Welcome to the Rise & Shine brief!
In our February survey we asked you to weigh in on the very important subject of student mental health and wellness at your school. These survey results reflect responses from hundreds of new principals, from all across the nation.

You are addressing growing mental health challenges

- The most prevalent mental health issues you see in your students are Attention Deficit Disorder and disruptive behaviors at school. Three-quarters of respondents consider these to be your school’s greatest mental health challenges. More than half of panelists also report significant challenges in dealing with students who have problematic peer and adult relationships, experience anxiety or phobias, and who bring stress from their outside environment caused by hunger, lack of housing, parent unemployment, health issues, and more.
- Contending with student mental health issues is taking up more of your own and your staff’s time. 69% of panelists report that the amount of time you are spending this year has increased from previous years. Only 6% are spending less time.

How are you meeting these challenges?

- Most of you have counselors on your team. 80% of panelists have either full or part-time school counselors on staff; almost 60% have a psychologist or psychiatrist available, primarily on a part-time basis. Social workers and behavioral intervention specialists are much more rare.
- You are implementing focused, schoolwide programs. By far, the most widely used program used to promote student mental health and wellness is Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS), which is in place at 79% of your schools. Most common programs you cited include:
  - PBIS: 79%
  - Restorative Justice: 19%
  - Responsive Classroom: 16%
  - Peer Mediation: 11%

Top three mental health-related concerns for which students are referred to you or your staff:

- Anger/aggression
- Interpersonal skills
- Bullying/cyberbullying

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Your School’s Greatest Student Mental Health Challenges</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attention Deficit Disorder</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disruptive school behaviors</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relationship issues with peers or adults</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anxiety/phobias</td>
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<tr>
<td>Environmental Stress (poverty, housing, health)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trauma/PTSD/Abuse/Neglect</td>
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<tr>
<td>Depression/Sadness</td>
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<td>Transitions (e.g. moving, parent divorce)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grief/Loss</td>
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<tr>
<td>Substance use</td>
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<tr>
<td>Suicide</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eating Disorders</td>
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</table>

School Staff includes  
Full-time / Part-time

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Counselor</th>
<th>60% / 20%</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Psychologist/psychiatrist</td>
<td>14% / 45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Worker</td>
<td>14% / 27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral specialist</td>
<td>15% / 15%</td>
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Note that many schools use a combination of programs; only 12% have no program that specifically addresses student mental health and wellness.
How prepared are you as a principal to manage student health and wellness?

- **Student mental health is not an area where most panelists feel well-grounded.** Only about 1/3 consider yourselves to be adequately prepared to take on this issue.

- **The majority of you have had training in some important areas, including:**
  - Behavior intervention: 75%
  - Crisis intervention: 61%
  - Ethics/Legal implications: 56%

- **You are much less likely to have received training on specific mental health topics of:**
  - Information on community mental health resources: 39%
  - Multicultural education/cultural competency: 34%
  - Social-emotional behavioral assessment: 27%
  - Developmental psychology: 22%
  - Student counseling: 21%
  - Adult counseling: 4%

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What stands in the way of greater success?

- **You are providing a range of services.**
  89% of panelists employ behavior interventions for students, including formal functional behavior assessments, student contracts, intervention plans, and more. 3/4 of panelists offer consultations with parents and caregivers, and the majority have relationships with community service providers such as therapists, psychologists, psychiatrists and the juvenile justice system. However, relatively few schools offer in-service training for staff, and it is quite rare to find training for parents and caregivers.

- **Lack of parent support: 58%**
- **Not enough funding: 56%**
- **Staff and administrators not knowledgable: 56%**
- **Staff spread too thin: 55%**
- **Staff and administrator burn out: 47%**
- **Overload of students needing services: 42%**
- **Mental health staff roles unclear: 39%**
- **Concerns with liability and legal issues: 33%**
- **Not enough space to provide services: 31%**
- **Excessive paperwork and regulations: 22%**
What’s helping?

Well-executed schoolwide programs DO make a difference!

“Building a school-community positive behavior recognition system has proved to greatly deter negative behaviors. We still have negative behaviors and trauma situations; however, with PBIS in place we now have more time to work with serious situations vs. marginal issues that used to regularly come up, because kids feel that we are a safe and caring place for them.”
Ryan Larson, Steele Elementary School, Bismarck, North Dakota

Professional mental health staff are highly valued – and missed when they are not available!

“What I found most helpful was working with a full-time interventionist and mental health professional, which we don’t have in my current district.”
Kalie Enlow, Chinacum Creek Primary School, Port Ludlow, WA

“I only have my school counselor and although she is amazing, I feel like I am drowning.”
John Hughes, Cottonwood Elementary, Orangeville, UT

“Our school is devastated by the loss of our full-time school counselor because our numbers are low; yet we have a high percentage of low income students whose mental health needs are greater.”
Cassandra Morrison, Elkin Middle School, Elkin, NC

Panelists recommend the following books and programs:

- **ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences)** training – info is available at a variety of websites, including free training at acesconnection.com and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website: cdc.gov
- **CHAMPS Classwide Positive Behavior Support (PBS)** developed by Dr. Randy Sprick, safeandcivilschools.com
- **Conscious Discipline** by Dr. Rebecca Bailey; multiple books and classroom management program
- **Engaging Children with Poverty in Mind** by Eric Jensen
- **Fostering Resilient Learners** – ASCD publication
- **Lost at School** by Ross Greene
- **Love and Logic** – Educator training and curricula: loveandlogic.com
- **Mindset** by Carol Dweck
- **Nurtured Heart Approach** – developed by Howard Glasser: childrenssuccessfoundation.com
- **Teaching Tolerance Magazine** (free) tolerance.org
- **The Leader in Me** – books and training developed by Stephen Covey: theleaderinme.org
- **The Tough Kid Book** by Rhode, Jenson and Reavis

About your job this month...

Here are a couple indicators of note, that are probably impacting your own mental health!

About how many hours did you work per week this month?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hours</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 40</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-50</td>
<td>19%</td>
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<tr>
<td>50-60</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-70</td>
<td>21%</td>
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<tr>
<td>70+</td>
<td>8%</td>
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This past month, how satisfying was your job?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(8-10)</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4-7)</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1-3)</td>
<td>7%</td>
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