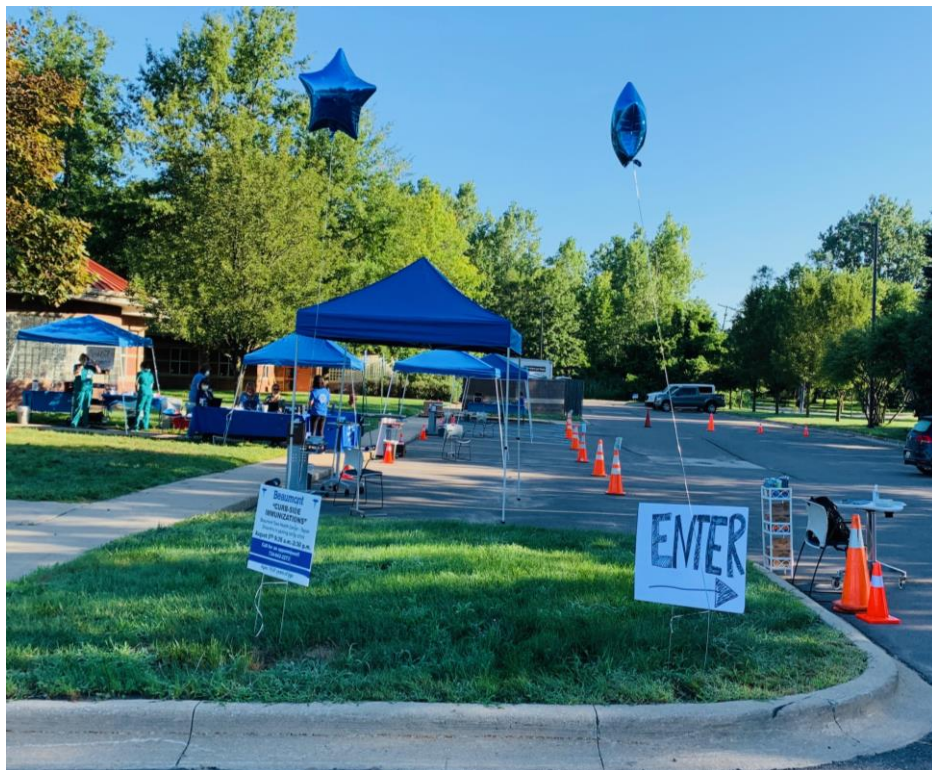
A perfect fit!

- Designated medically underserved areas (River Rouge & Taylor, Michigan)
- Strategically located in vulnerable populations where health equity and health disparity exist
 - Clinics – limited staffing – an event allowed shared staffing and better outreach
- Culturally competent and trusted resource in community
 - Knowledgeable in the immunization process
 - Certified training in Vaccination management
 - Great teachers!

Activity:
Process flow of curbside immunization event



Each car follows the arrows to complete full immunizations and social determinant assessment and assistance



MH Connection



What partnerships and opportunities to connect to mental health promotion exist?

Post-immunization A great opportunity!!!

- **Social Workers**
 - Medical care close – available
- Survey on process/social determinants of health
- Social determinant Resources
- Medicaid resource
- Food

Outcomes

- 100% of patients and families felt the precautions that the center took helped them feel more comfortable and that the process was easy & safe!



- Cost neutral!
- **UPTAKE** of Immunization very successful
 - 97% UTD status post immunization event
 - That's with 69% of the participants before the event greater than 1 year behind in scheduled immunizations
- More immunizations given than routine clinic day
- 48.2 % of this population had concerns about SDOH
- 34.5% have food insecurity concerns

Tool kit for Curbside immunizations

- <https://www.sbh4all.org/resources-2/school-based-vaccines-and-immunizations/>

Innovations From the Field



Tammy Greenwell, MPH

Chief Operating Officer

Blue Ridge Health, NC

Innovation



North Carolina

Blue Ridge Health
(FQHC)

In an effort to get more students vaccinated for COVID-19 and to catch them up on any missing required immunizations that had been missed because of COVID:

- For COVID-19 vaccinations, prepped with school districts (8 of them) on providing vaccines to students & parents on days and times convenient for the family
 - Sent survey as part of parent newsletter and used voicemail system
 - **Administered vaccines at the school or via drive-up**
- Provided **same day access for any missed required immunizations** at SBHC sites, pediatric locations, and other clinic sites
 - Also provided a drive-up option for parents/guardians to just get needed immunizations (no WCC)



Same Messaging Elements Apply

MESSAGING ELEMENTS THAT DON'T RESONATE

Negativity & Fear

People push back when reminded of how difficult a year it's been—it tends to put them in a pessimistic, hopeless or frustrated frame of mind.

Fear tactics are likely to backfire because this does little to generate trust or answer people's questions about vaccines.

Guilt

References to "many people already stepping up" can come off as pushy or accusatory.

Those who are hesitant do not see themselves as "free riders" letting others take risks first; rather, they are worried about being "guinea pigs" for new COVID-19 vaccines.

Overpromising

Avoid claims that are unproven. Being overly rosy may cause concern. Be clear about the facts without any sugarcoating.

Most people understand that mass vaccination is a long-term process. Avoid messages that inadvertently imply that vaccine availability will "flip the switch."

"Back to Normal"

Some just want things to "get back to normal," but for others, post-pandemic life will never be "the way it was."

It's more about getting back to life rather than back to normal.

Messages that focus on economic recovery—rather than public health—do not perform well.



Same Messaging Elements Apply

MESSAGING ELEMENTS THAT RESONATE

Validate Concerns & Answer Questions

Acknowledge people's hesitancy rather than challenge it.

Provide scientifically-based, plain language answers.

Moments Missed

Reference things the people miss most. With many feeling COVID-19 fatigue, missed moments (especially human connections that we took for granted like visiting family and friends) serve as a powerful reminder of the ultimate end goal: vaccination as a pathway to the possibility of regaining these moments.

Protection

Emphasize "protecting myself, loved ones and those in my community" (rather than "coming together as a nation").

Positive Tone

Be inviting and respectful as opposed to demanding.

Acknowledge that the "choice is yours to make," which connects with the deeply rooted American value of liberty.



How Schools Can Promote Vaccination and Address Hesitancy: A 10-Point Plan that Puts Equity First

1. Seek to understand and address vaccine hesitancy.
2. Take advantage of classroom time.
3. Run campaigns promoting vaccination for school communities.
4. Use school buildings and campuses as community vaccination centers.
5. Encourage, mandate, and/or incentivize vaccines for employees.
6. Form partnerships to address specific equity concerns.
7. Use quality, vetted resources to engage your school community
8. Embrace science.
9. Continue COVID-19 prevention practices.
10. Actively plan to protect vulnerable populations in your community.

<https://www.gettingsmart.com/2021/03/how-schools-can-promote-vaccination-and-address-hesitancy-a-10-point-plan-that-puts-equity-first/>



COVID Vaccine Outreach - School Resources

[10-Point Plan for Schools to Promote Vaccination and Address Hesitancy](#)

[School Vaccine Hub](#)

[How Schools Can Support COVID-19 Vaccination](#)

[Ad Council COVID Collaborative](#)

[School Based Health Alliance](#)

Curbside Immunization Toolkit

Advancing Health Center and School Partnerships to Improve COVID-19 Vaccination
Administration for Adolescents



Connect



www.schoolmentalhealth.org



www.ncs3.org

facebook.com/centerforschoolmentalhealth



@NCSMHTweets

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