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Know the Facts

The Problem

- 20% (67,000) of West Virginia children age 2-17 have one or more emotional, behavioral, or developmental conditions ⁶
- In any given year, less than twenty percent of children with mental illnesses receive mental health services ¹³
- 40% of West Virginia juvenile justice referrals are for truancy ¹⁰
- An average of 539 youth resided in Juvenile Detention, Correctional, and/or Residential Facilities from 2003-2011 ⁸
- Students placed in out of home juvenile facilities stay on average 450 days (15 months), costing WV \$20 million annually ¹⁰
- The average cost of placing one youth in a DHHR out of home facility is \$105,600 per year ¹⁰
- Based on figures above, by preventing even 10 students from institutionalization, school based mental health services in WV could save the state, on average, anywhere from \$1.056 million - \$1.825 million alone. WV generally spends \$20 million annually on out of home placements¹⁰
- The potential billing cost for one student at the proposed Dazzy Vance facility in Logan County, WV is \$500 per day, or \$182,500 per year ¹⁵
- School Districts spent an average of 3.6 million dollars per year on out of state placements for special education students ¹⁴
- High School Dropouts cost tax payers and average of \$292,000 per student ⁹
- US Department of Justice states WV is violating children's civil rights¹⁵ and failing to comply with the American's with Disabilities Act by over-relying on institutionalization ¹⁶

The Solution

Early Identification, Evaluation, and Treatment

- Research shows that early identification and intervention can minimize the long-term disability of mental disorders ⁷
- Early and effective mental health treatment can prevent a significant proportion of delinquent and violent youth from future violence and crime ¹³
- Prevention and early intervention programs that target elementary school-aged students who are academically and socially at risk have been shown to produce declines in special education referrals and placement, suspension, grade retention, and disciplinary referrals ⁵

Expanding School Based Mental Health Services

- Expanded school mental health services in elementary schools have been found to reduce special education referrals, improve aspects of the school climate², and produce declines in disciplinary referrals, suspension, grade retention, and special education referrals and placement among at-risk students ⁵
- When school-based mental health services are available, students are substantially more likely to seek help, especially those enrolled in special education programs ¹¹
- School-based drug abuse prevention programs have been conservatively estimated to provide a benefit of \$840 in social benefit per student, compared to a program cost of \$150 per student ³
- A meta-analysis of school-based social and emotional learning programs involving more than 270,000 students in grades K-12 revealed that students who participated in these programs improved in grades and standardized test scores by 11% compared to students in control groups ⁴
- The school system is the largest provider of mental health services to children and, for many of these children, it is the only source of mental health care ¹²
- School Psychologists are professionals with "expertise in mental health, learning, and behavior, to help children and youth succeed academically, socially, behaviorally, and emotionally." ¹⁷



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