



**“They Get Me”:
Connecticut School Based Health Centers Engage
Adolescent African-American and Latino Males in
Mental Health Services**

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Project Background

The project was launched with one simple question:

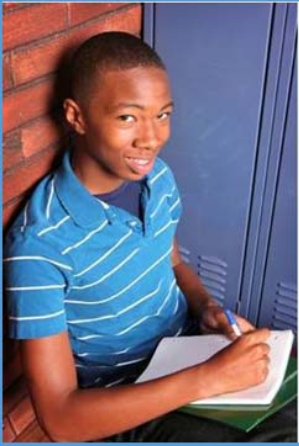
“How many African-American and Latino adolescent young men receive mental health services in CT SBHCs?”

The answer was -- We didn't know



Research Questions

The utilization of mental health services among adolescent males of color was of particular interest to the CT Health Foundation



- ✿ How many African-American and Latino adolescent males use SBHC mental health services?
- ✿ How often do they use SBHC mental health services?
- ✿ Why do they use SBHC services more than community-based treatment services?
- ✿ What have been the health outcomes of these interventions?



What We Did

- 1) Analysis of data collected by all School Based Health Centers (SBHCs)
- 2) Literature review of relevant publications
- 3) Focus groups with adolescent males that used mental health services in SBHCs



Focus Groups. 22 adolescent males ages 13-18 years

- 45% African American; 55% Latino


Setting. 4 geographic areas in Connecticut (4 high schools; 3 middle schools)

- All in urban, low socioeconomic areas
- Schools similar in racial and ethnic demographics



Health Research and Advocacy Project


Four significant study findings:




In CT School Based Health Centers (SBHC), African-American and Latino adolescent male students utilize mental health services at an average of 13.6 visits per student. In community-based mental health treatment, the majority drop out after 2-3 sessions



SBHCs remove or mitigate barriers to mental health treatment for African-American and Latino adolescents males



SBHCs provide an atmosphere of safety, confidentiality and trust; characteristics that are of paramount importance to adolescent males



Students perceived the School Based Health Centers staff as open and nonjudgmental - critical to student engagement in services

Partnerships made it happen

DPH had the aggregate SBHC data in Clinical Fusion

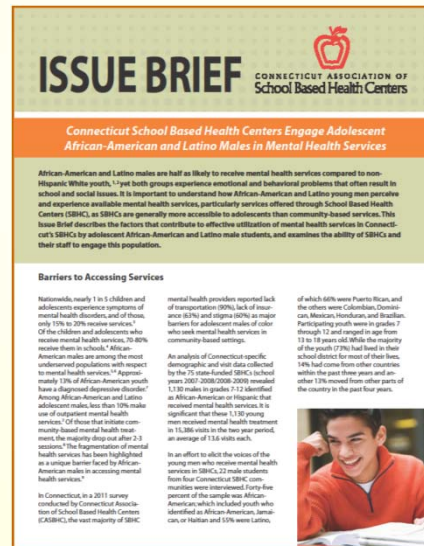
CASBHC formed a Data Workgroup for the project

CASBHC contracted UConn School of Nursing to develop the Brief

CASBHC contracted a design firm for the layout

CASBHC contracted Institute for Community Research: student interviews

CASBHC Workgroup wrote the content and guided the layout





Research to Advocacy



- Issue Brief was the centerpiece of a Legislative Advocacy Kickoff event in September 2012
- Participated in a legislative forum on “Improving Student Health to Close the Achievement Gap”
- Distributed 1500 copies of the Issue Brief to advocates, community agencies, legislators, SBHC sites, foundations, and at an NPR health disparities forum
- Used text and quotes from the Brief in legislative public hearings to discourage cuts to SBHCs
- Invited to provide testimony on SBHCs and children’s mental health before legislative mental health task force after Newtown tragedy - used parts of Issue Brief in remark
- Currently preparing research paper for publication



About the Connecticut Association of School Based Health Centers

- The CT Association of School Based Health Centers was incorporated in 1996 as the single formalized voice of School Based Health Centers (SBHC) in CT
- CASBHC represents 80 SBHCs sites in 20 communities, funded by the Department of Public Health
- CASBHC focus areas are: advocacy for school based health centers; technical assistance and training; and a centralized resource for information about SBHC services, staffing, funding, development, and sustainability

“Healthy Kids Make Better Learners”

*Healthy Kids
Make Better Learners*

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