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Disparities in Mental Healthcare for Teens in Sweet Home, Oregon

Sweet Home, Oregon: Vital Stats

- **population** of 10,090 [21]
- rural community in Linn County
- located 20 miles from I-5 corridor
- vulnerable population: people suffering with mental illness
- focus group: teens ages 14-18
- Social Determinants of Health
- **Disparities in health and healthcare** are differences created by non-medical factors, social determinants of health (SDOH), within a community that impact health outcomes and quality of life of individuals [16].
- **SDOH** include aspects of education, economic stability, social support, healthcare and environment [16].
- It is vital to identify SDOH in Sweet Home so we can advocate for change and implement interventions to eradicate disparities in order to provide individuals the opportunity to achieve optimal health



Protective Factors are factors in a community that positively effects mental health[6].

Collaboration and Planning

<u>Goal</u>

- Improve long term health outcomes by increasing protective factors for mental health and access to mental health services for teens in Sweet Home, Oregon.
- If we can decrease occurrences of mental health issues and crises, we will decrease the need for services and ease the burden on the system by increasing access to care.

<u>Planning</u>

- Increase education on mental health as part of a comprehensive health system in high school
- Increase the current level of curriculum available to students on mental health topics • Encourage early intervention of mental health issues
- Encourage advertisement of crisis line resources, and teach
- Advertise currently available mental health resources and services within the community
- Development of non-religious or costly safe places and programs to socialize and build
- relationships that provide a sense of belonging and support.
- Advocate for an SBHC planning committee formation [8]
- Committee will complete data collection required for the application of an SBHC • Committee will also reach out to Benton County and Lane County SBHCs to assess
- what worked for those systems in the development process of an SBHC
- Acquire a noncounty medical sponsor.

<u>Collaboration</u>: who are our potential stakeholders, what will their role be?

- Sweet Home School District School Board: To advocate for the implementation of the formation of a School Based Health Center Committee into funding opportunities for the school board.
- Counselors at Sweet Home High School: For data gathering on current needs of students
- Mental Health Counselors, or Current Health Care Institutions: to seek funding and staffing for the SBHC.
- Youth Advisory Council/Sweet Home City Council: for advocacy on behalf of Sweet Home Oregon to request a funding request on behalf of the City to the state.
- Community Health Centers of Benton and Linn County: Funding opportunity, they currently fund two SBHCs in Benton County, but do not have any locations within Linn County
- Oregon Health Authority: Planning resource for SBHC, Staff to assist planning committee with learning requirements of center as well as grant funding opportunities.
- Ford Family Foundation: Grant Opportunities to benefit Sweet Home Oregon
- Linn Together: Community advocacy group to promote healthier citizens in linn county, community partnership opportunity
- ABC House: Resource for staff and parents on preventing child abuse and education on early identification and intervention
- Safe Oregon: Online resource for students, staff, or parents to report instances of bullying.

Assessing access to and education on mental health services

Assessment Findings

- Oregon ranks 51st out of 51 states for youth having at least one major depressive episode and youth with substance use disorders in the past year [22].
- Linn County ranks highest for 11th graders reporting feeling sad or hopeless and using substances [20].
- **CONNECTIONS** 9.9% of 11th graders in Linn County reported attempting suicide which is 2% more than the surrounding counties and the entire state [20].
 - 25.1% of youth in Linn County have unmet mental health needs [6].
 - There is 1 mental health care provider per 1,000 people in Sweet Home [9].
 - There are two required wellness classes in the Sweet Home High School curriculum that address mental health topics [17].
 - There are no providers in Sweet Home that will see teens for same-day mental health services, or without a referral/screening process. (personal communication, Sweet Home Health Clinic)
 - Youth with mental health disorders are more likely to fail or drop out of school and to engage in high risk behaviors such as using drugs/alcohol and attempting suicide [22]. • Untreated mental illness increases rates of absenteeism and tardiness - school based
 - referrals to mental health centers or on site counseling helped reduce absenteeism rates by up to 50% [22].
 - Windshield Survey: Through observation of the community, we identified a lack of safe places that offer free or low cost activities for teens. Available resources include a limited number of parks, a movie theatre, and a community swimming pool. There is a boys and girls club as well, but they only offer classes for children as old as 8th grade.

Interpretation

Sweet Home has a high rate of teens suffering from mental and behavioral health issues which are exacerbated by substance abuse and lack of resources to address these issues. While the school district has taken measures to combat this, there are additional interventions that could be beneficial to the community's teens.

Potential Interventions

Increase Advertisement of Protective Factors and Resources • Encourage early intervention and education on child abuse

- Ford Family foundation funded a project to train and empower adults to recognize and report child misconduct at the early signs. Free or minimal cost trainings, locally provided by ABC House for Linn County [1].
 - Protectourchildren.org

• Zero tolerance for bullying and harassment

SafeOregon is a website that allows teens, parents, and school staff to anonymously or confidentially report harassment, bullying, substance abuse, physical abuse or self harm to a third party (monitored by State Police, investigated locally) that reports to officials at the school. The school is then required to address and report back with the findings and the conclusion of their intervention [14].

Safeoregon.com

• Enhance Connectedness Among Students, Staff, and Families

- Encouraging students to join extracurricular activities such as volunteering, school events, and clubs available to create a sense of
- community and strengthen peer relationships [12].
- Formation of a PTA
- Encourage student run clubs based on special interests
- Mindfulness based club with a staff member to lead curriculum, at risk students can be referred via primary counselor.

Key Takeaways

It's difficult to be a teenager in general, changing bodies and minds, different roles and responsibilities, yet you still aren't an adult. Take that and add any little or big stressor and your world seems to be turned upside down. Mental health is highly stigmatized. Even if you are empowered enough to take the step to seek help, or speak to someone about your struggles, the maturity level of your peers vary, and kids aren't known for being kind to one another, and the fear of someone finding out about your problems leads to not addressing them at all. Untreated mental health issues can quickly become so much more, self medicating with substances, self isolation and missing school quickly leads to dropping out and lower levels of education and lower salaries later in life and a vicious cycle begins and generational problems become the "norm". Like most things, prevention and early detection are key.

School Based Health Care (SBHC)

- school day, eliminating the barriers of traveling to mental health resources [8]. • There are current SBHCs in many of the surrounding counties currently. These will be a great resource for planning and insights into resources for funding. • Minors do not need to have their parent's consent to treatment, there is no cost barrier for treatment, any student who needs the services will receive them. SBHCs "Provide patient-centered care for all students, regardless of insurance status" [8]. • The American Academy of Pediatrics supports the use of SBHC for mental health services, the schools that have SBHC statistically show lower rates of depression and suicide [5]. • A school based health center is a model that was designed by the Oregon Health Authority to meet the physical, mental, and behavioral health needs of Oregon students. • There are no current school based health centers in Linn County as of 2024. Which presents a unique opportunity for Sweet Home High School to lead the charge to get SBHCs in Linn County. • To combat the rise in poor mental health for teens in the state of Oregon, many schools have implemented a School Based Health Center, with a special focus on behavioral health. • "Local mental health clinicians are placed directly in local schools to provide person-centered, traumainformed rapid crisis and clinical interventions directly to youth and families. They also help teachers with mental health related issues in their classrooms." [8] **OREGON SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH CENTERS 2024** David Douglas HS Parkrose HS HOOD RIVER COUNT Hood River Valley HS YAMHILL COUNTY McMinnville HS Newberg HS Willamina HS NORROW COUNTY MARION COUNTY Chemawa Indian School UNION COUNTY La Grande HS Union SD POLK COUNTY Central HS BAKER COUNTY Baker HS LINCOLN COUNTY Newport HS Taft High 7-12 Toledo Sr/Jr HS Waldport HS WHEELER COUNTY Mitchell School GRANT COUNTY Grant Union Jr/Sr HS BENTON COUNTY Lincoln ES Monroe ES/MS JEFFERSON COUNTY Madras HS LANE COUNTY Cascade MS Churchill HS Elmira HS North Eugene HS Springfield HS CROOK COUNTY Steins Pillar ES DESCHUTES COUNTY Bend HS La Pine K-12 Campus M.A. Lynch ES Mountain View HS Redmond HS Sisters HS COOS COUNTY Marshfield HS DOUGLAS COUNTY JOSEPHINE COUNTY Evergreen ES Grants Pass HS Illinois Valley HS Lorna Byrne MS North Valley HS KLAMATH COUNTY JACKSON COUNTY_ Eagle Point HS Jackson ES Oak Grove ES Phoenix HS Rogue HS Washington ES As of January 2024 Jewett ES Phoenix ES Scenic MS Table Rock ES White Mountain HS Healt Certified SBHCs = 87

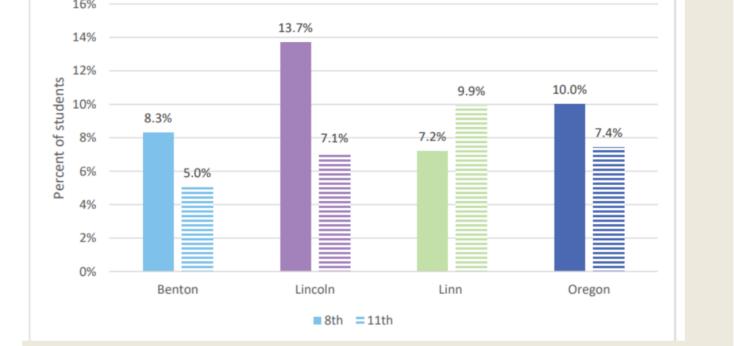
PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION School-Based Health Center Program

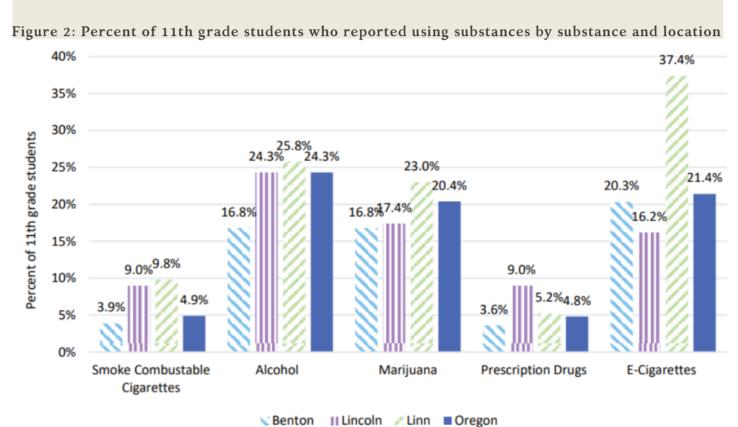
- SBHCs offer the opportunity to develop an in-school center to offer health services to students during their • This model can act as both a preventative resource as well as a crisis resource for students. According to the SBHC website, SBHCs Typically Offer the following services [8] • Routine physicals, well-child exams, and sports exams; • Diagnosis and treatment of acute and chronic illnesses; • Treatment of minor injuries/illnesses; • Vision, dental and other health screenings; • Immunizations; Alcohol and drug counseling and prevention; • Preventive health and wellness messaging delivery; • Mental health counseling; • Reproductive health services; • Health and wellness classroom education; • Medication prescription; • Help students find social supports.

• Contact Information for School Based Health Center Program Information • <u>E-mail: SBHC.program@odhsoha.oregon.gov</u> • <u>Phone: 503-798-2852</u>









Available Resources

Sweet Home School District Wellness Center

- Virtual relaxation room with mindfulness and relaxation techniques
- Crisis support links, articles and resources for students, parents and educators
- authuser=0 [18]

High School Curriculum That Implements Wellness Education

Sweet Home High School Mental Health Counselor

Lisa Malabago Email: <u>lisa.malabago@sweethome.k12.or.us</u> Phone: (541) 367-7153

School District Nurse

Lisa Murphy, District Nurse Phone: 541-367-7132

Safe Oregon

anonymous reporting of harassment, bullying, substance abuse, physical abuse or self harm [14] https/www.safeoregon.com

Counties with certified SBHCs

AFFILIATIONS

Linn-Benton Nursing Program

• Mental health education resource developed for online use during the COVID19 pandemic

• Website URL: https://sites.google.com/sweethome.k12.or.us/wellness-center/sweet-home-high-school?

• Required wellness classes that focus on mental/social/emotional health, violence and suicide prevention, substance abuse prevention, and human sexuality in freshman and junior year. [17] • Homeroom lesson time provided 2-3 times a month to teach socio-emotional learning skills

Sweet Home High School Counselors

Josalyn Lawrence Email: josalyn.lawrence@sweethome.k12.or.us Phone: (541) 367-7150 Julia Weist Email: julia.weist@sweethome.k12.or.us Phone: (541) 367-7748 Haley May Email: <u>haley.may@sweethome.k12.or.us</u> Phone: (541) 367-7155 Oregon Crisis Hotline

541.967.3866 (press 1) or 1.800.304.7468 Linn County Mental Health Crisis Line

Linn County Mental Health Crisis LIne **EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS** 24 hours a day / 7 days per week: Call 988 Call 541-967-3866 (press 1) or 1-800-304-7468

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