



Alexandria City Public Schools

Building Bonds Beyond the School: Webinars for Families

DESSA and Hazel Health in ACPS



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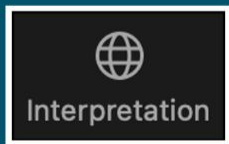
Essential Questions

What tools does ACPS use to support the mental health of students?

What is the DESSA and how is it used to support students?

How does Hazel Health provide mental health support for students?

TO ACCESS YOUR INTERPRETATION CHANNEL:



ES

PARA ESPAÑOL,
SELECCIONE "Español"

AM

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لإختيار الترجمة باللغة
العربية، أختار "Arabic"

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برای دري،
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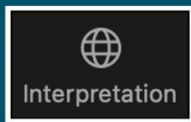


INNOVATIVE

What is meant by the term “mental health”?

Poll

TO ACCESS YOUR INTERPRETATION CHANNEL:



PARA ESPAÑOL,
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العربية، أختار "Arabic"



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Mental Health

- The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) defines mental health as our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act, and helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices.
- Mental health is addressed in our schools by our Student Support Team (SST) of school counselors, psychologists, social workers and nurses.





SEL and Mental Health Supports



SEL and Mental Health are not the same, but SEL can be a vital support in the promotion of positive mental health, **by promoting responsive relationships, emotionally safe environments, and skills development, SEL cultivates important “protective factors” to buffer against mental health risks. (CASEL)**



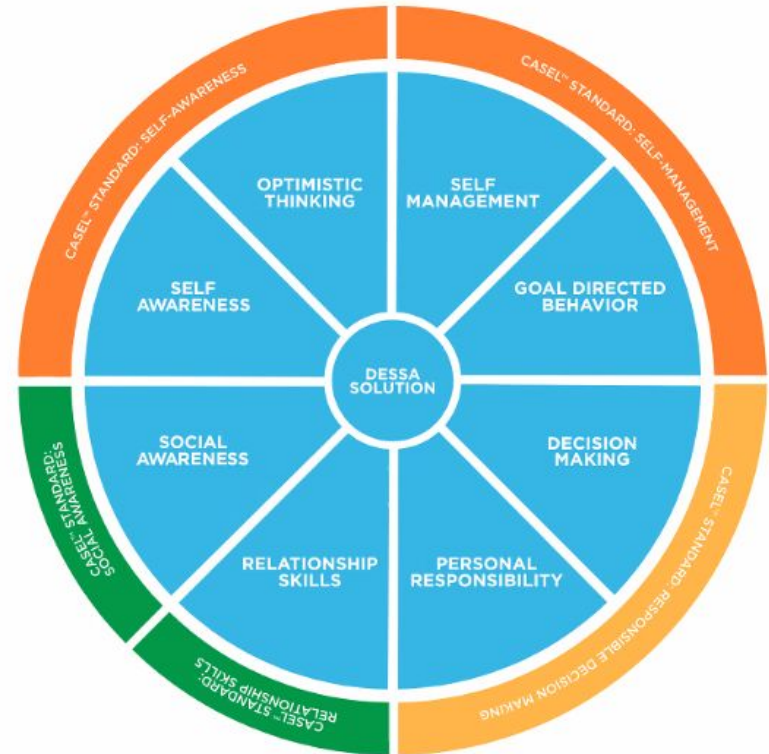
CASEL in ACPS





CASEL and DESSA

“Directly aligned to the CASEL™ framework, the DESSA is a nationally standardized, strength-based behavior rating scale that assesses students’ social and emotional competence.”





What is the DESSA?

“An evidenced-based social and emotional competency assessment to support student growth.”



Social Awareness

How often did the child work well in groups?



Relationship Skills

How often did the child offer to help somebody?



Self-Management

How often did the child get things done in a timely fashion?



Goal-Directed Behavior

How often did the child keep trying when unsuccessful?

*DESSA Testing Window:



DESSA in ACPS

Grades K-8

The DESSA-mini tool asks teachers to assess how often a student has demonstrated specific life skills in the past month.

Grades 9-12

Students complete a self-report and assess their own skills over the past month.





Sample DESSA Questions

DESSA-mini (K-8): 8 items

- How often did the child keep trying when unsuccessful?
- How often did the child offer to help somebody?
- How often did the child accept responsibility for what they did?

DESSA HSE-SSR (9-12): 55 items

- How often did you take an active role in your learning?
- How often do you trust that your hard work will pay off?
- How often did you serve an important role at home or in school?

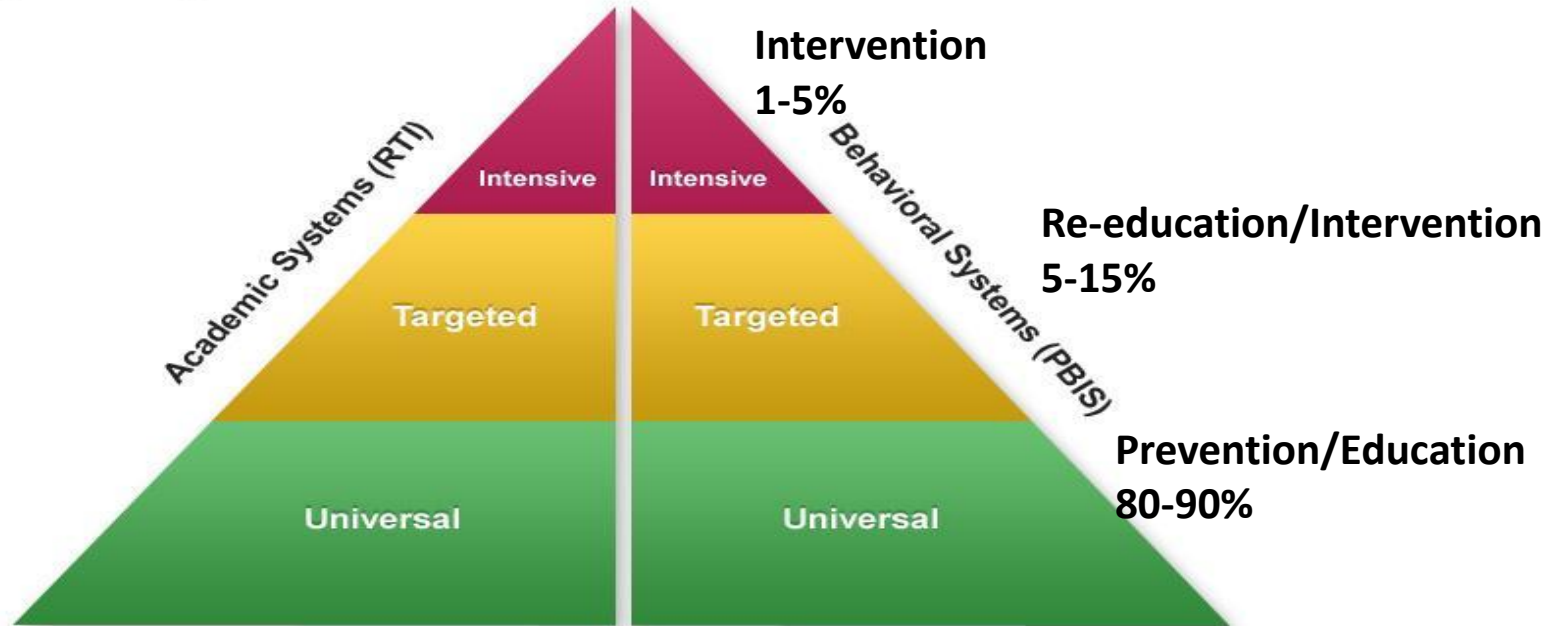
Response options:

- Never, Rarely, Occasionally, Frequently, Very Frequently, and Not Observed (DESSA-mini)



MTSS Structure

How are DESSA results used in schools?





Questions





**Hazel Health
therapists help children
and teens with what
they're feeling**





What resources are available in ACPS for Mental Health concerns?

Poll





Hazel Health Referrals

Hazel Health serves as a support for a myriad of mental health concerns.

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Sleep problems
- Self harm
- Grief/Loss
- Loneliness
- Motivation
- Concentration
- Anger management
- Academic stress
- Bullying
- Self-esteem
- Peer and adult relationships





Access to Hazel Health

<https://www.acps.k12.va.us/families/hazel-health>



National Data:

20%+ of all children have a mental, emotional, or behavioral disorder, but only 1 in 5 who need support receive care from a mental health provider

60% of LGBTQ+ youth report they wanted counseling from a mental health professional but were unable to receive care in the past year

Students are waiting up to 7 months for an appointment with a therapist

44% of teens feel persistently sad or hopeless



Hazel Health Feedback

“Hazel Health has helped my child overcome their shyness and helped them to blossom into a more confident student.”- Parent (ES)

As a high school student with anxiety, it was hard to feel comfortable in a lot of settings. Hazel gave me some tools to use to help and I’m doing much better now.” -Student (HS)

Everything from pressures of social media, stressors of growing up, hormones, transitioning from elementary school or to high school, peer pressure, struggles with communication, anxiety and depression - Middle School is HARD. Hazel has given parents and counselors the opportunity to have an extra set of ears for our kids to be heard, without judgement. Our students are excited to have their sessions and it shows. When they are actively engaged, we are seeing progress with overall mental health, attendance and grades. This opportunity for short term counseling has been a great asset to our SST team! - School counselor (MS)



Questions?



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