



**PROMOTING SCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH IN  
KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY**

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**Abstract**

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*The present globalize knowledge society is witnessing a paradigm shift from teaching content to competency. In this context school has to play vital role for all round development of a child in the knowledge society. The school environment be promoted for effective traction of curriculum.*

*School mental health is a growing movement that recognizes the critical role schools play in addressing the social and emotional needs of students.*

*The study focuses on Allen worth's and Kolbe's (1987) Coordinated School Health (CSH) Program. to promote mental health in schools by addressing the physical, social, emotional, and general needs for student well-being.*

*The objectives of the study are to understand the concept of mental health. to realize the need of mental health in schools. to know the Structure for Promoting School Mental Health .*

*The conclusions of the study are : A Mental health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being of a child, mental health promotes the all-round development and well-being of a child, so teacher should play the role of counselor and guardian in the school and for promoting School Mental Health, teacher should try to create healthy environment with the help of Allen worth's and Kolbe's Coordinated School Health (CSH) Program and has to establish the interrelationship between the component of the program.*

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**Keywords:** *Mental health and Wellbeing, Knowledge society.*

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## **1. Introduction:**

Due to global education reform India has been shifted over the modern trend, ICT based education and new evaluation system. The present globalize knowledge society is witnessing a paradigm shift from teaching content to competency. So in this context school has to play vital role for all round development of a child in the knowledge society. The school environment be promoted for effective traction of curriculum.

School mental health is a growing movement that recognizes the critical role schools play in addressing the social and emotional needs of students. A growing body of research indicates that providing mental health programs and services in schools, often referred to as school mental health, can improve both academic and treatment outcomes. Schools may not, however, be universally eager to embrace a mental health agenda as part of their academic mission due to increased pressure to raise academic standards, improve test scores, and increase graduation rates. With scarce resources, they may be reluctant to attend to the mental health needs of students.

## **2. Objectives of the study:**

1. To understand the concept of mental health.
2. To realize the need of mental health in schools.
3. To know the Structure for Promoting School Mental Health

## **3. School Mental Health:**

### **3.1 Concept of mental health:**

World Health Organization (WHO) has included mental well-being in the definition of health. WHO famously defines health as: A state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity (WHO, 2001b, p.1).

Three ideas central to the improvement of health follow from this definition:

1. Mental health is an integral part of health,
2. Mental health is more than the absence of mental illness and
3. Mental health is intimately connected with physical health and behaviour.

Defining mental health is important, although not always necessary to achieving its improvement. Differences in values across countries, cultures, classes and genders can appear too great to allow a consensus on a definition (WHO, 2001c). However, just as age or wealth each have many different expressions across the world and yet have a core common-sense

universal meaning, so too can mental health be understood without restricting its interpretation across cultures. WHO has recently proposed that mental health is:

A state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community (WHO, 2001d, p.1).

In this positive sense, mental health is the foundation for well-being and effective functioning for an individual and for a community. It is more than the absence of mental illness for the states and capacities noted in the definition have value in themselves. Despite this, mental health is still portrayed by some as a luxury. The misunderstandings on which this view is based are now clearer than they were in the past, and WHO and other international organizations identify the improvement of mental health as a priority concern for low and middle income countries as well as for wealthier nations and people (WHO, 2001b).

According to the Surgeon General, mental health is the —successful performance of mental function, resulting in productive activities, fulfilling relationships with other people, and the ability to adapt to change and to cope with adversity; from early childhood until late life, mental health is the springboard of thinking and communication skills, learning, emotional growth, resilience, and self-esteem. (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1999)

### **3.2 Children's Mental Health**

A study of the link between children's health status and to learning is robust. When discussing health, however, most people think only in terms of physical health and tend to overlook the critical importance of mental health. Yet physical health and mental health are strongly connected components of overall well-being. Issues related to mental health, such as low self-esteem, stress, and coping with emotional responses have a clear impact on physical health. Unfortunately, mental health concerns are so common in children and youth - with some disorders such as anxiety more common even than most physical health problems (McLoone, Hudson, & Rapee, 2006) Children suffer from a range of social, emotional, and mental health problems including trauma, family conflict, depression, anxiety and substance abuse.

### **3.3 Need of Mental Health in Schools**

While some may argue that schools are in the business of education, not the business of mental health, untreated mental illness among students has a significant and harmful impact on schools. Whereas education is certainly the primary mission of schools, there is solid evidence

that academic learning is impeded significantly or prohibited entirely when youth suffer from mental health concerns.

**3.3.1. Positive school outcomes:**

Research shows that when students' mental health needs are properly addressed, the possibility of school success increases. High quality, effective school mental health promotion has been linked to increases in academic achievement and competence; decreases in incidence of problem behaviors; improvements in the relationships that surround each child; and substantive, positive changes in school and classroom climates

**3.3.2. Create learning environment:**

As school mental health is linked to positive changes in the school climate. It is understood that the school and classroom climates relate directly to academic achievement and, therefore may serve as mediators between school-wide mental health approaches and school-wide indicators of academic success. More and more, schools are implementing school climate improvement strategies and working to address the emotional well-being of all students. According to Cohen, Pickeral, and McCloskey (2009): Comprehensive school climate data can powerfully support the tenets of the Whole Child initiative by providing meaningful information about how healthy, safe, engaged, supported, and challenged students feel. When schools use these data to create positive learning environments, they help students develop the social-emotional competencies and ethical dispositions that predict success in school and life. School climate is also related indirectly to achievement through individual effects on student engagement or their feelings of connectedness to schools.

**3.3.3. Improve the teaching conditions:**

The negative mental health of students cause teachers and other school staff to feel unprepared, overwhelmed, and helpless as school and classroom learning conditions are compromised. School mental health programs and services often include in-services, consultation, and information to assist teachers in creating classroom environments that promote positive behaviors and to allow them to identify students with mental health problems early, before their problems interfere with functioning in the classroom. Moreover, the mental health staff in schools can provide support for basic classroom management and interventions to help teachers handle and support students who struggle to meet the social-emotional and behavioral expectations of school. As such, mental health programs and services improve conditions in the

classroom as students' needs are met and teachers' stress and feelings of helplessness are reduced.).

### **3.3.4. Prevention, early intervention, and treatment efforts**

Most children and adolescents spend a significant part of each day inside a school building. Not only does this make the school an ideal location for accessing a large number of young people for mental health promotion and prevention activities, but this also provides families with increased opportunities to access treatment services for their children and to access them earlier.

### **3.3.5. Reduction of costs:**

Childhood mental disorders such as depression and anxiety persist into adulthood and often worsen if left untreated, thereby increasing the length and associated direct cost of treatment. Such delays can also encumber the individual with indirect costs that come with increased risk of school dropout, underemployment, incarceration, substance use, and co-morbid illness. The indirect costs of failing to appropriately address mental health issues early affect not only the individual, but society as well. The heavy toll placed on systems of health care, welfare, education, business, industry, justice, and public safety by unmet mental health needs cause society to absorb significant costs.

## **4. Structure for Promoting and School Mental Health:**

Allensworth's and Kolbe's (1987) Coordinated School Health (CSH) Program is designed to promote health and mental health in schools by addressing the physical, social, emotional, and general needs for student well-being (CSH consists of eight interrelated components:

1. Comprehensive health education,
2. Physical education,
3. Health services,
4. Nutrition services,
5. Counseling, psychological, and social services,
6. Healthy school environment,
7. Health promotion for staff, and
8. Family/Community involvement.

#### **4.1 Counseling, Psychological, and Social Services**

These mental health component includes services provided to improve students' mental, emotional, and social health. Traditionally, these services are provided by school counselors, psychologists, nurses, and social workers, and place emphasis on serving students with or at-risk for emotional disorders. Although interventions by these providers are critical to serving the needs of students and creating an environment where all students do well, isolating this component does not fully capitalize on the power of CSH to promote positive mental health and prevent mental illness. The school mental health practice emphasizes prevention and early detection, as opposed to simply early intervention.

#### **4.2 Healthy School Environment:**

In addition to focusing on physical and psychological safety, the school environment holistically includes the attitudes, feelings, and values of students and staff as well as positive interpersonal relationships. Students who feel safe and cared for at school are more likely to be successful and flexible. A safe, clean, and well-maintained school with a positive social climate and culture can foster school connectedness, which in turn boosts student and staff health as well as students' educational achievement. While school administrators have the overall responsibility for a school's physical and psychosocial environment, creating a healthy environment requires the commitment of everyone in the school.

#### **4.3 Comprehensive Health Education Curriculum:**

The comprehensive health education curriculum, tailored to each age and developmental level, includes classroom instruction on the physical, mental, emotional, and social dimensions of health. By integrating mental health into the curriculum, students have opportunities to acquire knowledge, attitudes, and skills about mental and emotional concerns, as well as develop pro-social and life skills.

#### **4.4 Nutrition Services:**

Hungry or malnourished children have a harder time focusing on basic core subjects. Students with eating disorders, or who are obese, often suffer from poor nutrition. School nutrition services can offer nutritious and affordable meals, nutrition education, resources for nutrition-related community services, and a school environment that promotes healthy eating habits for all children. They can have greater impact when they are integrated with mental health services. Providing students with nutritious meals, such as those offered in a school breakfast

program, can improve academic, behavioral, and emotional functioning, and reduce tardiness and absenteeism.

#### **4.5 Physical Education:**

Research demonstrates a link between physical activity and emotional well-being. In fact, physical activity is prescribed as part of the treatment for mental health disorders such as depression and anxiety, and physical activity is known to improve academic performance in students. Quality physical education programs promote optimum physical, mental, emotional, and social development. Schools should use physical education curricula that include learning experiences and a variety of activities that promote health related fitness as well as content on the physical, psychological and social benefits of physical activity. Schools can further promote physical activity and its social and emotional benefits through after-school activities, extra-curricular sports, and programs targeting students with special needs.

#### **4.6 Health Services:**

Students perform better when they show up for class, healthy and ready to learn. School health services are provided by school-based health centers and wellness programs. They include access or referral to: prevention and control of communicable disease, chronic illness, and other health problems; emergency care for illness or injury; counseling on healthy behaviors; and activities that promote the health of all students. Ideally, school health services should include mental health services, as there is an increasing understanding among researchers, policymakers, and advocates that there is no health without mental health. When health and mental health services are integrated, providers have increased capacity to identify mental health problems sooner; provide services more efficiently and effectively, and address the emotional factors related to students' physical health problems.

#### **4.7 Health Promotion for Staff:**

In order to optimally support students, staff must first take care of their own health and well-being. Health promotion -- including health assessments, education, and fitness activities -- is designed to improve health and overall well being through a commitment to healthy lifestyle choices. Health promotion for staff provides students with positive role models, increases staff morale, prevents absenteeism, and increases productivity, all of which contribute to a healthy school climate for students.

#### **4.8 Family and Community Involvement:**

Students flourish most when parents and caregivers are involved in their children's school lives and engaged as key collaborators in providing emotional support and reducing external stressors (e.g., sibling conflict, loss, violence) that affect mental health. As mental health promotion efforts become systemic across all fronts, such efforts must comprehensively involve schools, families, and communities. More specifically, school-based personnel, community mental health workers, and families should work together to plan prevention and intervention strategies across all components of school health and mental health.

#### **5 Conclusions:**

1. A Mental health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being of a child. Successful performance of mental function resulting in productive activities, fulfilling relationships with other people and the ability to adapt to change and to cope with adversity. Mental health is the springboard of thinking and communication skills, learning, emotional growth, resilience, and self-esteem. It is too important to transact the curriculum effectively.

2. Mental health promotes the all round development and well being of a child, so teacher should play the role of counselor and guardian in the school.

The school environment affects significantly when youth suffer from mental health concerns. So teacher should try to promote positive school outcomes, create learning environment.

3. For Promoting School Mental Health, teacher should try to create healthy environment with the help of Allen worth's and Kolbe's Coordinated School Health (CSH) Program and has to establish the interrelationship between the component of the program.

In knowledge society along with teaching , teacher should play the different roles for the well being of a child.

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