

Alliance for Inclusion and Prevention

A Boston agency's approach to
sustainable school/community
partnerships

AIP's Purpose

- Address the non-academic barriers to achievement
- Improve the emotional and behavioral health of children
- Keep children in least restrictive settings
- Pilot innovative strategies for student success
- Increase access to school-based mental health
- Incorporate sustainability from the start

Means to End

- Deep partnerships with public schools
- Demonstrating cost effectiveness
- Leveraging dollars the district could not otherwise obtain
- Having a *full-time* presence in schools
- Brokering community-school partnerships
- Operating multiple programs within schools
- *Full-Service Community Schooling* as a model

Programs

- Inclusion Day Program for SED students
- Therapeutic Afterschool Programs
- School-based mental health counseling
- Saturday and Summer Programs
- Home-based parent education/family therapy
- Community Partnerships

Funding & Sustainability

- 50% of AIP's funding comes from the Boston Public Schools (BPS)
- BPS funding commitment leverages funding from additional city, state, and private sources
- AIP's funding is sustainable because it demonstrably saves the Boston Public Schools money
- AIP leverages other funding for the schools through partnerships and direct services

Inclusion Day Program

- 3 sub-sep classrooms serving 20 ED/BD middle school students
- 3 special ed teachers
- 3 social workers
- 4 behavior specialists
- Intensive clinical supports:
 - case management
 - individual, family & group counseling
 - behavior management
 - crisis intervention

Inclusion Day Program

District Advantages

- Utilizes special education funds spent in private schools to pay for prevention services
- Saves the public school system money by returning students to mainstream education - or less restrictive/expensive special ed.
- Reduces transportation costs
- Prevents more restrictive placements
- Expands school-based mental health

Out-of School Time Programs

- 2 Therapeutic After School Programs serving 125 students each day
- 2 full-day summer programs emphasizing academics and recreation – serves 100 students
- Before school program serving 125 students per day
- Saturday program serving 100 students per week

Connecting With Care

Placing Full-Time Clinicians in Public Schools

Finance: Why do clinics lose money in schools

Access: Racial/ethnic disparities, lack of parent involvement in treatment

Stigma: Schools are a natural setting for services

Trauma: Undiagnosed/untreated trauma manifests as behavioral problems – sometimes years later

Connecting With Care

District Advantages

- Breaks from part-time, fee-for-service model
- Parents can be involved in treatment via family evening clinic
- Parents more willing to accept counseling services if part of the school program
- Treatment is more consistent and duration more appropriate if school-based
- Collaboration with teachers enhanced
- Integrates health insurance funding with schools

Challenges the AIP Model Addresses:

- CHALLENGE:
- Out-of-district/out-of-mainstream placements last too long

- STRATEGY:
- Allow SPED students to enter less restrictive placements before they are “100% ready” by having support resources follow students to inclusion placements

Challenges the AIP Inclusion Model Addresses:

- CHALLENGE:
- Teachers resist inclusion in mainstream classes for ED/BD students because they fear inclusion means “dumping” students without supports
- STRATEGY:
- Decisions regarding inclusion are performance-based using behavioral data, come with supports, and a guarantee a child can be returned to an AIP classroom as quickly as needed

Multisystemic Therapy (MST)

- Evidence-based and home-based family therapy program for 10-18 year olds with serious behavioral problems
- Began and SSHS grant funded initiative and is now sustained through MA Dept. of Children and Families

Challenges the AIP Model Addresses:

- CHALLENGE:
 - How to fund prevention when there are so many immediate demands on school budgets
- STRATEGY:
 - Convert tertiary \$ into prevention \$ by sharing special education resources spent on the most emotionally troubled students in a district with other students in the same public school

Coordinating Other Partnerships

- AIP coordinates all extended day partnerships through our 21st Century Community Learning Center
- AIP helps the school become a site where partners want to be through creating an easy interface between school and partners
- AIP recruits partners to provide school day programs in prevention and health topics

“It’s the Partnerships, Stupid”

- Premise: ***Schools Cannot Do It Alone***

Partnerships are an obvious strategy, but...

they are difficult to manage and sustain because

- they are aligned with *their own* mission and procedures, not the school’s
- their funding is less stable/sustainable than school funding
- differences in cultures between school/partner

Community Partners Bring

- Enthusiasm & focus on their core mission
- Expertise in specific areas/activities
- Experience teaching their specific skills to kids
- New Faces/New Relationships
- Time-limited commitments
- New perspectives on your kids and programs
- New strategies for engaging kids
- Access to broader community constituencies
- New funding sources

Community Partners *may also* bring

- Conflicting strategies/styles/relationships
- External lines of authority/accountability
- Expertise - but in different settings/age groups
- Incompatible curricular content or community sensibilities
- Different outcome priorities

Ideas to design for good partnerships

- Check into previous partnership experiences of prospective agency
- Memorandum of Understanding for partnership
- Negotiate balance of control/liability in relationship
- Insurance issues: additional named insured/transportation/hold harmless requirements
- Interviewing on-site personnel in advance
- Plan for supervision of on-site partner staff

Ideas to design for good partnerships (continued)

- Background check on partner's direct service staff
- Coordinate behavior management philosophies & procedures
- Clear mutual financial obligations & procedures
- Mutual evaluation of partnership experience

Sustainability Lessons Learned

- Prove cost effectiveness to the district
- Build sustainability strategies as early as possible
- Have evaluation data relevant to schools
- Leverage in significant new money for schools
- Facilitate partnerships for the district that can grow and expand to other sites
- Be savvy about how to manage partnerships
- Create a climate that attracts partners and funders