

Project AWARE

Increasing access to mental health and substance abuse services for school-aged youth

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In partnership with:



**CARBON COUNTY
SCHOOL DISTRICT 1**
*Educating today's students for
tomorrow's opportunities.*



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What is Project AWARE?

AWARE = Advancing Wellness and Resiliency in Education

A Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) grant offered to State Education Agencies, in partnership with State Mental Health Agencies and three Local Education Agencies, for the purpose of building and expanding the capacity to:

- 1) Increase awareness of mental health issues among school-aged youth.**
- 2) Provide training for school personnel and other adults who interact with school-aged youth to detect and respond to mental health issues.**
- 3) Connect school-aged youth who may have behavioral health issues (including emotional disturbances or serious mental illness), and their families, to needed services.**

The program builds upon the successful strategies of the Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative that have been effective in creating safe and secure schools and promoting the mental health of students in communities across the country by:

- ❖ Facilitating a closer relationship between state and local implementation of policies and programs
- ❖ Supporting the development of integrated systems that create safe and respectful environments for learning and promoting the mental health of school-aged youth

Goals of AWARE are:

- ★ Increase, and improve access to, culturally competent and developmentally appropriate school- and community-based mental health services, particularly for children and youth with SED or SMI
- ★ Develop school-based mental health programs staffed by behavioral health specialists, in order to screen for, provide early intervention for, and to address any ongoing mental health needs of children with symptoms consistent with a mental disorder(s) or SED
- ★ Conduct outreach and engagement with school-aged youth and their families to increase awareness and identification of mental health issues and to promote positive mental health
- ★ Help school-aged youth develop skills that will promote resilience and promote pro-social behaviors; avert development of mental and behavioral health disorders; and prevent youth violence
- ★ Equip schools with the ability to immediately respond to the needs of youth who may be exhibiting behaviors/psychological signs of a severity indicating the need for clinical intervention
- ★ Develop an infrastructure that will sustain and expand mental health and behavioral health services and supports for school-aged youth when federal funding ends

Why Wyoming?

Mental Health is identified as a high priority in Wyoming for all age groups.

- ❖ Wyoming's 2017 suicide rate was four times higher than the national average (CDC, 2017).
- ❖ Wyoming identified a need for additional support with substance abuse treatment (State Needs Assessment, 2018).
- ❖ Pandemic: 93% increase in people taking online assessments for anxiety and a 62% increase for depression assessments.
- ❖ Wyoming ranks 45th in the nation for access to care due to its rural nature.
- ❖ WDE calculated a 20% prevalence rate in CCSD1 (332 students per year).

... and the need for a statewide system is critical due to Wyoming being such a rural state!

- Wyoming occupies 97,818 square miles, which makes it the 10th largest state.
- Yet, it is the least populated with a population of 578,759 (in 2019)!
- Of the 23 counties, 17 are considered frontier (meaning having less than six people per square mile), 4 counties are considered rural, and only 2 as urban.

Wyoming Project AWARE...

is designed to implement and enhance a comprehensive, coordinated, and integrated school and community mental health services system.

Goals:

1. Increase access to mental health and substance abuse services for school-aged youth
2. Increase each LEA's student, parent, and family knowledge of mental health and substance abuse services available and develop student skills that will promote resilience, pro-social behaviors, and prevent youth violence through outreach, engagement, and training
3. Increase each LEA's capacity to recognize and appropriately respond to mental health and substance abuse needs of students through professional development and training
4. Develop state and LEA level infrastructures to foster wellness in school-aged youth and their families

Who?

SAMHSA

Substance Abuse and Mental Health
Services Administration



2020 Grant Local Education Agencies (LEAs):

- **Campbell County School District #1**
- **Fremont County School District #1**
- **Park County School District #1**

2021 Grant Local Education Agencies (LEAs):

- **Carbon County School District #1**
- **Sweetwater County School District #1**
- **Uinta County School District #1**

State Mental Health Agencies:

- ❖ *** Wyoming Behavioral Institute**
- ❖ **Central Wyoming Counseling Center**

2021 LEA Data:

- CCSD #1, Sweetwater #1, and Unita #1 have a combined student population of 9,466.
- With an estimated 20% prevalence rate, that is a potential to serve up to 1,893 students!
- Teletherapy is growing and will help us reach the underserved populations in our communities. (The Wyoming Telehealth Association reports that 79% of all telehealth is utilized for behavioral health needs.)

***Schools are an ideal place to provide mental health services because we can break through the barriers that prevent care otherwise (ie. cost, time, transportation, family circumstances/no support, and lack of enough mental health providers).**

How?

A telehealth model is being implemented in order to reach our underserved population by supplementing the mental health services already available in Carbon County.

What it looks like:

- Community Project Manager - A local representative to serve as the primary point of contact for all Wyoming Project AWARE SAMHSA grant responsibilities and provide comprehensive planning
- Mental Health Professional (WBI) - Designated to CCSD1 to provide direct care services and help develop district level strategies for effective intervention to develop healthy, safe, and caring environments
- Mental Health Aide (WBI) - On site to provide the clinician with support duties (intake, case management, scheduling, referrals, etc.)
- 5 Teletherapy Rooms - Equipped with IT and furniture/decorations conducive to a therapy session
- Learning Collaborative - Representation from a variety of stakeholders to guide the direction of the program to make sure we are meeting the needs of our community
- Professional Training and Services - Training and services will be provided based on need

Where do you fit in?

- Provide referrals - CCSD #1 doesn't see or know everything!
- Referral partners - We can't meet the needs of everyone and need your help!
- Group Therapy Sessions
- Professional Training - Violence and Bully Training, Suicide Prevention, Substance Abuse Training
- Other Services as Needed - Family Organization Services, Other identified gaps in service

The objective of Project AWARE is to break down the barriers to, and create a sustainable model for the future of, mental health services in Carbon County!

What Wyoming Project AWARE 2021 will do is...

- ... connect students to mental health and substance abuse services in the school and beyond the school's walls through telehealth...
- ... provide professional development and training to staff to recognize and respond to mental health and substance abuse needs...
- ... standardize data collection to be able to analyze youth and family mental health data in order to make trend and gap analysis and see the correlation between youth and adult behavior...

... through collaborations with state and local partners.

QUESTIONS?

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