Creating A Sense Of Community And Finding Resources In Your Area

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Maui Behavioral Health Resources
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SAMHSA
Substance Abuse and Mental Health
Services Administration

Mountain Plains (HHS Region 8)
MHTTC Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

Disclaimer and Funding Statement

The Mountain Plains Mental Health Technology Transfer Center

The Mountain Plains Mental Health Technology Transfer Center (Mountain Plains MHTTC) provides training and technical assistance to individuals who serve persons with mental health concerns throughout Region 8 (Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming).

We belong to the Technology Transfer Center (TTC) Network, a national network of training and technical assistance centers serving the needs of mental health, substance use and prevention providers. The work of the TTC Network is under a cooperative agreement by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration (SAMHSA).
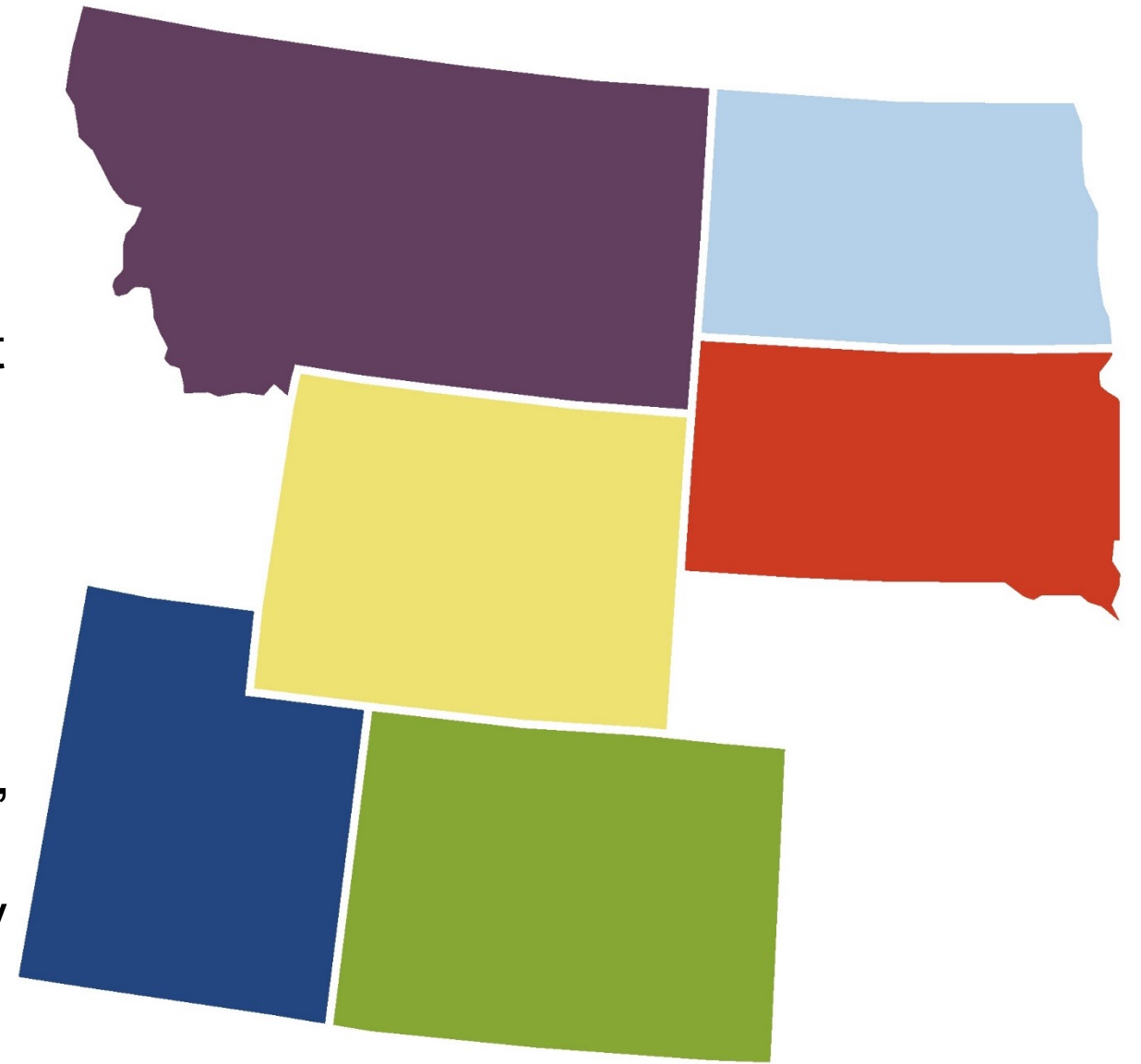
Land Acknowledgement Statement

Today, the University of North Dakota rests on the ancestral lands of the Pembina and Red Lake Bands of Ojibwe and the Dakota Oyate - presently existing as composite parts of the Red Lake, Turtle Mountain, White Earth Bands, and the Dakota Tribes of Minnesota and North Dakota. We acknowledge the people who resided here for generations and recognize that the spirit of the Ojibwe and Oyate people permeates this land. As a university community, we will continue to build upon our relations with the First Nations of the State of North Dakota - the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara Nation, Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate Nation, Spirit Lake Nation, Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, and Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians.

The MHTTC Network uses affirming, respectful and recovery-oriented language in all activities. That language is:

Inviting to individuals participating in their OWN JOURNEYS

Strengths-based AND HOPEFUL

Person-first and FREE OF LABELS

Inclusive and accepting of diverse cultures, genders, perspectives, and experiences

Non-judgmental and avoiding assumptions

Respectful, clear and understandable

Healing-centered and trauma-responsive

Consistent with OUR ACTIONS, policies, and products

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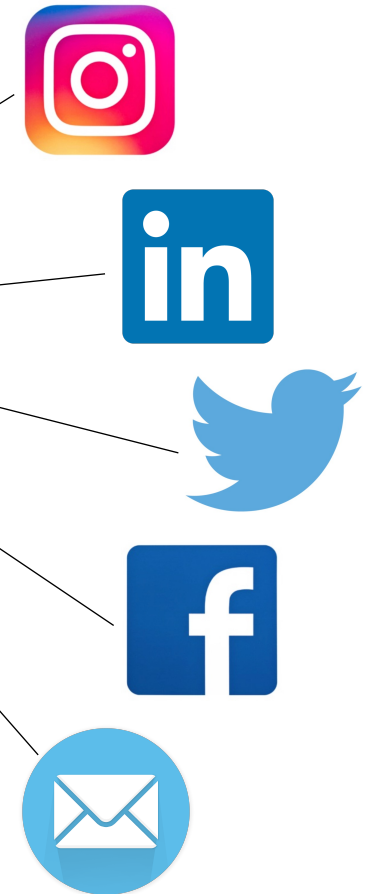
Community Minded

Rural Communities are placed where the houses are spread very far apart. Many people think of rural communities as farm land. This is because, in most rural communities, people have quite a bit of property, and they can have many plants and animals on their property.

Urban Communities are located in cities. These are areas where people live in very close proximity, and there is almost always something going on or noise of some kind.

Suburban Communities are the mix of the urban and rural. With a suburban area, you are going to get many of the same conveniences a city has. You will also get room to spread out and move around as well as a bit of nature.

Why Do You Live There?

Please take a 5 minutes to:

1. Write down what type of community you live in.

2. Write down some of the resources you use at work in those areas.

3. Write down some resources that you don't have or have difficulty getting access to.

Hills To Climb In Rural Communities:

Rural Communities have the biggest distance you must travel to get places. It could be twenty or even forty miles just to get to the grocery store.

Most people who live in areas like this get used to the process, and they learn how to plan accordingly. For others, this can be a significant adjustment.

People who live in rural communities also need to think about resources and their distance to travel to get there. Chances are there will not be as many options when it comes to medical services, mental health providers, specialists, or support services.

"Of All The Paths You Take In Life, Make Sure A Few Of Them Are Dirt."
-John Muir

Of All The Things You Could Learn

Many children and teens struggled with the following major issues during this pandemic:

Loss of services and support system

Bullying/Feeling targeted online

Concerns about your body image

Being culturally different Is bad

Identifying as LGBTQIA isn't safe

Identifying with depression and suicidal ideations

Not feeling safe to share online

Not knowing where to go for help

How Do We Create A Safer School?

Establish a culture of inclusion and respect that welcomes all students. Reward students when they show thoughtfulness and respect for peers, adults, and the school.

Monitor bullying "hot spots" in and around the building. Students may be at higher risk of bullying in settings where there is little or no adult monitoring or supervision, such as bathrooms, playgrounds, and the cafeteria.

Enlist the help of all school staff. All staff can keep an eye out for bullying. They also help set the tone at school. Teachers, bus drivers, cafeteria staff, office staff, librarians, school nurses, and others see and influence students every day. Messages reach kids best when they come from many different adults who talk about and show respect and inclusion.

Set a tone of respect in the classroom. This means managing student behavior in the classroom well. Well-managed classrooms are the least likely to have bullying.

Manage Classrooms

Here are some ways to promote the respect, positive relations, and order that helps prevent bullying in the classroom:

Create ground rules.

Develop rules with students so they set their own climate of respect and responsibility.

Reinforce the rules.

Be a role model and follow the rules yourself. Show students respect and encourage them to be successful. Make expectations clear. Keep your requests simple, direct, and specific. Reward good behavior. Try to affirm good behavior four to five times for every one criticism of bad behavior. Use one-on-one feedback, and do not publicly reprimand. Help students correct their behaviors. Help them understand violating the rules results in consequences: "I know you can stop [negative action] and go back to [positive action]. If you choose to continue, then [consequence]."

Classroom Meetings

Classroom meetings provide a forum for students to talk about school-related issues beyond academics. These meetings can help staff stay informed about what is going on at school and help students feel safe and supported.

Start the conversation. Focus on specific topics, such as bullying or respectful behaviors. Meetings can identify and address problems affecting the group as a whole. Stories should be broad and lead to solutions that build trust and respect between students. Use open-ended questions or prompts such as:

Share an example of a student who helped someone at school this week. Without names, share an example of someone who made another student feel bad. What did students nearby do? What did you do? Did you want to do something different—why or why not? Etc.

End with a reminder that it is everyone's job to make school a positive place to learn. Encourage kids to talk to teachers or other trusted adults if they see bullying or are worried about how someone is being treated.

Follow-up when necessary. Monitor student body language and reactions. If a topic seems to be affecting a student, follow-up with him or her.

Don't Change Them
Allow Them To Change You

Where is one place in the world you felt safe or currently feel safe to be your authentic self?

How To Make Your Space A Safe Space

1. **Really listen.** Take your time. Lean in and listen.

2. **Get to know the lingo.** Research, ask, humble yourself.

3. **Lobby for safe spaces (or create them).** Be a leader.

4. **Take a forthright unequivocal stand against bullying.** They kids will assert themselves if they see you asserting yourself for them.

5. **Get help if you need it.** Research and reach out. There are free nation wide services at your fingertips.

6. **Honor their experience.** These times they are changing. This is not your school experience. It is theirs and they are experiencing it in real time.

7. **Give yourself some credit.** Everyone makes mistakes. Take accountability. Keep trying. Admit when you don't know. Ask for help.

Is My Space A Safe Space?

Look around your space and ask yourself:

Is there anything in here that would give the impression of privilege and recognize the impact it can have on my students?

Is there any reflections of my own identities, privileges, or power?

Am I following best practices and recommendations for the culture, ethnicities, and other identifying factors of my students, now and in the future?

Am I supportive of LGBTQ+ history, inclusive curriculum, and visual representation?

Do I have resources for different BIPOC or other inclusive clubs?

Do I participate and/or advocate for both LGBTQ+ and anti-racist education training at school?

Do I have information readily available Supporting LGBTQ+ & Youth of Color?

Items To Have In A Safe Space

Handouts that are readily available to give to students or parents

Posters that have different children on them

Age appropriate and ethnic appropriate toys for the children

Books that represent different ethnicities, families, and identities

Flags of different countries, fun facts from around the world

Different identifiers of gender, sexuality, and pronouns

Large posters that clearly have printed phone numbers, apps, or websites for children to see and write things down or QR code scan with their phones.

Lock box or sign identifying where to drop off suggestions or questions students have and when they are available to talk or text.

HIPPA & Confidentiality

Each site, school district, county, and state handle HIPPA and Duty To Report differently here are some helpful hints:

Gain knowledge: Ask your administrators and legal team what your hierarchy of reporting looks like.

Be honest from the beginning: Inform your student based on their age and risk of harm confidentiality protects only certain things.

Be Specific and Give Examples: Go over duty to warn, duty to report, and your role in that. Give examples of when and how you would report.

Be supportive and work as a team: Any time confidentiality is broken it can be shocking for the student/family. A lot may change instantly for them. Make all attempts at walking with them through the process and working together.

When You Are Done They're Not

When you are done for the day the work of the student and family is not.

Some things to think about:

1. Specialists, doctors, therapists, non-profit programs, and mandated services may be far away and financially catastrophic for families if insurance doesn't cover it.

2. Additional time may be taken away from school and extracurricular activities that were keeping the child in a somewhat positive place.

3. They may have to fly, drive far distances, participate via telehealth, or have long periods of time away from their families for appropriate treatment.

4. Integrating back into the school may be difficult. They may have to participate in programs or groups and don't want their peers to know about.

A Nation of Services Here To Help

RESOURCE LIST FOR CHILDREN AND TEENS

https://msdh.ms.gov/msdhsite/_static/resources/2585.pdf

Gay Lesbian Straight Education Network

https://www.glsen.org

Provides handouts, posters, education for school staff, to create an anti-bully educational and safe environment for all students

National Campaign Against Youth Violence

1-800-99-YOUTH

www.violencepreventionweek.org

This group encourages teens to use outlets other than violence to express themselves. The site offers tips for preventing violence and information to start anti-violence projects in your community.

Crisis Line

601-713-HELP (601-713-4357) 601-366-9298 (en español)

A helpline for adolescents in crisis.

Now The Real Work Begins

I challenge all of you to reach out to at least 5 agencies you have never worked with and 5 agencies you have worked with in your town and surrounding areas and ask these questions and more if you want:

What ages do you work with?

What services do you provide?
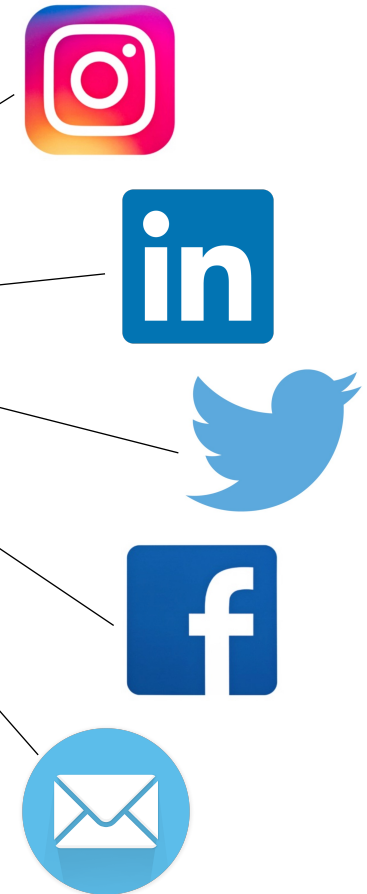
How do people get linked to your services?

How can I help spread awareness of your services?

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Thank You!