



MHTTC

Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network

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SMH Curriculum Always and Now Learning Series: Session 7

Janet Cummings: Hello everyone thanks so much for joining us for the MHTTC school mental health, best practices, always and now learning series we're going to get started in a moment just a reminder that all attendees are muted today.

Janet Cummings: And today's session is being recorded in the meantime, we have a slide here for you to get comfortable with the zoom webinar interface.

Janet Cummings: So, for those of you who are joining, please feel free to enter your name and where you're joining from in the chat box.

Janet Cummings: During the presentation, the chat box can be used to send questions or requests for help to our members of our team.

Janet Cummings: Please note that the comments here will be open for public viewing and then also during the presentation, if you have any resources that you'd like to share with panelists or you have any questions for the panelists.

Janet Cummings: Please enter those and the questions and answer or Q amp a pod that's a separate pod that in the chat box.

Janet Cummings: I also want to point out that closed captions are available for those of you who would like to enable or disable captions click on the CC icon at the bottom of your zoom platform and select the arrow for options to display or hide captions.

Janet Cummings: And for those of you who just entered the room thanks again so much for being here we're going to get started in a moment at the top of the hour.

Janet Cummings: Just a reminder all attendees are muted and the session is being recorded and if you haven't already It would be wonderful if you could put your name in the chat and let us know where you're joining from.

Janet Cummings: We also have a slide here to help everyone get familiar with the interface, we have a questions and answer pod if you have questions for any of our panelists or you want to share resources, please enter those there.

Janet Cummings: And if you need any support during the presentation, you can reach out to members of our team in the chat box.

Janet Cummings: For those of you have just joined we're going to get started at the top of the hour Thank you so much for joining us for our image ttc school mental health, best practices, always and now learning series of you are in the right place and we're going to get started in a moment.

Janet Cummings: If you want to reach out to anyone in our team during the presentation, please communicate with them in the chat box, if you have any questions for panelists you can put those in the Q amp a pod.

Janet Cummings: also note that closed captions are available so for those who want to either enable or disable captions click on the CC icon at the bottom of the zoom platform and select the arrow for the options to either display or hide those captions.

Janet Cummings: Hello everyone welcome i'm Janet cummings i'm the deputy director of the southeast mental health, technology transfer Center and i'm the project director of our school mental health initiative team.

Janet Cummings: i'm so excited to be moderating today's session, thank you for joining session seven of our eight part series.

Janet Cummings: Today we're going to be covering module seven funding and sustainability in our htc school mental health best practice always and now series.

Janet Cummings: So we have a couple of housekeeping items, before we begin to make sure you have the best audio quality we have muted mike's for all participants, except for the speakers.

Janet Cummings: If you have audio or technical issues during the session the chat box is open for you to communicate with our team.

Janet Cummings: And if you have a link to any resources, you want to share with the panelists or, if you have any questions for panelists please put those in the question and answer pod.

Janet Cummings: Now note that we have scheduled time for Q amp a at the end of the session but you're also welcome to put those questions in there any point.

Janet Cummings: we've made every attempt to make today's presentation secure, but if we need to end the presentation, for any reason unexpectedly, we will follow up with you, using a registration information.

Janet Cummings: will receive an email following the presentation on how to access the certificate of attendance the session recording and slides that will also be posted on our website, in a few days time.

Janet Cummings: And if you don't already follow us on social media, please do follow us on Twitter Facebook and stay in touch with us to find out about more upcoming opportunities.

Janet Cummings: For those of you who are joining the series, for the first time this eight part series is a collaborative effort.

Janet Cummings: Of the mental health, technology transfer centers or mh ttc for short.

Janet Cummings: Were network funded by the substance abuse and mental health services administration, which includes 10 regional centers.

Janet Cummings: and national American Indian Alaska native Center and national Hispanic and Latino Center and our network or donating office.

Janet Cummings: Our collaborative network supports resource development and dissemination training and technical assistance and workforce development for the field of mental health.

Janet Cummings: After today's session, please visit our website to find your regional Center and keep in touch with us to find out about more resources and training opportunities.

Janet Cummings: today's session is being led by the South East image ttc school mental health initiative team.

Janet Cummings: we're located in Atlanta Georgia at the emory university rollins School of Public Health and we're proud to serve the eight states picture here in hhs region for.

Janet Cummings: So our team includes faculty and staff with expertise in public health programs finance policy and health systems, which gives us a unique lens through which we work to accelerate the adoption of evidence based programs and practices throughout the region.

Janet Cummings: Various very brief disclaimer before we continue this presentation was prepared for the http see network under a cooperative agreement funded by the substance abuse and mental health services administration.

Janet Cummings: The opinions expressed here in the learning session or the views of our moderator and panelists and do not reflect the official position of the Department of human and health, health and human services or Samsung.

Janet Cummings: And then, as part of receiving sansa funding required to submit data on the quality of today's event so after the training, we ask that you take a moment to complete a very brief survey about how today's session once.

Janet Cummings: And one more quick reminder before we dive in we are hosting a regional we are hosting regional breakout sessions, so these sessions are intended to provide an opportunity for you.

Janet Cummings: To have some informal discussion moderated by staff with other participants from your region to participate in the 30 minute regional breakout session will provide you access to a link at the end of today's presentation.

Janet Cummings: OK, so now it's time to dive into some great content that we have prepared for you today.

Janet Cummings: As many of you know, this eight part training series uses the national school mental health curriculum.

Janet Cummings: guidance and best practices for states districts and schools but Before I continue, I just have to highlight to everyone a title change that we've made recently.

Janet Cummings: Our network in partnership with the national Center for school mental health decided to remove the word curriculum from this resource, and this is based on feedback from you our constituents.

Janet Cummings: So this resource will now be referred to as national school mental health, best practices implementation guidance modules for states districts and schools.

Janet Cummings: This resource was developed by our network in collaboration with the national Center for school mental health and 2019.

Janet Cummings: it's intended to help states districts and schools advanced comprehensive school mental health systems.

Janet Cummings: It includes trainer and participant manuals eight sets of slide decks for each module representing the core features of comprehensive school mental health and also a number of additional resources.

Janet Cummings: So today's live session is going to consist of a discussion with a panel of experts and leaders who provide and always and now application of the best practices for module seven funding and sustainability.

Janet Cummings: So, while the modules are a great resource to use and typical school settings and typical times we think they're especially relevant in the current context, with the ongoing pandemic and the impact it's had on school mental health services.

Janet Cummings: And now we are so excited to have Dr Nancy lever with us today, who is a Co director of the national Center for school mental health.

Janet Cummings: And an associate professor in the University of Maryland school of medicine she's going to start us off with a brief recap, of the module so thanks for being here with us Nancy and i'm going to pass it off to do.

Nancy Lever: Okay Thank you so much Janet hi everyone hope you had a chance to review module seven on funding and sustainability in advance of today's webinar but don't worry if you haven't i'm going to share some highlights of the module prior to our panelists to provide some foundational knowledge.

Nancy Lever: In this module we reviewed the definition of school mental health funding and sustainability and consider an array of opportunities to secure and leverage diverse funding sources to sustain successful school mental health systems.

Nancy Lever: We review national standardized performance indicators for funding and sustainability, or what we refer to as quality indicators.

Nancy Lever: For each of the indicators, we outline best practices and offer some helpful tips reflections district and state exemplars to teach planning and some very practical resources.

Nancy Lever: So what do we mean by the term school mental health funding and sustainability school mental health funding and sustainability looks beyond just dollars and includes the.

Nancy Lever: strategies to optimize financial and non financial assets needed to maintain and improve your school mental health system over time.

Nancy Lever: it's important to remember that this financial considerations look beyond just fiscal dollars to consider broader resources and assets.

Nancy Lever: Sustainability is always evolving, but the goal is to ensure that your operational structures and capacity are sound, and that your system can grow and adapt to match the changing needs of your students families, schools and communities.

Nancy Lever: here's a list of quality indicators, but the funding and sustainability domain i'm going to briefly describe each one.

Nancy Lever: In this quality indicator, we look to the use of multiple and diverse funding and resources to assist to support a full continuum of school and a health services and support.

Nancy Lever: Best Practices include using funding from different levels, such as school districts state federal types of funding, such as grants third party reimbursement and having funding that aligns with the funding needed for the tier.

Nancy Lever: Perhaps what is most helpful in the module are examples from districts and states here's one example of an urban district in Maryland use of blended funding that pools and leverages funding from multiple sources.

Nancy Lever: And, here are some state exemplars Pennsylvania as a state that expertly uses braided funding to support school mental health.

Nancy Lever: Alabama effectively uses funding to support new positions, including school based mental health service coordinators and masters level clinicians we're really fortunate to be able to hear more about Alabama from Lynn and our panel today.

Nancy Lever: We also have examples of state appropriations from Kentucky and Tennessee for funding school based mental health providers and school based behavioral health liaisons so again, these are really helpful examples from our state's.

Nancy Lever: Another quality indicator is leveraging funding and resources to adequately support a comprehensive school mental health system always thinking about new partners to include and how to leverage funding or best practice considerations.

Nancy Lever: The module offers helpful tips for leveraging funding resources such as how to effectively develop a memorandum of understanding or mo u.

Nancy Lever: And there's some great templates that you can use another quality indicator considers strategies that are in place to retain staff.

Nancy Lever: retention of staff is critically important for students, family and school staff relationships and trust.

Nancy Lever: And is cost effective so hiring and training new staff we know is time consuming and costly so here's the list of best practices, some examples of best practice include regularly recognizing accomplishments and personal milestones flexible work schedules and incentive based pay.

Nancy Lever: it's also critical to think beyond just individual staff self care to consider broader organizational factors that contribute to staff well being and reduce burnout the organizational self care checklist is one example of how to begin to address system, issues related to staff wellbeing.

Nancy Lever: Another quality indicator involves maximizing the expertise and resources of all stakeholder groups to support ongoing professional development activities.

Nancy Lever: We need to recognize the strengths and skills of our family school and Community partners and providing professional development, and to make sure that all partners have opportunities for advancing knowledge and skills.

Nancy Lever: The last quality indicator considers the extent to which there is funding and resources.

Nancy Lever: To support each of the tiers of the Multi tiered system of support and to what extent schools are maximizing reimbursements opportunities for eligible services.

Nancy Lever: it's important to move past the idea that funding from treatment services can provide funding to support the full time angle, there needs to be funding that matches the services and supports that are provided.

Nancy Lever: Other considerations include figuring out how to maximize fee for service funding mechanisms, both public and private, to support mental health, there are, here are some helpful reflection questions, as well as worksheets and tools to move the topic forward.

Nancy Lever: The module also considers how to influence policy related to school mental health.

Nancy Lever: Working with key knowledge leaders and advocates can help inform the most effective policy to influence school mental health.

Nancy Lever: In your state, so one example for state policy, I encourage you to check out to advance school mental health services and supports is from the state of Nevada and it state funded block grant program that provides full time, social workers.

Nancy Lever: As a next step, you can bring this content back to your district and begins to teach planning which includes creating specific goals and action steps for comprehensive school mental health.

Nancy Lever: Using the strategic planning guide in conjunction with module resources, including the school mental health quality guide for funding in sustainability offers schools and districts tools and strategies to move funding and sustainability efforts forward.

Nancy Lever: So that is your cliff note version of the module hope you'll check out the full module if you haven't had a chance to do that, let me turn things back over to Janet.

Janet Cummings: So much Nancy we really appreciate that recap of module seven, so now we want to jump into the next portion of our session or panel discussion.

Janet Cummings: i'm so excited about the all star panel that we have for you today is to provide some more information about school mental health funding and sustainability.

Janet Cummings: So, first we have Ashley Harris who's the Georgia Department of Education director of hot whole child supports and strategic partnerships.

Janet Cummings: Overall created to submit the department shift toward a common framework of improving of improvement with the whole child at the Center.

Janet Cummings: Ashley leads the department's efforts to address students well being in the learning process to address the non academic factors that impact student achievement.

Janet Cummings: And to maximize educational opportunities, she has more than 15 years of experience and education administration.

Janet Cummings: We also have Lynn Bashir, who is the former Commissioner of the Alabama department of mental health.

Janet Cummings: A post she held from July 2017 until this past December.

Janet Cummings: During her time in this role Lynn oversaw significant expansions of school based mental health partnerships, as well as an expansion of the school mental health workforce.

Janet Cummings: Prior to serving at the Alabama department of mental health.

Janet Cummings: She served as an executive director of envision 2020 a strategic planning process that prioritized establishing a coordinated sustainable regional system of mental health care.

Janet Cummings: In several Central Alabama and counties and then, finally, we have Dr Adam will, who is a health economist and health policy researcher at the emory university rollins school of public health.

Janet Cummings: He has 15 years of experience in medicaid consulting technical assistance and research.

Janet Cummings: His research focuses on access to care for low income and underserved populations, as well as state financing and policy related to providers operations and care, so thank you all so much for being here today we're going to stop sharing slides so that everyone can see our panelists.

Janet Cummings: And i'm going to kick it off with a question for Ashley so actually could you talk to us about potential funding source does schools can access to support student mental health from the perspective of Department of Education.

Ashley Harris: Absolutely well the first before we can talk about funding it's important for us to distinguish two things.

Ashley Harris: One there isn't dedicated funding allocated by federal programs to support mental health outside of really students with disabilities.

Ashley Harris: There are programs that you can use to support mental health, but there are no dedicated funds.

Ashley Harris: So each State has the autonomy to create funding but federally there is a dedicated funding for mental health and education, outside of students with disability, which has its own specific regulations and guidelines.

Ashley Harris: The second thing you should remember is that there is.

Ashley Harris: A distinguished difference between mental health services which are generally billable so think individual student counseling.

Ashley Harris: First, mental health support which is generally non billable so think tier one support social emotional learning curriculums are what we call here in Georgia connected so well being.

Ashley Harris: So when we talk about mental health services, these are the direct services provided to individual students, based on an established prerequisite.

Ashley Harris: So some schools and districts may be doing individual Student Assessment connecting interventions to students with disabilities.

Ashley Harris: or allow students to self refer again, these are generally billable, for example, individual therapy for a child that has a diagnosis.

Ashley Harris: Mental health supports, is a little different, these are upstream preventative measures which we.

Ashley Harris: else shrink preventative measures we implement to promote healthy mental health development that are again generally non billable these are generally and usually it's here was alternative interventions as well, this is.

Ashley Harris: With this understanding and education, we have a few ways to fund mental health services and supports in schools.

Ashley Harris: For mental health services schools can opt to use part of a title for a created under Obama administration with the updated federal education.

Ashley Harris: Policy ESA IDA funds which are special education funding in McKinney-Vento which is federal funding targeted towards students impacted by homelessness to pay for students who do not have.

Ashley Harris: Insurance keep in mind IDA in McKinney Ventos phones can be used for populations identify how whatever title for a as an open for also the speed.

Ashley Harris: Additionally, schools department for local organizations to develop a Skype and phone, so to speak, that will.

Ashley Harris: assist families in need or partner with the local FQ HC or federally qualified health care Center to provide students with.

Ashley Harris: Care who do not have health insurance as stated, these are generally billable services, therefore, the school should work to establish appropriate process he's to build accordingly for services rendered.

Ashley Harris: But on the side of mental health support schools have more options as far as the webinar material you're provided with Georges mental health allowable federal funding funnel.

Ashley Harris: This funnel is generic so just this.

Ashley Harris: funnel is generic, although it says GA these are federally based regulations this funnel provides insight on how you can break and when federal title funding programs together to support students.

Ashley Harris: The funnel shows the most flexible dollars at the top, or the most why part of the funnel and narrows to the least flexible dollars, as you see it in the graphing.

Ashley Harris: These ones are those used to pay for school based curriculums professional development, universal programming and family engagement.

Ashley Harris: The key to using these funds is writing your story just about all funding in the education space is tied to a data driven story or analysis, the eligibility of your.

Ashley Harris: use of funds is directly tied to document why you need to use exponent to do, why intervention.

Ashley Harris: If you are stating that mental health services are needed in schools, what data drove you to this intervention and why this intervention over others.

Ashley Harris: Again, your data driven story is what creates allowable funding not selecting the intervention didn't figuring out the funding.

Ashley Harris: A Spencer this discussion is the S or elementary and secondary school emergency relief violence that employee as part of cares one, two and three, so to speak.

Ashley Harris: These funds have been earmarked to be used for mental health for student mental health, however, each State will define what mental health means.

Ashley Harris: Is it mental health services or support as we previously defined I encourage you to have local discussions about how these funds can be used.

Ashley Harris: In summary, to leverage funds across all three tiers you will need to develop an appropriate strategy.

Ashley Harris: For tier one school funding can be used to improve the supports refer to the allowable federal funding example.

Ashley Harris: That are provided remember school's responsibility is to educate the child mental health development is a skill that is taught.

Ashley Harris: For tier two you can use target population first to impact those students but generally tiers two and three, you will want to look at federal programs, but allow.

Ashley Harris: I'm sorry but also stimulate appropriate local partners like the fact that, for example, I gave through philanthropic or progress with an organization that can build to these for services for these particular students.

Janet Cummings: Thank you so much for that, just a quick follow up question what would be your key piece of advice for schools that may be just beginning to address school mental health using these funding sources.

Ashley Harris: I will probably say two things, one of them is be sure to explore what is currently in place, there is a multitude of programs that are in services that are already kind of out there and example that I'll give this.

Ashley Harris: I remember, working with a school that can tell me that they would implement a new reading program um However, when I looked at their mapping.

Ashley Harris: process actually one of the other modules that's available in the toolkit is the teaming.

Ashley Harris: module I use that in Janet and everybody at the image etc is very familiar with my usage of that particular tool, but using that tool really didn't allow us to map out everything, so we had three breeding.

Ashley Harris: partners that we're partnering with the school, but again, they were all servicing the same kids so as a matter of US looking at which program can service other populations of students in looking at what is currently in place.

Ashley Harris: The second thing I would probably say is be sure to develop a strong tier one intervention, so that you don't overburden your tier two and tier three support.

Ashley Harris: The first thought shouldn't be mental health services for all, not everyone needs mental health services, yes, everyone needs mental health support.

Ashley Harris: When I work with schools, and I see that they have a large percentage of schools in tears, two and three, I immediately question the efficacy of their tier one support.

Ashley Harris: Are we doing upstream prevention, or are we doing more over identification.

Ashley Harris: Are we doing more training around how students can stay maintaining their classroom because everyone's goal is to keep kids in the classroom so that they can learn.

Ashley Harris: Or is it more situations of sitting that student out supporting students in the classroom I really look at that conversation as a will or skill issue.

Ashley Harris: Will being are being unable to, or is it a skill issue that they do not know how to so again making sure that you're just paying a lot of attention to a strong tier one, so that you don't overburden your tier two and tier three.

Oh.

Janet Cummings: Thank you so much for that i'm now going to ask the question of our second panelist Adam.

Janet Cummings: Adam, why do you think medicaid is generally considered to be the number one source of funding for school mental health services.

Janet Cummings: And then on the flip side, are there any factors that you see is potentially standing in the way of even greater sounds of medicaid dollars being allocated to support school mental health services.

Adam Wilk : Yes, thank you, Dr cummings and Thank you everyone.

Adam Wilk : good to see you all absolutely medicaid is an important source of financing for school mental health services in general and, at the same time.

Adam Wilk : There are a number of barriers to accessing services through medicaid it's a complex topic with way more nuanced than we have time for today.

Adam Wilk : But let me start with just a few key reasons why medicaid is such a big deal in this context.

Adam Wilk : I should say, first, that most of what I have to say pertains both and medicaid and chip the children's health insurance Program.

Adam Wilk : And for those who don't know medicaid and chip are similar programs, but they cover children with slightly different household income.

Adam Wilk : medicaid covers individuals at the lowest end and chip covers youth in low income families that are not quite eligible for medicaid.

Adam Wilk : So with That said, one of the main reasons why medicaid and chip are important in school mental health is that combined the two programs cover about two out of every five children in the US 40%.

Adam Wilk : And that proportion is, of course, much higher in lower income communities in some communities, nearly all children are eligible for medicaid.

Adam Wilk : medicaid is also disproportionately likely to be a source of coverage for children with mental health needs.

Adam Wilk : Now there's another reason medicaid is important for school mental health and that's because medicaid benefits are actually quite generous.

Adam Wilk : medicaid covers a large number of tier three school mental health services, including therapy services and medications.

Adam Wilk : As well as many screening services now, in particular, I wanted to point out the EP sgt benefit which all state medicaid programs must cover for enrollees under age 21.

Adam Wilk : He pst T stands for early and periodic screening diagnostic and treatment it's a mouthful.

Adam Wilk : Many folks know that up sgt covers a wide range of behavioral health and other screening services.

Adam Wilk : But then, for any child identified as potentially having a mental health or other health problem medicaid must also cover the diagnostic tests to specify the child's mental or or medical care need.

Adam Wilk : and also the treatment services determined to be medically necessary to control our correct the problem.

Adam Wilk : So, to be clear, even if a certain service isn't covered under the state's medicaid plan.

Adam Wilk : Under a PSD to medicaid has to cover the service, so long as the child's mental health condition was identified and diagnose through EP sgt covered screenings and diagnostic tests, which is pretty cool.

Adam Wilk : it's a very comprehensive benefit and it's probably underutilized in the school mental health context, now there are a few reasons for that, and I can get back to that if there's interest in it later on.

Adam Wilk : I also want to point out that our school mental health team here in the southeast and htc region has put together several resources on APS dt and other relevant dimensions of medicaid and other financing sources to for school mental health.

Adam Wilk : We are putting the links to some of those in the chat now alongside a link to the full list of resources, our centers put together, so please do check those out.

Adam Wilk : There are a few other reasons why medicaid is important in school mental health, including some policy overlap with IDA.

Adam Wilk : For those who are familiar with the individuals with disabilities Education Act medicaid will often cover all of the medical services listed in a child's IEP or individualized education program these are IDA eligible children and referring to if they're also medicaid eligible.

Adam Wilk : In addition, many le a's may not yet be aware of that medicaid will often pay for ellie's administrative expenses.

Adam Wilk : If they're related to medicaid so things like outreach efforts or enrollment support and other related duties those can be covered through medicaid funded cost based reimbursement systems.

Adam Wilk : And medicaid is also flexible from a policy perspective so, for example in recent years, some states have tweaked regulations to make school nurses and other.

Adam Wilk : Staff eligible for medicaid reimbursement so that's a lot of things in medicaid favor so many kids are enrolled in medicaid medicaid has generous coverage terms.

Adam Wilk : But your part of your question was what keeps le a's from leveraging medicaid and more so well first not all kids are eligible for medicaid.

Adam Wilk : And then, not all kids that are eligible for medicaid are actually enrolled in medicaid about one out of every 14 children who are eligible for medicaid are not enrolled in the Program.

Adam Wilk : The process of verifying eligibility for medicaid varies from State to State like so many other medicaid parameters.

Adam Wilk : And it can be onerous for families and then eligibility has to be re verified, with some frequency, in order to sustain coverage so it's not up not at all uncommon for medicaid enrollees to slip in and out of coverage and become uninsured periodically.

Adam Wilk : Second, many tier one and tier two services are not covered under medicaid medicaid covers most of the tier three services, you might think of in some tier two services.

Adam Wilk : Some other services like school wide behavioral and trauma screening or promotion and prevention programs have to be paid for through non medicaid sources.

Adam Wilk : Now, fortunately, like Ashley was talking about, there are some other Department of Education and other sources that can be used to finance those kinds of services so that may not be such a big detriment.

Adam Wilk : Next, in about three fourths of states, nearly all medicaid enrolled children are actually enrolled in a medicaid managed care plan of some kind.

Adam Wilk : These are private insurance companies that contract with the state to administer benefits for medicaid enrollees on the state's behalf.

Adam Wilk : And so often building medicaid for services is not just as simple as building one large health insurer if that's simple.

Adam Wilk : but, rather, it may mean building maybe three, four or five different plans operating in your area.

Adam Wilk : and working with medicaid managed care plans can be intimidating or frustrating for different reasons, and so we've heard many le a's may just not want to make the investment to figure that all out it's tricky.

Adam Wilk : For another barrier, there are lots of nuances to medicaid rules to adhere to and these also change over time, of course.

Adam Wilk : These changes can be tricky to keep track of and then, if you're looking for resources to help orient yourself to those rules in your state or what to do about them.

Adam Wilk : Unfortunately medicaid program rules vary so much from state to state that it can often be difficult to get good guidance about how to approach medicaid in any one state.

Adam Wilk : Now there are national organizations like the Kaiser family foundation that do a good job of tracking these things at a high level, but they might not provide the specific guidance are looking for.

Adam Wilk : And then, lastly, we are all aware that there is a massive shortage of pediatric mental health care providers in most areas of the country and some communities have no such providers at all.

Adam Wilk : But then, on top of that, in many communities that have providers, many of those providers will not accept medicaid patients.

Adam Wilk : This is significantly, because what medicaid pays for a given service is often much less than what private insurers or higher income self pay patients might pay.

Adam Wilk : Now medicaid is just not built to overcome the absence of suitable willing providers and community, so there are other barriers to but that's probably enough on medicaid for now.

Janet Cummings: Oh Thank you so much site, it was an incredible amount of medicaid knowledge packed into just a few minutes, really, really appreciate that and I see some questions in our.

Janet Cummings: Q amp a pod lots of interest in digging more into these topics and hopefully we can circle back around during the Q amp a portion.

Janet Cummings: Next i'd like to ask a question of Lynn who has experience leading an agency and attaining nude state funding to support school mental health.

Janet Cummings: So when when you are Mental Health Commissioner Alabama you working with stakeholders to secure additional funding from the state legislature to support and expand school mental health So could you tell us a little bit more about what exactly is an Alabama do here.

Lynn Beshear : Sure, or when I became Commissioner in 2017, it was with the clear goal to implement mental health crisis care centers across the state.

Lynn Beshear : And when I learned about school based mental health expanding those services also became a primary focus One reason is that, as a former nurse I approached solutions from the perspective that prevention and.

Lynn Beshear : produce a better outcome, as well as saving time and money, I appreciate the opportunity to share how we were able to achieve a tremendous amount during my turn, and I want to emphasize four factors relationships persistence, trust and timing.

Lynn Beshear : At the beginning of my term the school based mental health program was a small partnership between 13 of our 19 mental health centers but included only.

Lynn Beshear : Out of Alabama has 137 public school systems, the 13 mental health centers have agreements with those 53 le is to provide in school therapist in a private designated place in the school.

Lynn Beshear : So when I arrived in July 2017 the 2018 budget was already said, our focus then was to expand the school mental health program through the 2019 budget request.

Lynn Beshear : Part of our securing the funding for this program was due to timing of a committed new governor our work to build trust with her office and the legislature and sadly a national tragedy.

Lynn Beshear : The catastrophic parkland high school shooting was on valentine's day of, as you know, so student mental health again moved into the spotlight.

Lynn Beshear : Our governor immediately established the safe Council with major department heads as leaders safe stands for securing alabama's facilities of education.

Lynn Beshear : And, as Commissioner, I was on the Council, the school based mental health program was one of the 10 focus areas so elected officials became fully aware of the program and the importance of mental health for students.

Lynn Beshear : While no one would want this to be the way that school based mental health became a major focus.

Lynn Beshear : That was the circumstance, in which we found ourselves as we worked with our legislature and governor to secure additional funding for expansion.

Lynn Beshear : We did receive \$500,000 in fiscal year 2019 to provide \$50,000 to a Community mental health Center to initiate a program and that resulted in two new sites that year.

Lynn Beshear : 10 new sites open in F1 20 with the additional half million dollars and the Department received \$750,000 for this current fiscal year to open 15 new size and I have received word that it expects to receive another \$750,000 for next year or continued expansion.

Lynn Beshear : All 19 of alabama's Community mental health centers now have a school based program and at least one school and their multi county region with a total now i've 77 of Alabama has 137 ellie's involved.

Lynn Beshear : In the fall of 2018 I had the great fortune to me, Dr Janet cummings and to learn about the technical assistance at the regional and national levels.

Lynn Beshear : She and her team have been extremely generous in their availability, as we said about growing our relationship with the Department of Education.

Lynn Beshear : To expand the commitment to school based mental health, as well as the number of programs.

Lynn Beshear : As we and the Department of Education get into greater understanding of the importance of tier one and tier two services we collaborated to envision a new position in the middle health workforce.

Lynn Beshear : Our joint goal was to create a position of a mental health service coordinator, that would work for each la and be responsible for coordination.

Lynn Beshear : of student mental health services, including tears one, two and three throughout the school district.

Lynn Beshear : One vital player from our Department of Health mental health and this success story was our legislative liaison who worked with her counterpart and education to write the bill to create and fund the mental health service coordinator position.

Lynn Beshear : This further demonstrated the value of focusing on our common goal of improve student mental health and attaining increased funding sustain and expand the work.

Lynn Beshear : Other key players, of course, where the governor her finance office staff and the House majority later in the Alabama legislature, the governor charged him in the summer.

Lynn Beshear : To be both champion and chair of a bipartisan committee of senators and representatives to focus on the broad category of mental health.

Lynn Beshear : They lead the effort that culminated in a mental health legislative day in February of 2020 with unanimous support for our department in the.

Lynn Beshear : fiscal year 21 budget to obtain that \$750,000 to expand sites for tier three services and for the education department to receive 4.5 million to implement the tier two mental health service coordinator position.

Lynn Beshear : The other factor egging our calls was that three other Commissioners without in your request for me.

Lynn Beshear : That for prisons department of human resources and the site partment of education, all three have to emphasize, to the governor and the legislature.

Lynn Beshear : In that their primary issues were regarding the middle health of those that they serve the bottom line is due to persistence of messaging and action by our department.

Lynn Beshear : Strong support about the governor's office a tireless and courageous champion in the legislature collaboration with the Department of Education.

Lynn Beshear : and support from other state agencies new funding was secured for school mental health during a pandemic in the state with constrained resources it's a wonderful story and we'd be delighted to share more later.

Janet Cummings: Oh, thank you, thank you so much for that that's.

Janet Cummings: An incredible success story, and just such a great example of being able to secure additional funding for school mental health, with all of these other other forces working.

Janet Cummings: Possibly against you, but I think so many lessons and kernels of wisdom there now i'd like to switch gears here for a second and ask a question that all of the panelists have a chance to answer and.

Janet Cummings: In this case, i'd like us to go in reverse order so all when i'll have you answer first, followed by Adam Ashley and then Nancy i'd love to have you.

Janet Cummings: chime in as well, so we've talked about a lot of funding sources a federal sources Department of Education medicaid new State fun.

Janet Cummings: And so i'd like to ask everyone how resilient have the funding sources you all just described, been during the pandemic and then, how do you see the pandemic the related economic downturn.

Janet Cummings: and other related factors affecting.

Janet Cummings: sustainability of the sources of financing, moving forward so.

Janet Cummings: When would you like to offer a couple of words on that particular issue.

Lynn Beshear : Sure um and and it's important to note that I had not been the Commissioner nail for since December, so this is definitely a work in progress, but what is important for the participants to know is that Alabama is not an expansion stage.

Lynn Beshear : But, about half of our births are paid by medicaid, and we of course have it for children, who made the threshold for services, and we also have the all kids program, which is that gas gap coverage on the SG amp.

Lynn Beshear : what's very interesting is that.

Lynn Beshear : The schools or the the mental health centers or the billers, of course, for the services, the therapists are an employee of the mental health Center.

Lynn Beshear : But the children who do not have a funding stream in Alabama often or the children with blue blue cross insurance, they are by far the dominant provider of private insurance in this state.

Lynn Beshear : And they do not cover services that are not provided in the office, they will not cover services in the school.

Lynn Beshear : On the medicaid reimbursement that he has received is is a tremendous help, of course, but it does not, of course, account for the time that therapist spends not doing direct services such as working with the say of educating them, maybe managing a crisis at the school there's not billable.

Lynn Beshear : Those services, of course, are crucial, but not reimburse them all through insurance.

Janet Cummings: Thank you, thank you, Adam do you have anything to add to how we can think about sustainability, particularly with respect to medicaid and what that might look like going forward.

Adam Wilk : yeah i'll i'll keep my comments focused on medicaid here, overall, I would say medicaid is a pretty persistent and reliable funding source across years, despite what I was alluding to earlier about all the year to year changes in the Program.

Adam Wilk : That said, in most years in in most states, maybe there will be rumblings about cuts in medicaid.

Adam Wilk : medicaid tends to be a scapegoat for any state budget concerns sensitive most states number one line item expense at around 25% of the state budget that's a really big ticket item.

Adam Wilk : During the pandemic, maybe to help illustrate the accompanying economic downturn actually hits medicaid hard in two ways.

Adam Wilk : One when medic when the economy is down and unemployment goes up demand for medicaid coverage goes up.

Adam Wilk : So there's been a lot of increased demand for medicaid recently and then also when the economy is down state revenues are significantly down.

Adam Wilk : Because of reduced income taxes and reduce sales Texas, so that leaves a lot less money to pay for medicaid despite the increasing demand for coverage.

Adam Wilk : Actually, gave a webinar presentation about these issues last July, so if folks are interested in seeing more discussion about these issues.

Adam Wilk : Please do again check out the link to that webinar recording on the southeast and htc website.

Adam Wilk : Now, in the last several months of the of the pandemic, the Federal Government has agreed a few times to foot larger shares of the bill for medicaid than they would normally under the F matt matching arrangement.

Adam Wilk : And that reduces states burden, but still many states have been facing pretty dire budget situations and tough choices to try and make ends meet.

Adam Wilk : Now some States might look to restrict medicaid eligibility or restrict terms of coverage or reduced reimbursement.

Adam Wilk : Now, all three of those things are hard for different reasons it's also possible that States might just reduce the number of staff that they employ and medicaid offices and that might slow down a number of different processes in some ways, but.

Adam Wilk : That said, during the public health emergency States actually have some expanded authority to modify the program so.

Adam Wilk : The Center for budget and policy priorities put out a report late last year that documented some of these ways that medicaid programs actually expanded the generosity of their programs.

Adam Wilk : Even if it doesn't make the program a little bit more expensive for the State, including things like easing requirements for verifying eligibility.

Adam Wilk : and expanding coverage of certain services like covert testing and telemedicine, so, in the end, I would say it's worthwhile to check in periodically on medicaid policy changes in our States, because they will change.

Adam Wilk : But, especially in an era when popular opinion of medicaid is improving and there's goodwill towards the program major cuts in the program seemed pretty unlikely and protest, particularly during a public health emergency.

Ashley Harris: For me, I was saying what like what Adam just shared about medicaid majority of the funny that I mentioned today has been in the education, education system for years.

Ashley Harris: Better programs dollars, such as title for a mckinney events or IDA are generally resilient, including the fluctuations that you've been Adam mentioned earlier.

Ashley Harris: However, this is our first pandemic, since the creation of those funds, so what will happen with those funds.

Ashley Harris: I am hopeful that they will remain resilient but then we also just have to acknowledge that this the first time that those funds have experienced a pandemic, along with us.

Ashley Harris: The funding source that comes into question are really more philanthropic and so or the elementary and secondary school relief on.

Ashley Harris: Emergency Relief i'm sorry, but those dollars are the ones that are specifically earmarked for education in the cures one, two and three, so to speak, in those funds do expire in September of 2024.

Ashley Harris: I also talk about Philip Philip philanthropy because donations or fundraisers may not be what it was in historic times and however larger organizations may have more funding.

Ashley Harris: For a specific causes due to this pandemic time so again in closing a note about Esther Oregon the elementary and secondary school at emergency relief.

Ashley Harris: As we begin to implement these various interventions, it is for the most important that we think about sustainability.

Ashley Harris: Look at these funds as seed money and extra push and one large projects can we find with seed money that will free up other funds or projects.

Ashley Harris: So that we will be able to that we necessarily wouldn't usually have the funding to do so again, this is seed one in the newer dollars that are.

Ashley Harris: coming in to free up some of those others understanding that again those funds do have the exploration of 2024.

Ashley Harris: On this now allows you to reallocate that funding that you necessarily save by using the foot Money Fund, a seed money to sustain some of the various interventions and initiatives that you may implement at this time.

Janet Cummings: Great do you have anything to any additional words of wisdom to add to that Nancy.

Nancy Lever: Absolutely.

Nancy Lever: This has been probably one of the most popular questions that we've been getting recently.

Nancy Lever: And I feel like my responses in agreement with what we've been hearing from the other panelists, and so we definitely recommend using relief funding to both meet.

Nancy Lever: acute needs, but also to build sustainable infrastructure that can help support longer term school mental health system needs.

Nancy Lever: we've seen funding us to support things like needs assessment listening forums strategic planning, we want to make sure that we're getting it right.

Nancy Lever: In terms of what needs to come next relief dollars have been used to enhance school Community partnerships to offer more school based services and support.

Nancy Lever: To build screening and data systems that can support identification free housing and following up with students and families, as well as to inform the impact of school mental health service provision.

Nancy Lever: We hope that funds will be used to build longer term capacity and particularly encouraged dates and districts, to consider using funds to hire school mental health coordinators.

Nancy Lever: Who can build capacity by establishing comprehensive multi tiered systems of support that build on family school Community partnerships.

Nancy Lever: With a growing number of students reporting increased mental health challenges, including depression, anxiety.

Nancy Lever: We cannot tackle the needs of students with only tier three services and support, so we need to strengthen our tier one and to support.

Nancy Lever: can really help our schools and districts, to reach a broader number of students with proactive prevention oriented strategies.

Nancy Lever: Some other ideas we have definitely have lots of ideas, but there's other ideas for how to use the leap dollars include.

Nancy Lever: Implementing organizational and individual strategies to promote educator well being.

Nancy Lever: Offering mental health literacy for K to 12 staff and students integrating social emotional learning into the curricula.

Nancy Lever: Assessing and advancing positive school climate hiring retaining offering professional development to a full continuum of students support professionals.

Nancy Lever: such as school psychologists, social workers and school counselors establishing form of partnerships with Community health and behavioral.

Nancy Lever: health providers to provide school mental health services and support and to facilitate referrals so we want to have a strong.

Nancy Lever: School employed network, as well as our Community Partner network so it's not one or the other but both end, and you know these are just really some of the examples there's lots of different possibilities, but regardless it's important to make sure we're advancing quality and capacity.

Janet Cummings: Thank you so much for that we've been having a number of questions coming in in our Q amp a.

Janet Cummings: pod pod and we've been monitoring those and so i'd like to have the chance to ask a couple of follow up questions of our panelists.

Janet Cummings: I believe the first question that came in to that we'd like to cover is for Ashley Ashley, how do you think about the trade offs between funding for instruction versus for tier one mental health supports.

Ashley Harris: It really is going to be based on what the local school district has identified as their priorities so.

Ashley Harris: When we start talking about the funding sources, again, I always say look at what's going on map out everything use the teeny module from.

Ashley Harris: The image ctc like I cannot argue that enough because it will allow you to be able to see medium, where there is duplication of services support so.

Ashley Harris: Right now, we can all say everybody is working tremendously hard to impact this this particular ever, but is it that we're working too hard, because we have streamlined appropriately.

Ashley Harris: So, again notice, not a thing of your trading all one for the other, it really is making sure that you're addressing all needs.

Ashley Harris: By way of doing the proper assessment to make sure that you are spending in the appropriate manner, you have the right staffing in the appropriate manner and you're coordinating with your Community partners as much as possible.

Janet Cummings: Thanks.

Janet Cummings: A lot of great insight there.

Janet Cummings: Had a couple of questions come in for Adam about APS dt so just going to roll it into one question, since you said you had a little bit more, you can share with us on EBS dt.

Janet Cummings: Can you, you mentioned that up so he may be under utilized you can say a bit more about that, and can you also speak to how best to advise led to leverage at sgt.

Adam Wilk : yeah so to be brief, I think, the one thing I would say, first, is that I did copy the links to a couple of resources, our Center has put together on a PS dt into the Q amp a pod.

Adam Wilk : So if you're interested in seeing more about the basics of EP sgt and how it can be used in this context, I would encourage you to go there, one of our resources was also some more specifically about this question of why it may be under utilized.

Adam Wilk : And I think a lot of it has to do with the workforce shortage.

Adam Wilk : So I can imagine that lots of Le a's would be very interested in identifying more precisely, who are the kids in their districts, who have these.

Adam Wilk : Mental health conditions that you'd like to address and then hand them off to a Community provider, so that they could have those needs met.

Adam Wilk : But if you're not going to be able to find a provider in the Community to meet that child's needs there's not much point to screening.

Adam Wilk : And starting that chain of events with the GPS dt benefit in much rather just use those same staff resources for other purposes, maybe even supporting instructional needs if you're not you know perfectly aligned and using the teeming module like Ashley suggested.

Adam Wilk : And so, in instead of using the GPS dt benefit to its full to the hilt.

Adam Wilk : If you have a shortage of providers APS dt is sort of a secondary concern, so I think in a lot of communities ups dt is particularly underutilized because of the shortage so again check out those resources on our website for further insight on that.

Janet Cummings: Thanks so much for that um let's see we we've had a question come in about foundation funding so i'm going to pose this and you know, perhaps Ashley or Nancy could chime in on this one what major foundations might help supplement funding for school mental health that you're aware of.

Ashley Harris: hardcore.

Ashley Harris: I would definitely say start with your local philanthropic organizations, first, I always notice that most of the local organizations, usually have some type of particular funding source kind of a.

Ashley Harris: pulse on what's happening in their Community so they've already started fundraising towards those particular initiatives.

Ashley Harris: So I would definitely stay at your local level, first, before you start to radiate out into the larger organizations that are nationally based.

Ashley Harris: However, there hasn't been a like a comprehensive list that I can list often Nancy i'll pass over to you, maybe you have some additional information.

Ashley Harris: But I will definitely say stay at your local level as much as possible, because again they are the ones as well to have.

Ashley Harris: kind of the pulse, and the thumb on exactly what's happening in your community and be able to kind of radiate and raise the funds that are needed for the particular incidents that are happening.

Nancy Lever: do want to call out like any Casey foundation beetham family foundation, there are foundations that have invested in school mental health, sometimes they are regional really.

Nancy Lever: learning about whether it's what you have available in your state or in your region often it's they're not may not necessarily be.

Nancy Lever: A plan or a grant that already exists where they're saying we're looking for school mental health, this is where we can get creative.

Nancy Lever: we've had some fantastic opportunities, sometimes what we're able to do through our private foundations, they can often do like the seed funding for a great idea.

Nancy Lever: And then, once you have some of that data once you have that information, you can take it and bring that to a much greater.

Nancy Lever: Funding opportunity but I it doesn't hurt to ask and to look to see what's available we do when we send out resources from today, we can make sure to include some links for how to find out more about private foundations.

Janet Cummings: Great and now we I think we have time for one more question very quick this final question is for Lynn Cassandra was asking when, could you repeat your four words that led to the success of of securing new funding for school mental health in the state of Alabama.

Janet Cummings: you're on mute.

Lynn Beshear : Thank you for the question.

Lynn Beshear : Relationships persistence trust.

Lynn Beshear : All of those things had to come together.

Janet Cummings: wonderful words of wisdom, I and.

Janet Cummings: That that just leave just a few minutes left, I have a couple of announcements.

Janet Cummings: And a link to our evaluation to share before I do again just a huge Thank you to all of our panelists for sharing so much insight wisdom ideas strategies, this is just been packed full of information, so thank you all so much um.

Janet Cummings: let's see here we go.

Janet Cummings: Okay, so just to remind everyone coming up, we have our regional breakout sessions these sessions will provide an opportunity for you to ask questions about some of the content we've covered today.

Janet Cummings: and allow for time for a more informal moderated discussion with staff, and this will be contextualize for your specific region to participate in the 30 minute discussion.

Janet Cummings: These are taking place right now, after the live session, you can gain access by clicking the link we just provided in the chat box.

Janet Cummings: you'll see the link takes you to a document that lists the 10 breakout sessions happening simultaneously so choose the one for your region click on that link as soon as we wrap up here today.

Janet Cummings: For information about local state and regional school mental health, training and technical assistance activities, please access your image ttc regional Center on our website.

Janet Cummings: really close to the top of the hour, just a couple of more announcements before we conclude thanks so much for joining us today for our.

Janet Cummings: session as a reminder, this is the seven.

Janet Cummings: And eight part series, we have our final session coming up on may 25 at the same time as today.

Janet Cummings: So we're going to focus on the impact module don't want to miss that session and information on how to register will be included in a follow up email coming your way.

Janet Cummings: Here we're sharing the link as to where you can access the material in the national Center school mental health, best practices implementation guidance modules on the image ttc websites.

Janet Cummings: One final announcement before our evaluation classroom wise is our new free mental health literacy package for teachers and school staff, it has an online course.

Janet Cummings: Video series website with resource library, this is launching in June 2021 and let me reiterate it is free.

Janet Cummings: it's developed by the htc network with the national Center for school mental health.

Janet Cummings: It has concrete universal approaches to promote student mental health and create safe support and classroom environments.

Janet Cummings: It gives a description of student behaviors that could be indicative of mental health concerns and that's going to provide specific skills and strategies to engage and support students with mental health concerns.

Janet Cummings: As part of the launch of classroom wise we're inviting 24 schools to participate in a project to better understand.

Janet Cummings: which types of technical assistance strategies work best to help with the implementation of classroom wise participating schools within interest.

Janet Cummings: Would designate a school implementation team and what have the opportunity to receive free technical assistance and fall of 2021 we're finalizing plans for this project.

Janet Cummings: If your school might be interested in participating, please sign up to get more information about the project and how to apply to participate.

Janet Cummings: And then, finally, we ask that you take a moment to complete a brief survey about today's training.

Janet Cummings: The survey should pop up on your browser window automatically after the browser closes will also be sending the survey link via email to everyone who attended today.

Janet Cummings: So thank you again so much for joining us, I encourage you to join your regional breakout session take care of yourselves and have a wonderful rest of your afternoon.

