Indiana State Epidemiological Outcomes Workgroup –
Meeting Minutes
January 19, 2024

Via Microsoft Teams at 9:30 a.m.

Meeting Attendance:

Name	Department
Adam McFatridge	Indiana High-Intensity Drug Trafficking Area
Allison Lake	Indiana Department of Health
Blashko Milenkovski	Indiana Department of Health
Brandy Paul	Indiana Department of Health
Catherine Thomas	Indiana Division of Mental Health and Addiction
Dane Minnick	Indiana Division of Mental Health and Addiction
Deepika Vuppalanchi	Syra Health
Donald McCay	Indiana High-Intensity Drug Trafficking Area
Emily Pham	Indiana Department of Health
Fred Bingle	Syra Health
Jason Collins	Syra Health
Jason R Murrey	Indiana Department of Education
Jeannie Bellman	Indiana Division of Mental Health and Addiction
John L. Long	Indiana Division of Mental Health and Addiction
Joyce Fondren	Indiana Division of Mental Health and Addiction
Kaitlyn Christian (MPH)	Indiana Management Performance Hub
Kaitlyn Short	Indiana Department of Health
Matthew J Stucky	Indiana Division of Mental Health and Addiction
Maureen Hoffman	DMHA Grant Evaluator
Michael Paul	Syra Health
Mike Toles	Indiana State Police
Rachel Parrett	Indiana Department of Child Services
Rebecca B Buhner	Family and Social Services Administration
Shelby Nierman	Indiana Department of Health
Srikant Devaraj	Syra Health
Sydney Elizabeth Whiteford	Prevention Insights at Indiana University
Vera Mangrum	Indiana Division of Mental Health and Addiction

MEETING AGENDA

• Approval of November 2023 SEOW Meeting Minutes

• Speaker:

- **Srikant Devaraj -** Relationship between bullying and behavioral/mental health

• Project updates

• Updates from SEOW committee

• Open Discussion

• Closing Remarks

MEETING MINUTES

Approval of November 2023 SEOW Meeting Minutes

- Syra Health presented the draft of the November meeting minutes to the SEOW committee via Teams screenshare. The committee was given a final opportunity to make corrections or request additions to the minutes. Upon hearing no corrections, **Srikant Devaraj (SEOW chair) asked that there be a motion to approve the November Meeting Minutes**. Jason Murray moved that the minutes be accepted, and Dane Minnick seconded the motion. **The meeting minutes were then approved.**

Srikant was the speaker and discussed about "**Relationship between bullying and behavioral/mental health**":

- One of the goals for SEOW is to monitor the behavioral health priorities annually, identify any emerging trends and existing gaps and do detailed analysis to understand the issues. Last year, SEOW had generated several recommendations on monitoring the precursors of suicidal ideation among youth. Due to the unavailability of YRBS data at that time, we explored proxies for suicide precursors. One significant variable we found was the duration of time youth felt sad or hopeless for two weeks in a row. This led us to delve deeper into the potential factors affecting suicide and the mediating factors that could mitigate or exacerbate suicidal ideation. Srikant's talk focused on one of these mediating factors – bullying in schools.

- There are various forms of bullying, including victimization, perpetration, and the overlap of both. Additionally, bullying can be categorized into physical, verbal, and social aspects.

- According to NIH, bullying involves unwanted aggression with a perceived power imbalance, and it can be one-time or repeated. Srikant explored the association between bullying and potential risk factors and mediators.

- According to YRBS in Indiana shows that approximately 15% of high school youth report being electronically bullied, with similar figures for on-school property bullying. Gender differences indicate that females experience more bullying than males.

- Over the past six years, there has been a slight decrease in on-school property bullying, while electronic bullying remains relatively stable. State and school-level policies may influence this.

- To gain a broader perspective, Srikant examined a Pew Research study from 2022, which revealed that nearly half of U.S. teens reported experiencing some form of cyberbullying. Girls aged 15 to 17 appear to be more vulnerable to multiple types of cyberbullying.

- The repercussions of bullying are significant. Bullies may engage in antisocial behaviors and substance use and display impulsiveness. Victims, on the other hand, may experience sadness, sleep deprivation, and an increased risk of suicidal ideation.

- A recent structural equation modeling study highlighted the direct and indirect impacts of school and electronic bullying on suicidal ideation. Depression symptoms such as sadness and sleep disturbances act as mediators in this association.

    Key Points Identified:

1. **Comparison of 2015 and 2021 Data:**
    - Detailed analysis of mental health measures, focusing on gender differences.
    - Trends in feelings of sadness or hopelessness showed increases across genders.
    - Notable rise in reports of seriously considering suicide, especially among females.
2. **Suicidal Ideation and Attempts:**
    - Disturbing trends in suicidal ideation and attempts among youth.
    - Females exhibited a higher increase, indicating a critical mental health concern.
3. **Substance Use Measures:**
    - Examination of substance use data, highlighting an increase among females.
    - Elevated risks for females in areas such as alcohol consumption, smoking, and marijuana use.
4. **Electronic Bullying Trends:**
    - Electronic bullying statistics presented, showing females consistently being victims across different races.
    - Incidences analyzed by grade level, indicating higher impacts on 9th and 11th-grade females.
5. **Association Studies:**
    - Mention of numerous studies associating bullying with depression symptoms and suicidality.
    - Emphasis on strong statistical associations between bullying and mental health issues.
6. **Longitudinal Effects:**
    - Recognition of the potential long-term impact of bullying on mental health and substance use into adulthood.
    - Acknowledgment of the need for further research to understand causality.
7. **Individual-Level Study Results:**
    - Detailed breakdown of results from an individual-level study, including direct and indirect effects.
    - Electronic bullying found to have both direct and indirect impacts on mental health through mediators like sadness and sleep.

Next Steps and Considerations:

- Highlight the importance of addressing mental health concerns among youth, especially focusing on females.
- Suggested the need for additional research to understand the complex interactions between mental health, substance use, and bullying.
- Encouraged a collaborative approach involving schools, communities, parents, and health professionals to develop targeted interventions.

The floor was opened for discussion on Cyberbullying and School Policies:

- **Vera Mangrum** raised the issue of collaboration between schools, counselors, and mental health professionals but noted the absence of parents in the discussion.

- She questioned the inclusion of parents in the collaboration, particularly in addressing cyberbullying, as school policies might not cover incidents occurring outside school hours or property.

- Vera expressed concerns about the effectiveness of school policies in addressing cyberbullying cases and the need for more research in this area.

- **Srikant Devaraj** acknowledged the importance of addressing cyberbullying and inquired about the Department of Education's (DOE) initiatives in handling both in-school and cyberbullying.

- **Jason Murrey** from the DOE highlighted legislative changes, including requiring crisis information on student IDs, but emphasized the need for effective education on crisis lines.

- Jason discussed suicide prevention training, the requirement for schools to have a suicide prevention policy, and challenges in ensuring educators know their roles in crisis situations.

- He also mentioned issues with electronic training and the importance of in-person training for better understanding and engagement.

- **Vera Mangrum** emphasized the significance of including parents in the collaboration to address cyberbullying, citing instances where parental involvement could be crucial in resolving bullying cases.

- **Jason** shared insights into schools' efforts to prevent cyberbullying, including restricting cell phone use, implementing digital programming, and monitoring online activities for potential warning signs.

Key Points Raised:

1. The need for a comprehensive approach involving parents in collaboration efforts to address cyberbullying.

2. Concerns about the effectiveness of current school policies in handling cyberbullying cases, especially those occurring outside school hours.

3. Jason Murrey highlighted legislative changes, suicide prevention training, and challenges in ensuring effective crisis response within schools.

4. Emphasis on in-person training for educators and the importance of addressing dehumanization and disconnection in the digital age.

Next Steps:

1. Explore additional education modules, particularly focusing on cyberbullying and when to report incidents occurring outside school hours.

2. Consider initiatives to bridge the gap between school policies and effective response mechanisms for cyberbullying.

3. Collaborate with parents and educators to create a culture that emphasizes mental health, humanization, and responsible technology use.

SEOW Project updates

- Syra Health will continue efforts to update the annual report, including obtaining access to relevant datasets for analysis.
- Continued progress on the Community Addiction Services Assessment research for special topic research and incorporating feedback from subcommittees and stakeholders.
- Srikant mentioned that the SEOW symposium will be held in May and have asked the committee to reach out to him by mid-March if they are interested to be a speaker at the symposium. The topic should be relevant to behavioral health.

Update from Jeannie Bellman, DMHA

Jeannie Bellman provided an update on the regional prevention system. She mentions that the DMHA has had a regional prevention system over the past few years to build collaborations and partnerships among communities. However, in the next six months, they will be transitioning away from this system, with the coordinators concluding their work by June 30th. Despite this transition, the goal is to carry forward all communication and partnerships established.

Jeannie emphasized two priorities in the new strategic plan involving the SEOW (State Epidemiological Outcomes Workgroup). The first is a mapping project to track state and local prevention efforts, addressing the challenge of understanding prevention services outside of funded ones. The second priority is evaluating and refining SEOW products to better meet community needs.

She mentioned that Syra will be assisting in the mapping effort, and they've already started work on evaluating SEOW reports. This involves listening sessions with select grantees to understand how SEOW reports can better meet their needs for prevention data. They are also looking at the format of reports, briefs, and data dashboards to make them more understandable and usable by community agencies. Additionally, there is an effort to reestablish community representation on the SEOW committee.

Update from Kaitlyn Christian, MPH

Kaitlyn Christian showcased a new Mental Health Events Dashboard released by MPH. The dashboard provides an overview of mental health-related events using EMS and emergency department data. Kaitlyn explains the different views and functionalities of the dashboard, including breakdowns by district, events, age group, gender, race, and more. She mentions that the underlying data set for the dashboard is available on their data hub.

https://hub.mph.in.gov/dataset/mental-health-related-ems-and-ed-events-by-county/resource/e820ccee-0933-45d3-980b-936505918095

https://www.in.gov/mph/projects/fortress/

Meeting conclusion

The meeting was adjourned with Srikant announcing the next meeting on March 22nd and expressing gratitude to the participants.

General Discussion
• Srikant opened the floor for discussion:
• **Future SEOW Meetings** via Microsoft Teams   o March 22, 2024
• Contact information of Syra Health: **Jason Collins** – Research Associate, Syra Health jasonc@syrahealth.com 463-345-8978 **Srikant Devaraj, Ph.D.** – Chair for SEOW and Vice President of Health Analytics, Syra Health srikantd@syrahealth.com 463-345-8957

Next meeting:

Date: March 22nd, 2024

Time: 9:30 a.m. – 11 a.m.

via Microsoft Teams

THANK YOU