

**Connecticut School-Based
Diversion Initiative**

The Connecticut School Based Diversion Initiative (SBDI): Effective Strategies for Reducing Exclusionary Discipline

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JRB/LIST Conference

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Listening Groups

- **Supporters**
 - Comment on at least one thing you agree with
- **Critics**
 - Comment on at least one thing you disagree with
- **Questioners**
 - Ask a question
- **Appliers**
 - Provide an example of how this applies in your community

SBDI Background

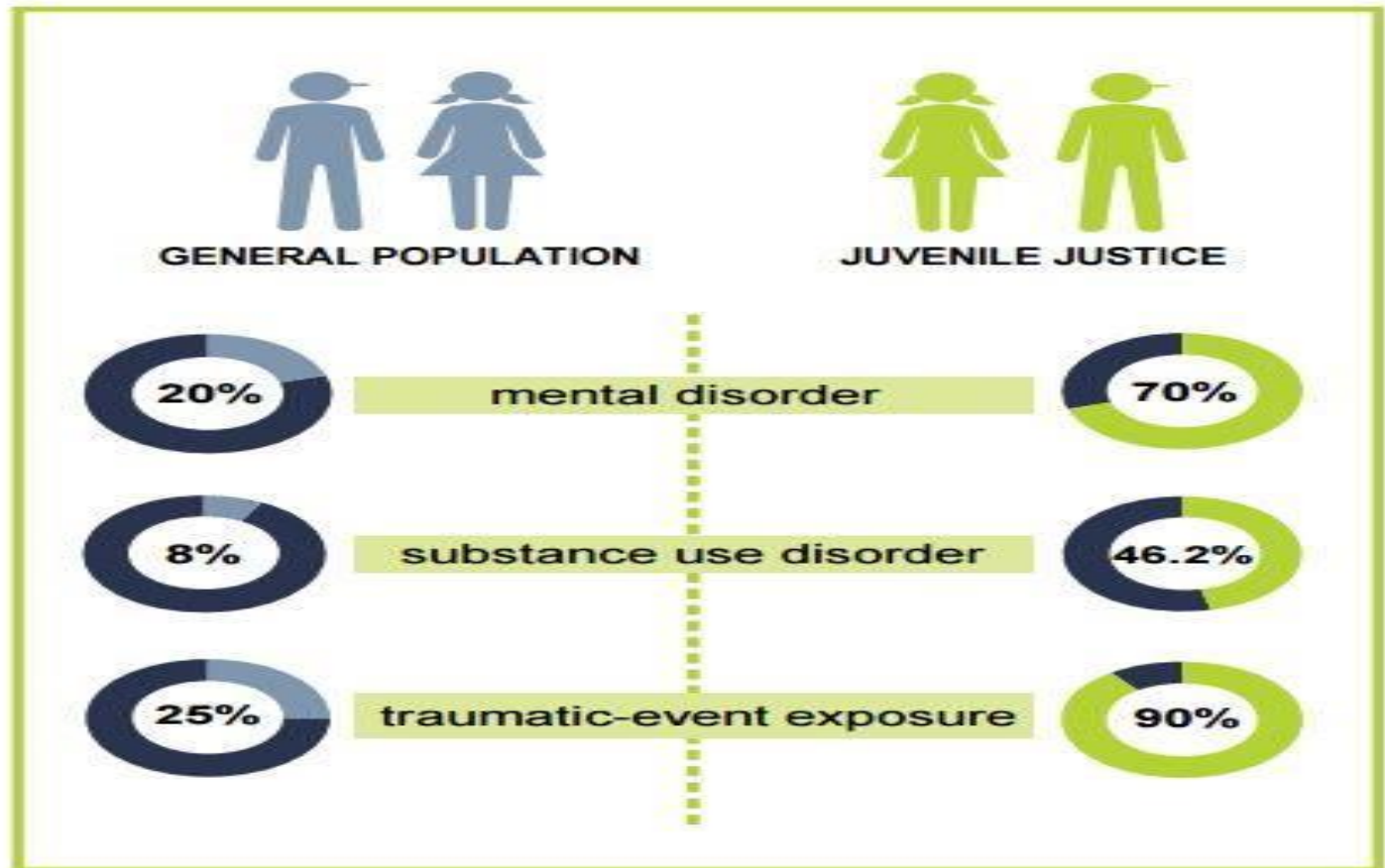
Fewer juvenile court referrals, *proportion* from schools continues to be a concern

- 18.6% of all CT juvenile court referrals in 11-12; 14% in 12-13; 10% in 13-14,
- **Back up to nearly 20% in 14-15**

High rates of unmet mental health needs and academic risk among youth who are arrested or expelled

- 20% of children meet criteria for MH diagnosis (160,000 youth in CT)
- Rates are 65-70% among youth in juvenile detention
- 80-90% in detention w/ significant trauma exposure
- Students arrested are 2x as likely not to graduate; increases to 4x if processed through court

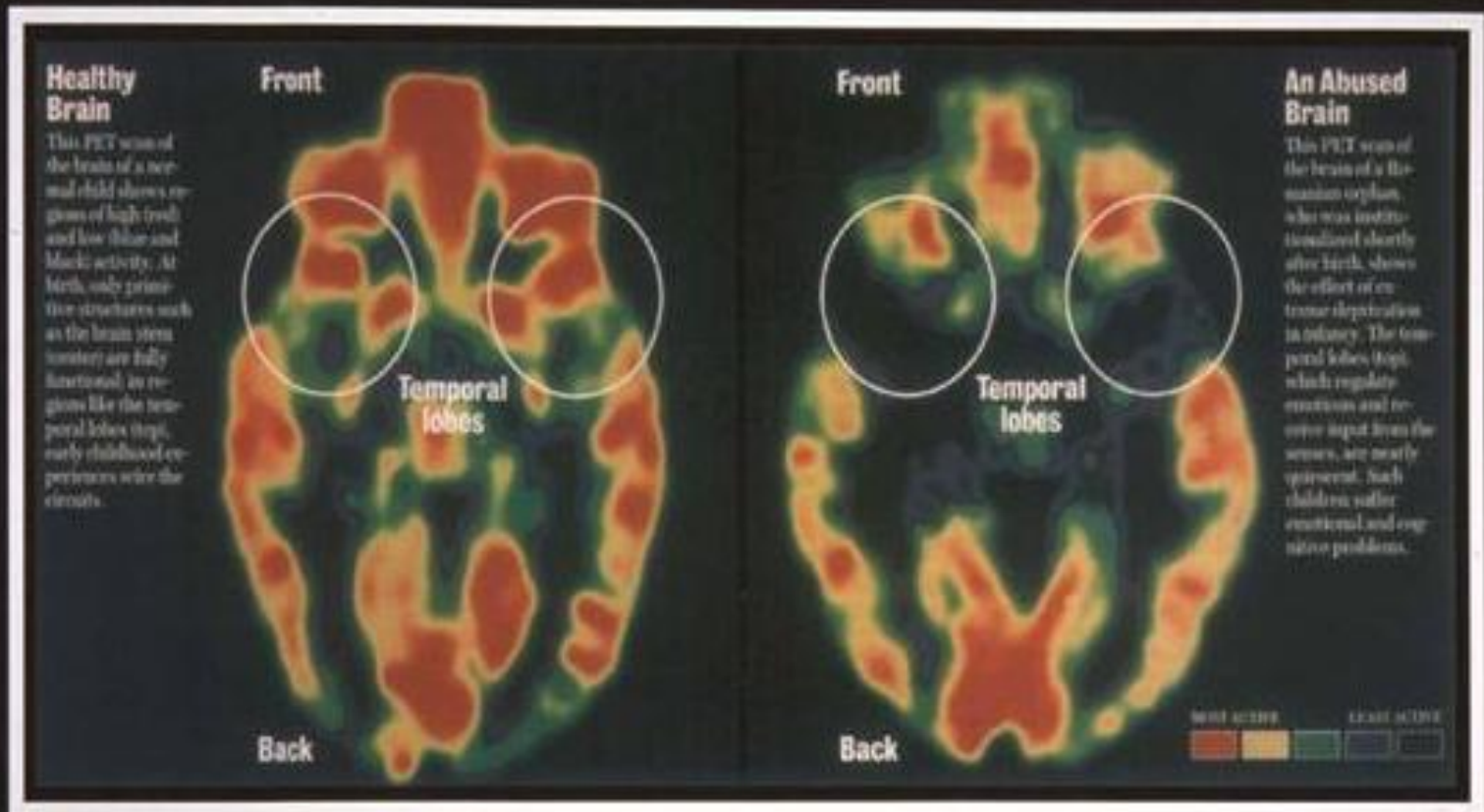
Trauma Exposure and Behavioral Health Needs



Prevalence of Mental and Substance Use Disorders and Traumatic-event exposure among Youth in the Juvenile Justice System

Source: National Center for Mental Health and Juvenile Justice

Traumatized Brain



Background and Statistics

- School arrest, expulsion, and suspension disproportionately affect students of color and students with disabilities (including those with BH concerns)
- Influence of “zero tolerance policies,” “exclusionary discipline,” “school pushout,” “school to prison pipeline,” “school-justice pathways”
- Role of law enforcement in schools
 - Presence of law enforcement in schools rose 37% from 1997-2007
 - \$ 2.3 million allocated to fund SROs/security officers in 2013
 - Ongoing challenge of determining what constitutes criminal activities vs. matters of routine discipline

The Cost of Arrest and Incarceration

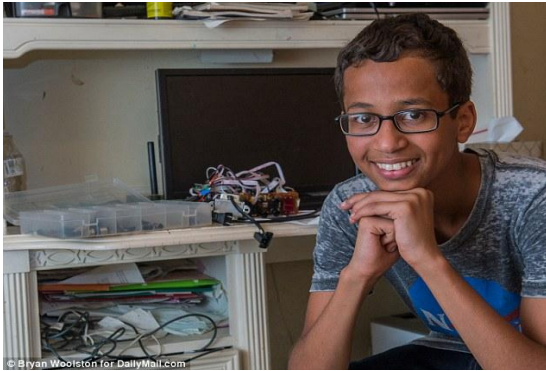
Nationally, between 2001 and 2011, there has been a 45% reduction in youth incarceration (Justice Policy Institute, December 2014)

- In 2011, 62% of all committed youth were adjudicated for non-violent offenses.
- To incarcerate one youth, Connecticut pays:
 - \$607.41 per day
 - \$221,705 per year
 - Compared to the national average of \$148,767/year
- The cost to youth and families (e.g., educational disruption, recidivism, dropout)

School-Based Arrests in the News

Muslim teen Ahmed Mohamed creates clock, shows teachers, gets arrested

Posted: September 16, 2015, By Ashley Fantz, Steve Almasy and AnneClaire Stapleton, CNN



Police handcuff Georgia kindergartner for tantrum

Posted: Apr 17, 2012, By Jeff Martin and Jeri Clausing, Associated Press



Kiera Wilmot, 16, Arrested And Expelled For Explosive 'Science Experiment'

Posted: May 1, 2013 By Rebecca Klein, The Huffington Post



Two Easton lacrosse players suspended under zero-tolerance policies

Posted: May 10, 2011, By Liz Bowie, The Baltimore Sun



Progress in Connecticut

There have been a number of recent improvements in the CT system, supported by a multi-pronged approach

CT's approaches were highlighted in a New York School Justice Summit publication (www.school-justicesummit.org) and *Family Court Review*

Changes in CSSD Policies

- Changes to Juvenile Court Intake process (probation supervisors now can “send back” inappropriate court referrals), often to JRB
- “Raise the Age” included 16 and 17 year olds in the juvenile system
- New data collection practices to “drill down” arrest sources including tracking arrests occurring at individual schools/districts

Systems coordination, public awareness, school policy consultation

- Host forums; school-police MOA; analyze and report school discipline data

Introduction

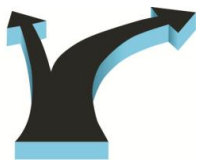
The Connecticut School-Based Diversion Initiative (SBDI) is a school-level initiative that promotes positive outcomes for youth at risk of arrest due to emotional or behavioral health challenges through:

- Arrest reduction efforts
- Linkage to community-based services and supports
- Staff professional development
- Discipline policy consultation

Operates primarily at school personnel level to build capacity, increase early detection skills, awareness of BH and JJ systems, disciplinary decision-making

Development of SBDI

- 2008: MacArthur Foundation Models for Change Mental Health Juvenile Justice Action Network facilitated by NCMHJJ
- 2009: Pilot SBDI in 3 schools
- 2010: State agencies sustained by sharing cost, blended funding with collaborative oversight
- 2013: Expanded partnership as evidence increased, tied into larger education and criminal justice reforms
- 2015: Statewide expansion in Governor's biennial budget



Goals of the School-Based Diversion Initiative

Reduce the number of discretionary arrests in school; reduce expulsions and out-of school suspensions

Build knowledge and skills among teachers, school staff, and school resource officers to recognize and manage behavioral health crises in the school, and access needed community resources

Link youth who are at-risk of arrest to appropriate school and community-based services and supports

Listening Groups

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SBDI Core Components

Professional Development

- Training and Workgroups
- Perspective shift

School-Community Coalition

- MOA Development (EMPS, police)
- EMPS Crisis Intervention Service
- System of Care, LISTs, JRB, YSBs, etc.

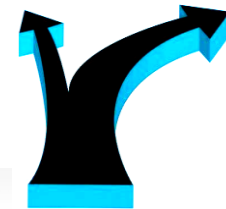
Discipline Policy Consultation

- Graduated Response Model
- Restorative Practices

Implementation Guided by SBDI Toolkit



Professional Development



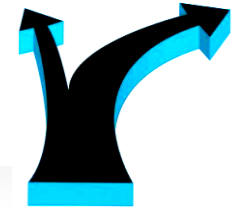
Goal: enhance knowledge, attitudes, and skills among school staff to support arrest diversion principles and practices

Training and Workgroup Modules include:

- Effective Classroom Behavior Management
- Distinguishing Normal Adolescent Development and Mental Health Symptoms
- Effective Collaboration with EMPS and Care Coordination
- Multicultural Competence in the Schools
- Understanding and Partnering with the Juvenile Justice System
- Promoting School Climate and Connectedness



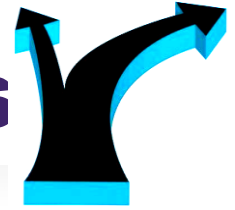
Graduated Response Model



SAMPLE	Behavior	Strategies
Classroom Intervention	Excessive talking School policy violation	Change seat Parent call/meeting
School Administration Intervention	Disruptive behavior Verbal student conflict	Detention
Assessment and Service Provision	Inappropriate behavior Insubordination	EMPS, Care Coordination, community orgs.
Law Enforcement Intervention	Weapons violation Drug possession	Informal response School Police Task Group



Community-Based Resources



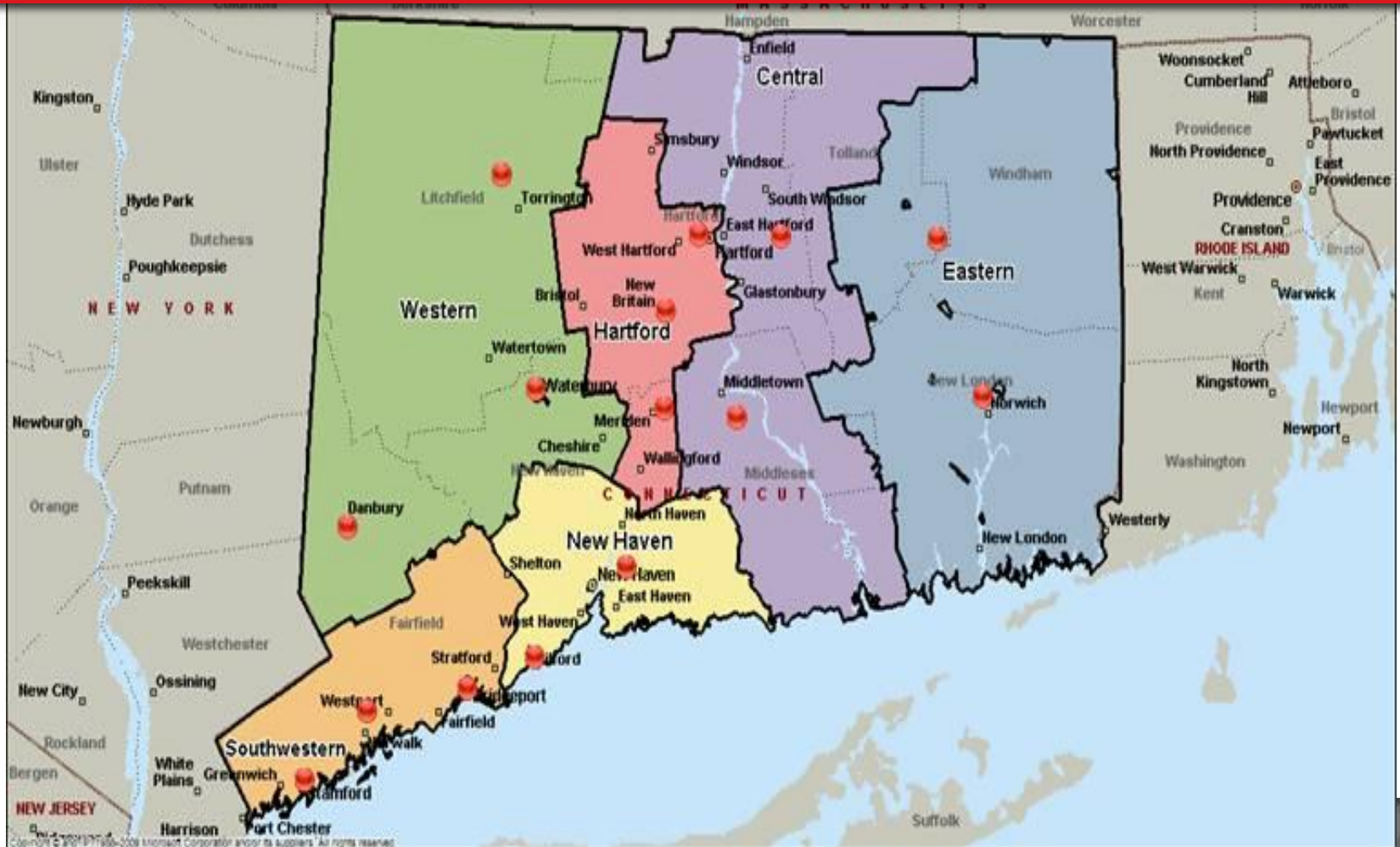
Goal: Reduce burden placed on schools to address mental health concerns

Community coalition-building

- **Emergency Mobile Psychiatric Services (EMPS)**
- Care Coordination
- Family members and students
- Local police departments
- Juvenile Probation officers
- Youth Service Bureaus
- Community Collaboratives (LIST, system of care)
- Juvenile Review Boards
- Local Interagency Service Teams (LISTs)
- Disproportionate Minority Contact Committee



EMPS Components



EMPS Components

- EMPS Provider Network
 - ✓ 6 Primary Contractors, 14 sites, statewide coverage
 - ✓ Available for free to all children regardless of insurance, system, ability to pay
 - ✓ Crisis stabilization, assessment, brief treatment, linkage to ongoing care
- Single Statewide Call Center
 - ✓ Dial 211 from anywhere in CT, improves access to EMPS
 - ✓ Allows for improved marketing
 - ✓ Consistent response and improved accountability
- System Features
 - ✓ Mobile hours are 6am to 10pm M-F; 1pm to 10pm Sat/Sun/Holidays)
 - ✓ Telephonic response during non-mobile hours
 - ✓ Capacity to handle multiple calls
- Performance Improvement Center
 - ✓ Performance standards; data reporting; feedback quality improvement
 - ✓ Standardized expert training for all clinicians
 - ✓ Regular feedback from families and other referrers

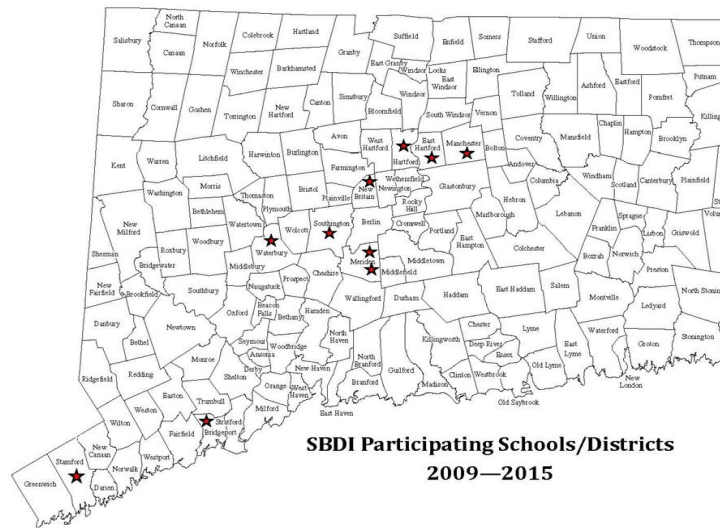


Participating Districts/Schools

Bridgeport
 New Britain
 Technical HS
 East Hartford
 Hartford

Manchester
 Meriden
 Southington
 Stamford
 Waterbury

*Adding next year:
 West Haven
 New Haven*



- Bridgeport Public Schools**
- Luis Muñoz Marin School
- Consolidated School District of New Britain**
- New Britain High School
- CT. Technical High School System**
- H.C.Wilcox Technical High School (Meriden)
- East Hartford Public Schools**
- East Hartford High School
- East Hartford Middle School
- Hartford Public Schools**
- Academy of Engineering and Green Technology at Hartford Public High School
- Culinary Arts Academy at Weaver High School
- Sarah J. Rawson School
- Manchester Public Schools**
- Illing Middle School
- Manchester High School
- Meriden Public Schools**
- Francis T. Maloney High School
- Orville H. Platt High School
- Venture Academy
- Southington Public Schools**
- John F. Kennedy Middle School
- Joseph A. DePaolo Middle School
- Stamford Public Schools**
- Cloonan Middle School
- Westhill High School
- Waterbury Public Schools**
- Crosby High School
- Enlightenment School
- Wallace Middle School
- West Side Middle School



Connecticut School-Based Diversion Initiative

Referrals to Behavioral Health Service

UP 94%

Among the 18 schools that have participated in SBDI since 2010, those schools on average have reduced court referrals by 45% in their first year of participation, and have increased EMPS referrals by 94%.

School-Based Court Referrals

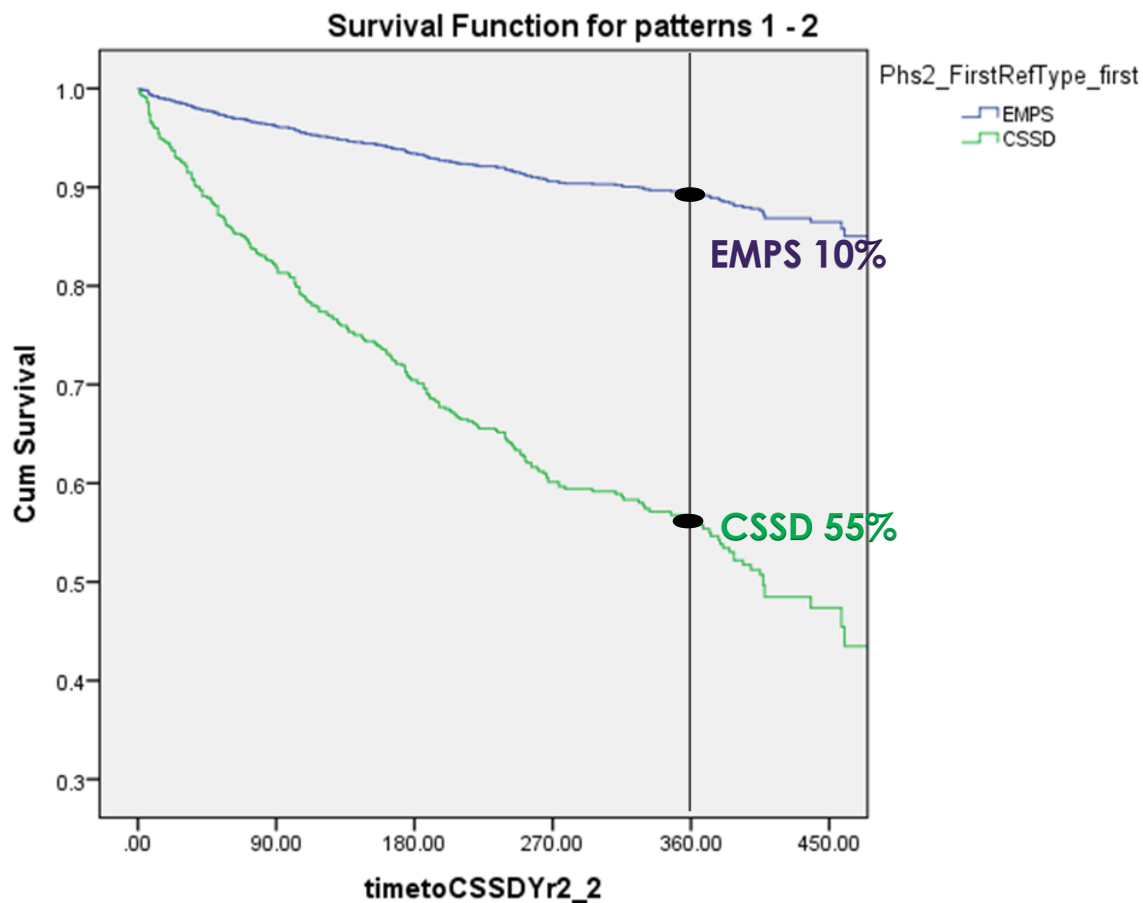
DOWN 45%

The Connecticut School-Based Diversion Initiative is helping transform school discipline and improve student outcomes. Instead of arresting and suspending children with behavior problems, SBDI schools are connecting them to community-based behavioral health services.

Learn more at:
www.chdi.org/sbdi
and www.ctsbdi.org

Connecticut School-Based Diversion Initiative

Community Impact

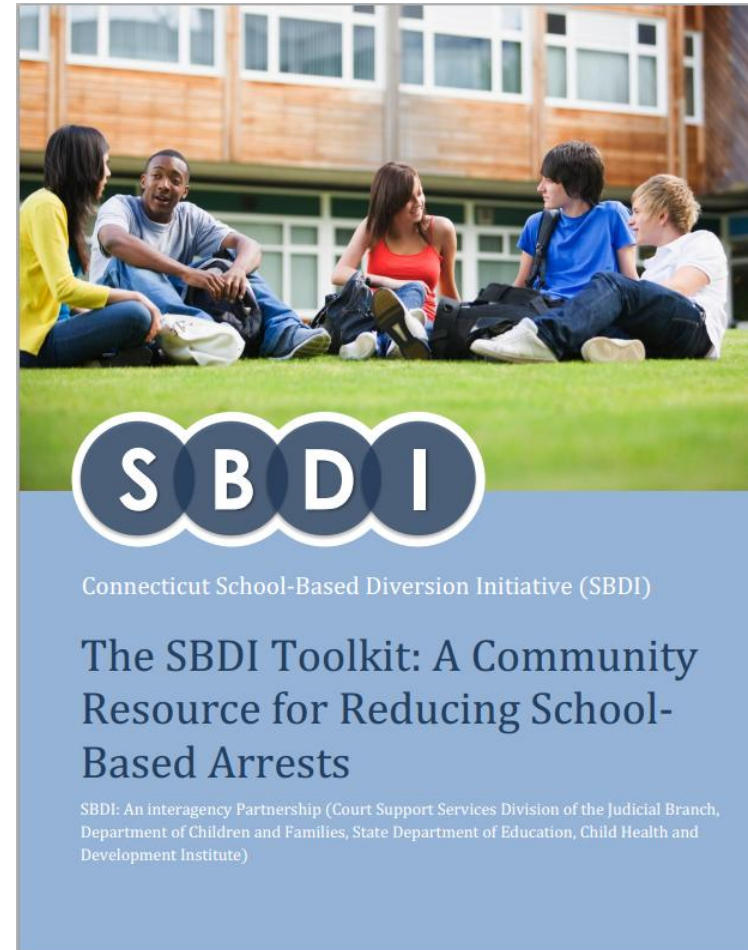


SBDI Toolkit

Available for **free download**
<http://www.chdi.org/SchoolToolkit>

We recognized a need to reach **more schools, more quickly**

Toolkit was designed for a school to **self-implement some of the core principles and activities** of SBDI



SBDI Toolkit's Contents

- **Self-assessment guide** and best practice information
Immediate action steps
- **Support** for Data informed Decision-Making, Referral and Service Coordination
- **Appendices:** Sample MOA; Graduated Response Framework; Core Training Modules; Workgroup Activities; SBDI Application Form; List of Resources

Immediate Action Steps

1. Monitor your data
2. Meet with your mobile crisis provider (EMPS)
3. Connect with your local systems of care (e.g., Community Collaborative, LIST)
4. Develop a School-Police Memorandum of Agreement



Getting Started

School selection

Interest

Needs

Capacity



Needs assessment survey

Three core components:

- 1) Linkage to Network of Community-Based Resources
- 2) Customized Professional Development in MH and JJ
- 3) School Disciplinary Policy Consultation

Interest

The term “interest” refers to whether a school has a desire to participate in SBDI and work towards its goal of reducing arrests, expulsions, suspensions, etc.



Need

In the context of SBDI “need” refers to the extent to which a school experiences high rates of arrest, expulsions, and suspension, unmet mental health needs among students and a less than optimal degree of collaboration with outside mental health providers and other community stakeholders.



Capacity

“Capacity” refers to the extent to which a school is able to meet the demands of the initiative, especially in terms of committing personnel to the work, coordinating required data collection, and identifying consistent times for meetings and trainings.



Needs Assessment

- A brief Survey only takes 5 minutes to complete.
- Goal is to determine how your school identifies youth with juvenile justice and behavioral needs and refers them for services.
- Responses to the survey are reported only in aggregate data

- strongly agree
- somewhat agree
- disagree



Data Informed Decision-Making

School and community-level baseline and outcome indicators

- Rates of arrest
- Disciplinary referrals and outcomes
- Student characteristics
- Community-based service referrals



Data tracking helps identify patterns, highlight improvements, address challenges, and plan for sustainability

Discussion Question

What methods does your community use to access school arrest data?

Discipline Policy Consultation

Goal: Examine and revise disciplinary policies and practices where needed to support diversion efforts

Convene a workgroup, ideally building off an existing in-school team to develop a Graduated Response Model

Include restorative justice practices in disciplinary approach and in linkages to community-based organizations



Discussion Question

To what extent are your discipline policies punitive vs. restorative?

School-Police MOA

A school-police Memorandum of Agreement(MOA) addresses behavioral incidents through strategies that encourage and support diversion from the juvenile justice system without compromising school safety.



Discussion Question

What type of relationship exists between your local school district and the police department?

Referral and Service Coordination

Reduce burden placed on schools to address mental health concerns

Community coalition-building

- Emergency Mobile Psychiatric Services (EMPS)
- Care Coordination
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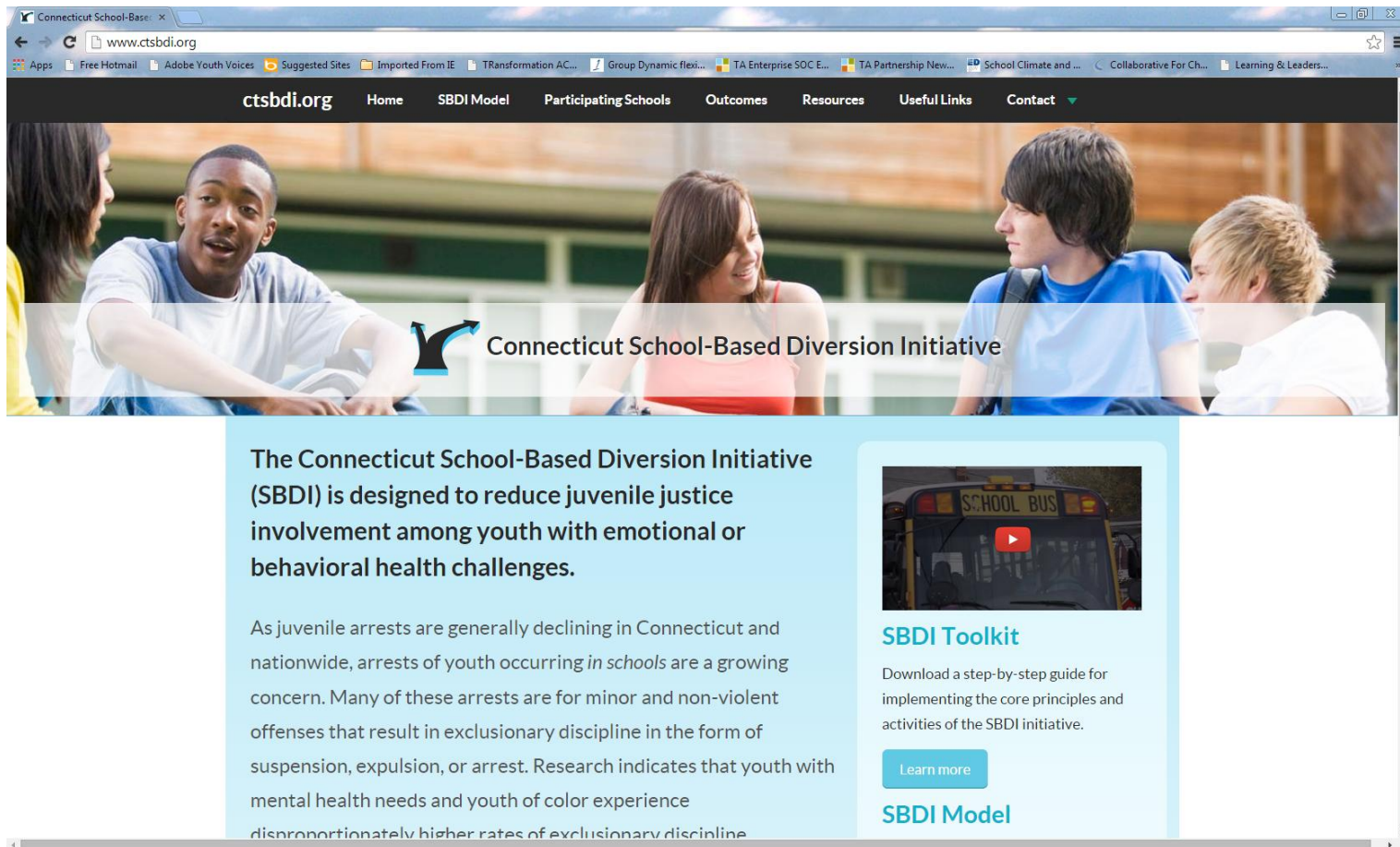
Discussion Question

What are some referral and service coordination resources used in your state?

Discussion Question

What are some strategies used for family engagement and/or family advocacy?

SBDI Website www.ctsbdi.org



Connecticut School-Based Diversion Initiative

The Connecticut School-Based Diversion Initiative (SBDI) is designed to reduce juvenile justice involvement among youth with emotional or behavioral health challenges.

As juvenile arrests are generally declining in Connecticut and nationwide, arrests of youth occurring *in schools* are a growing concern. Many of these arrests are for minor and non-violent offenses that result in exclusionary discipline in the form of suspension, expulsion, or arrest. Research indicates that youth with mental health needs and youth of color experience disproportionately higher rates of exclusionary discipline

SBDI Toolkit

Download a step-by-step guide for implementing the core principles and activities of the SBDI initiative.

[Learn more](#)

SBDI Model

Four Group Activity

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