

MTSS- Mental Health/Behavior Practical, Evidence Based Strategies

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Why MTSS-Mental Health/Behavior?

- Can't separate mental health / behavior & learning
- **Surgeon General May 2023**
“Our Urgent Public Health Crisis is a devastating decline in the mental health of kids across the country.”
- It's Federal & State law
- It's the right thing to do for kids and families



EdWeek Survey - Jan. 2024 Reported That

- Very slow adoption nationwide of mental health/behavior universal screenings
- 68% of Principals reported their students do not do them
- 22% said they do them, but only in certain grade levels
- Only 10% of schools reported using them in PreK-12
- CO, IL & NJ have state laws requiring screenings to be done & provide funding & resources for schools to do them

Districts Who Use Screeners Report that it helps them to

- Identify students who need assistance (73%)
- Inform parents when their children may need assistance (66%)
- Identify which mental health services are needed on campus (44%)
- Make choices about SEL programs & curriculum

So... Why Aren't More Districts Using Screeners????

- Behavior/Mental Health “Scary,” - Very subjective
- How would we measure progress?
- Lack of confidence
- Lack of training/knowledge
- Parental consent/privacy concerns
 - 71% of districts take a passive consent approach (opt out option)
 - 15% of districts use an opt-in option
 - 11% of districts don't tell parents about them

Beliefs that “They choose their behavior - lack of motivation, lazy, extreme task avoidance, we don't need more long, cumbersome meetings, when nothing we come up with will make a difference, we just need better consequences.”

What's In It for Us? - Proven Benefits of MTSS-B

01

**Increases Students
Connectedness with
school**

02

**Improves families
relationships with
schools**

03

**Increases academic
learning for all
students**

04

**Teacher attrition is
higher**

05

**Student BEING valued
not just Student
DOING**

06

**Enhances School,
parents & Community
partnerships enhanced
- true partners**

07

**Team problem
solving approach -
we unpeel the onion**

08

**ALL Students are
successful & believed
in, no exceptions**

Here We Go Again, Another Program

MTSS/RTI - Philosophy, way of doing things (not program) - beliefs

- Common Language
- Shared Beliefs about students' behavior & mental health
- Holistic approach that connects other segmented initiatives (e.g. PBIS; Restorative Practices, Trauma-Informed Schools)
- Comprehensive structure that encompasses academics, behavior, attendance & social emotional learning (SEL)

SAY THE COLOR AND NOT THE WORDS

YELLOW	BLUE	ORANGE
BLACK	RED	GREEN
YELLOW	RED	PURPLE
ORANGE	GREEN	BLACK
BLUE	PURPLE	RED
GREEN	ORANGE	BLUE

Left ~ Right Brain Conflict

Your right brain tries to say the color but your left brain insists on reading the word

SISD's Specific Steps - MTSS - Mental Health/Behavior

01

SRSS- IE Universal Behavior Screenings done twice annually in October & February

02

Team have "Drill Down" Meetings to analyze SRSS data & consider other ABC data: Attendance, Behavior & Completion of Work

03

Tiers 2 & 3 Plans put in place with specific responsibilities assigned; timeline to complete; & progress monitoring dates set

04

Implement Support plans, ; progress monitor; Adjust plan based on data

Why SISD Chose SRSS-IE Screener

- Student Risk Screening Scale - Internalizing & Externalizing (SRSS-IE) has been in use since 1994) & includes both internalizing & externalizing behaviors
- Research studies have shown it to be to be valid & reliable
- Listed on Federal CiT3.org as a validated screening tool
- Free access
- EXCEL sheet that teachers use to rate students' behaviors on Likert Scale
- Ease of use - Teachers can rate entire class in 20-30 minutes
- EXCEL sheet is set up to automatically sort students into 3 levels of, "No, Some or High Risk," & color codes groups green, yellow or red

To download copy of SRSS-IE, view video overview about it, access fillable templates plotting your campus' screeners results, user & training manuals & get information about several other universal screening tools go to:

<https://www.ci3t.org/>

Comprehensive Integrated 3 Tiered Model of Prevention/Intervention

SISD's Lessons Learned in 3 years Using SRSS-IE

Universal Screener

- Teachers need initial training, booster training & specific written steps
- Need system to track who has not completed SRSS for their class with automatic reminders
- Keep SRSS-IE spreadsheet in EXCEL, don't convert to Numbers, Goggle Sheets etc.
- Identifying internalizers, what about quiet, shy students



Challenges Encountered & Solutions

- Length of screening window?? (Solution - 7-8 school days is plenty, scheduling so that a teacher PD/Work day is in the screening window helps)
- Concerns that only one of student's teachers rated them (Solution - reminded them they would have a chance to add students on MTSS Tiers 2/3 list during "drill down," meetings)
- Special education LSSPs/Behavior Specialists concerns that MTSS team would request new evaluations, FBAs, BIPs etc. for high number of special ed. Students scoring "high risk." (Solution - MTSS team alerts them of their students' scores and the ARD Committee does staffings to determine next steps)
- (Likert Ratings of never, occasionally, sometimes, frequently, being too vague)
- Solution - We stressed that SRSS is a screener & just one piece of data to be used to help identify students in need of additional supports)
- Cut-Off scores for internalizing behaviors was pretty low, overidentification possible (Solution - At "drill down," meetings, staff had opportunities to choose, "monitor for now," as an option if they believed student was just quiet/shy Vs. withdrawn/depressed)

Positive Experiences with SRSS-IE Screening

- Staff began having focussed, problem solving conversations about students' behavioral/emotional/mental health challenges
- “Drill Down,” & “Tiers 2 & 3 planning meetings allowed us to examine the possible, “Why?” of students behavior & to develop supports/interventions aligned with students' needs
- Concept of incremental improvements over time in behavior/self-regulation etc., became clearer & more broadly accepted by staff
- More teaming between counselors, administrators and staff
- Incidental “mini,” staff development behavior/mental health PD during the MTSS meetings

Year 1 - SISD Fall SRSS Results 2021

Campus	N Screened	Low Risk	Moderate Risk	High Risk
BES (PreK-5)	550	68%	19%	13%
CTE (PreK - 2)	330	71%	21%	8%
CCI (Gr. 3-5)	310	68%	17%	15%
Sixth Gr. Center	161	90%	9%	1%
SMS (Gr. 7-8)	420	78%	10%	12%
SHS (Gr. 9-12)	654	89%	4%	7%
TOTAL	2425	Average 77%	Average 13%	Average 9%

Year 1 - SISD Fall 2021- SRSS Students Scoring "High Risk by Special Programs

Campus	High Risk	Special Ed	ELL	Section 504	New to SISD
BES	72	35%	14%	0%	38%
CTE	28	22%	13%	0%	13%
CCI	45	31%	4%	3%	4%
SGC	1	0%	0%	0%	0%
SMS	49	27%	12%	12%	8%
SHS	41	22%	8%	17%	17%
District	300	Average	Average	Average	Average

**SISD Fall 2021 - SRSS High Risk Scoring Students
Breakdown by Externalizing & Internalizing Behaviors**

Campus	Externalizing Behaviors	Internalizing Behaviors
BES	<i>43 (60%)</i>	29 (40%)
CTE	<i>11 (39%)</i>	17 (61%)
CCI	<i>27 (60%)</i>	18 (40%)
SGC	<i>0 (0%)</i>	1 (100%)
SMS	<i>19 (39%)</i>	30 (61%)
SHS	<i>13 (32%)</i>	28 (68%)
District	Total 113 (5%)	Total 123 (5%)

Data Analysis/Observations

Of the Students Rated as High Risk on the SRSS:

- K-2 student numbers significantly higher than those in grades 3-12
- 23% are in special education
- 13% enrolled in SISD in August 2021
- ELL (English Language Learner)
- Internalizing challenges are much higher in Gr. 6-12 than in Gr. K-5

BIG AHAs

- **Our Pyramid was way out of whack - we needed to focus on our Tier 1 behavior/mental health supports & strategies**
- **We had exactly 50% of students rated, “high risk,” for internalizing challenges & 50% for externalizing challenges**

Next Steps Taken at District Level Based on Our SRSS Data

- Held a 3 days Tier 1 supports/interventions training & resource development for campus PBIS teams in the Summer
- Provision of teacher requested practical behavioral strategies; understanding effect of trauma & how to use trauma-informed approaches
- Did needs & gaps analysis & generated SISD's triangle of supports available at each level of need

Drill Down Meetings



Team reviews SRSS Data - ABC data (Attendance, Behavior, Completion of Work (grades), PASS results etc. for students rated “high/moderate risk.”



If student has IEP; Section 504 Plan etc., refer to these teams for support/intervention planning.



Schedule Tier 2/Tier 3 MTSS problem solving meeting (30 minutes per student) for those needing remaining students

Positives from MTSS Tier 3 Meetings

**“I learned so much about my student that I did not previously know
(5th Grade Math Teacher)”**

**“That plan we made where he checks in with Ms. Jones every morning & is my official helper in the class is really working”
(2nd Grade Teacher)”**

**“It was so cool to be able to to run my meeting, tell my story & have people listen & try to really help me. I feel hopeful for my future.”
(Sophomore Student)”**

**Now we know that the family needs food, clothing & medical assistance, we can figure out ways to help
(Elementary Counselor)”**

**Our campus/students really need some small group counseling sessions about bereavement, self regulation
(HS ELA Teacher)”**

**PASS Survey -
Ensuring
Student Voice
is Represented**



9 Key Barriers to Learning Assessed by PASS

- **Connectedness**

- Feelings about school
- Perceived learning capability
- Self-regard as a learner

- **Self-Efficacy**

- Preparedness for learning
- Attitudes to teachers
- General work ethic
- Confidence in learning

- **Motivation**

- Attitudes to attendance
- Response to curriculum needs

Pupil Attitudes Towards Self & School

PASS Survey

- Ensuring “Student Voice,” is part of every MTSS meeting
- Examines underlying reasons why students may be unmotivated, disengaged and/or disruptive
- Takes about 20 minutes for students to take
- Available in 40 languages
- Has screen reader capacity
- Provides 70 plus interventions for whole, group, & individual levels
- Generates easy to read traffic light reports flagging where action is recommended
- Provides insight into school climate, culture & student connectedness with school



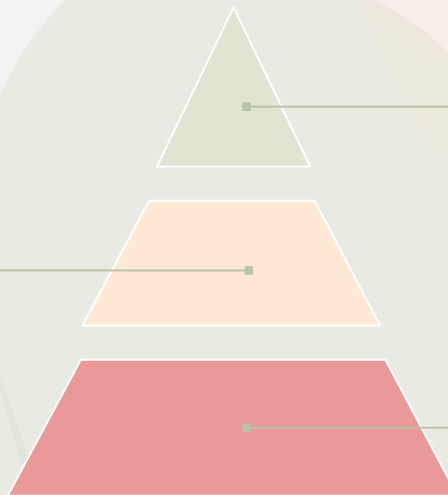
**Energizer - Takes 10
seconds to get our blood
flow back to the brain**

Touch 3 walls & high
five 2 people. When
you high five your 2nd
person, freeze

So, What's Available in Sanger ISD's MTSS - Mental Health/Behavior Tiers?

Tier 2

Check-In/Check-Out
Meaningful Jobs
Breaks with break cards
Visual Schedules
Social
Stories/Narratives/Comic
Strips
Circle of Friends/Lunch
Bunch/MGC
TCHAT
referral/counseling
Increased access to
campus counselor



Tier 1

PBIS SchoolWide
Access to campus counselor
*****Why Try?**
*****Ripple Effects**
*****Chill Zones/Gotta Move
Spaces**
Monthly/weekly specific SEL
lessons schoolwide

Tier 3

MST
WrapAround Services
Case Management
Intensive Counseling
MST referral
Functional Behavior
Assessment

Tier 1 - Schoolwide (ALL students) Supports/Interventions

- **School-Wide PBIS that includes the 3 Es**
 - **Expectations**
 - **Encouragement**
 - **Enforcement when necessary (using restorative approach)**
- **Starting 2023-2024, Dedicated time for SEL Lessons to be taught once weekly at elementary campuses & biweekly at secondary campuses - Counselors support teachers with lesson content, teachers teach lessons**

Tier 2 - (Some students) get Tier 1 plus individualized Supports/Interventions from our Tier 2 Menu

- **Scheduled, daily motor breaks for Tier 2 students in Chill Zones/Gotta Move Spaces** at Elementary & LTHS campuses are available to all
- **Targeted lessons from Why Try? & Ripple Effects SEL Programs** based on student/class group specific needs All students have access to a campus counselor
- **Meaningful jobs on campus** for Tier 2/Tier 3 students (i.e. read to a lower grade level; assist in office/Life Skills classes; run a teacher snack cart; PE/Computer Lab/Library Asst)
- **Visual schedules/individualized schedules/physical environment engineering**
- **Social stories/narratives/comic strips to directly teach social skills**
- **Circle of friends/Lunch Bunch**
- Counselor (and/or other staff) have **scheduled Check-Ins**
- **Check In, Check Out/Check & Connect Program**
- **More frequent opportunities to earn reinforcers**
- **Daily progress/point sheet/behavior chart**
- **TCHATT - TX Child Health Access Through Telemedicine - Available free to all schools in TX**
- <https://tcmhcc.utsystem.edu/tchatt/>

Tier 3 - (A few students) get Tier 1 plus some of Tier 2 plus individualized Supports/Interventions from our Tier 3 Menu

- **Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA)**
- **Individualized intensive case management/wraparound meetings to collaboratively (with parent & student involved) develop Tier 3 plan**
- Referral to community based resources (with parent consent) such as:
 - **MultiSystemic Family Therapy (MST)** (through partnership with local mental health authority)
- School staff use of **Life Space Crisis Intervention (LSCI)**
- **Meet with district crisis counselor regularly**
- **More frequent progress monitoring** to determine what is & is not working
- **Increased access to campus Counselor**

Why Try? & How it is Used in SISD

<https://whytry.org>

- Used at Tier 1 for schoolwide weekly SEL Lessons, Tier 2 for more targeted small group lessons & Tier 3 for individualized sessions. Also, at DAEP to focus specifically on areas they got in trouble for and during behavior problem solving meetings
- Evidence-based & Research informed. 3rd party, independent research studies show students using Why Try? Increase their
 - Locus of control
 - Ability to set and achieve goals
 - Relationships with teachers and fellow students
 - Classroom engagement
 - Attendance records
 - Academic performance
 - Behavioral and Emotional Screening System (BASC) scores

Can be used Gr. 2- 12, **is culturally responsive? & trauma informed**

“Street Smart,” & Multisensory Approach incorporating visual metaphors, music, journaling

Ripple Effects & How it is Used in SISD

<https://rippleeffects.com>

- Listed on National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs & National Professional Development Center as evidence-based program
- Over 250 computer-based modules related to SEL skills (can be self-paced/direct teach)
- Incorporates gaming, visuals, journaling, is very street-smart & constantly updating for today's needs
- Includes assessment student can take pre & post program to measure growth in resiliency skills
- PreK-12 grade
- Minimal preparation/planning for the teacher
- Incorporates ideas for books teachers can use in storytime/read alouds related to specific SEL skills

Numerous third party, independent research studies have been done on it's effectiveness & have consistently shown positive:

- Impact on Grades
- Impact on Suspension
- Impact on Dropout Rates
- Gains in Resiliency Assets
- Impacts on Tardiness
- Impact on Depression

Calming Centers/Chill Zones/Calming Walls/Calming Boxes Considerations

- **Setting them up, teaching/normalizing their use**
- **Tracking usage levels/patterns etc.**
- **Have mixture of items available**
 - **Take a Break items (puzzle, book, Magna-Doodle, coloring)**
 - **Breathing/self calming aids (bubbles, visuals to follow)**
 - **Oral sensory input (chewing gum, hard candy, chew necklace/lego piece)**
 - **Get Moving items (Yoga Poses cards/floor tiles, Gym skipping rope, mini-trampoline)**
 - **Visually Rest items (snow globe, light up toys, glow wands)**
 - **Fidgets, play dough, stress balls, mini massager, nail brush, blankets, stuffed animals**

**Ripple Effects Bouncy PreK-1 Program
(Print Based - Can be used at Tiers 1, 2, & 3)**



MultiSystemic Family Therapy (MST)

MEADOWS MENTAL HEALTH POLICY INSTITUTE

What is the Extent of the Need?

In Texas, there are an estimated **20,000 children and youth** (ages 6-17) either currently or at very high risk for out-of-home or out-of-school placement because of their **mental health needs**. Using the statewide roll-out of MST in Louisiana and other states as benchmarks, we estimate that of these 20,000, approximately **7,000 Texas youth and their families who are eligible for Medicaid** would benefit from MST services.

• Given that MST services typically last between **three to five months** and MST teams should serve at least 50 youth per year, Texas would need approximately **140 teams to meet statewide need**.

As of January 2023, Texas had a **total of seven teams** that operate primarily through juvenile justice dollars.

MAKE A REFERRAL:

WHO CAN MAKE A REFERRAL?

Referrals can be made from a wide range of sources that come into contact with the child or youth including social workers, case managers, probation officers, community-based mental health providers as well as parents, legal guardians, foster parents, or other caregivers.

WHAT IS THE REFERRAL PROCESS?

Denton County MHMR Center will provide you with a program referral form to be completed. Once the referral form is completed and received, an assessment and determination for appropriateness will be conducted prior to the youth's enrollment into the MST Program.

WHERE DO SERVICES TAKE PLACE?

Services take place in the home, school, and community of the youth and their family. Denton County MHMR Center is servicing families in Denton County.

HOW LONG DO THE SERVICES LAST?

The average length of treatment for MST is 3 to 5 months.

CONTACT US

Questions about MST can be directed to:
Sherri McCarthy, LPC-S, LPHA
MST Clinical Supervisor
940.390.6805 or sherrime@dentonmhmr.org
<http://www.dentonmhmr.org/>



Denton County
MHMR Center



MST[®]
Services

Supporting
At-Risk Youth

TEXAS



www.dentonmhmr.org

Life Space Crisis Intervention

<https://www.lsci.org/>

- How to talk to students in crisis, so crisis becomes opportunity
- Gives steps to follow (& examples of scripts to use) when students are encountering behavioral/social/emotional crisis
 - **Step 1** - Drain Off (intense emotions, de-escalate strategies)
 - **Step 2** - Timeline - what happened based on student's perception - their story
 - **Step 3** - Central Issue - Identify main reason for student's intense emotional feelings & determine the appropriate
 - **Step 4**
- LSCI includes resources/training related to Conflict Cycle that most students (and often adults) get into when students are dysregulated; how to avoid power struggles and/or exit gracefully from them if you find yourself in one

**If not us, then who?
If not now, then
when?**

(John Lewis)