



Project AWARE

Advancing Wellness and Resiliency in Education

PURPOSE

The Arizona Department of Education (ADE) is a grantee for the 5-year Project AWARE funded through the Department of Health and Human Services Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services. The purpose of this program is to build or expand the capacity to: (1) increase awareness of mental health issues among school-aged youth; (2) provide training for school personnel and other adults who interact with school-aged youth to detect and respond to mental health issues; and (3) connect school-aged youth, who may have behavioral health issues (including serious emotional disturbance or serious mental illness), and their families to needed services. Project AWARE supports the development and implementation of a comprehensive plan of activities, services, and strategies to decrease youth violence and support the healthy development of school-aged youth.

Sub-grantees: Glendale Elementary School District, Pinon Unified School District, and Sunnyside Unified School District submitted a Letter of Commitment to work collaboratively with ADE to improve or expand mental health related interventions and services. Project AWARE sub-grantees were identified in the original grant application to the Department of Health and Human Services Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration using the Arizona Healthy Communities Index (2016) indicating zip codes throughout the state that lack access to care, with insufficient education and prevalent poverty rates. Subgrantee districts are eligible to request funding for certified mental health professionals to foster site level screening, early intervention, and immediate response to mental health issues.

Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child

The CDC Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child (WSCC) Model is foundational to the programs and technical assistance provided by the ADE School Health and Safety Team. The WSCC model is student-centered and is a unified and collaborative approach designed to improve learning and health in schools.



Performance Measures



FUNDING AMOUNT

\$1,800,000 per year

PROJECT PERIOD

10/1/2018 - 09/30/2023

The ADE AWARE Team

The Arizona Department of Education AWARE Team includes a partnership with the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS) to work collaboratively with the Community Project Managers to: improve or expand school-and community-based mental health services, implement the ability to respond immediately on-site, through the employment of at least one mental health professional in each grant-funded school, provide coordinated services, and follow-up to youth and their families, develop and implement a workforce development training plan to increase mental health awareness and literacy of those who interact with school-aged youth, engage in local and state program and process development to support improvements in school-aged youth and family serving systems to include improving the quality of school-based services, use of trauma-informed approaches, and social and emotional learning.





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Goals and Objectives

GOAL#1: Build and maintain infrastructure for mental health services in Arizona schools for school-aged youth.

- 1) By September 30, 2019, utilize existing statewide coalitions, and invite up to 10 private and public partners to identify gaps in resources to increase/improve access to culturally competent and developmentally appropriate school and community-based mental health services.
- 2) By September 30, 2019, partner with a minimum of 5 internal and external programs, meet quarterly to promote available resources, facilitate communication, encourage collaboration, and market awareness of school behavioral health initiatives.
- 3) By September 30, 2019, coordinate the development of mental health focused infrastructure within the 3 selected LEAs and throughout the state to connect school-aged youth and their families to mental health services, to include baseline data and needs assessment.
- 4) By September 30, 2019, develop a behavioral health resource document to be utilized by grant funded schools and at LEAs 50 schools throughout Arizona to connect schools, families, and communities with resources, and targeted support services.
- 5) By September 30, 2019, develop a Performance Assessment (PA), and meet with an Evaluator quarterly to review PA data to determine project goal achievement, objectives, and outcomes are met and make modifications as needed throughout the project.

GOAL#2: Conduct outreach and engagement with school-aged youth and their families to increase awareness and identification of mental health issues and to promote positive mental health.

- 1) By September 30, 2019, connect the 3 selected LEAs with evidenced-based practices that are culturally competent and developmentally appropriate for school-aged youth.
- 2) By September 30, 2019, develop strategies to engage 25% of selected LEA students and families in the design and implementation of education and community initiatives related to youth mental health through activities such as celebrating child mental health day and participating in family engagement events.

GOAL#3: Provide professional development and training to school personnel, SEA staff, community partners and other adults who interact with school-aged youth, to detect and respond to mental health issues.

- 1) By September 30, 2019, assess, via survey, pre- and post-training knowledge and skill of grant funded LEA staff and administration to enable them to increase capacity for the identification and connection to mental health services.
- 2) By September 30, 2019, design and develop quarterly educational opportunities and provide training for the 3 selected LEAs, partners, and adults that work with school-aged youth to promote consistent messaging to detect and respond to mental health issues.
- 3) By September 30, 2019, train LEAs and partners statewide through workshops and media-based sources to utilize the ADE behavioral health resource document to connect schools, families, and communities with support services in the event of a crisis or need for clinical intervention.
- 4) By September 30, 2019, provide technical assistance to the 3 grant funded LEAs on their Emergency Response Plan to respond to behavioral health needs in a crisis.

