

BASECAMPUS

MENTAL WELLNESS TOOLS
FOR EDUCATORS



**H. E. BUTT
FOUNDATION**

clarity | child
guidance
center



**Communities
In Schools**

San Antonio

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Basecampus program is a collaborative project between the H. E. Butt Foundation, Clarity Child Guidance Center (Clarity) and Communities In Schools of San Antonio (CIS-SA). CIS-SA hires and places a Socio-Emotional Wellness Coach on a campus to provide full time support for teachers, administrators, school support staff, and other youth workers in the community surrounding the school. The program works in coordination with the [One in Five Minds](#), an interactive online platform of mental health information that is curated and managed by Clarity. The purpose is to provide non-mental health professionals with the tools, resources, and self-care support they need to confidently manage the prevention and early identification of mental health issues in youth.

Schools: L.E.E. HS, International School of the Americas (ISA), Jackson Keller MS, Colonial Hills ES, and Nimitz MS.

DESIGN PROCESS

In May of 2017, the H. E. Butt Foundation pulled together a cross-sector group of agencies to investigate how to better promote mental wellness and prevent mental health issues with youth and teens in San Antonio. Through a series of facilitated meetings, partners from Clarity Child Guidance Center, Communities In Schools of San Antonio, The Ecumenical Center, Excel Beyond the Bell, and the Bexar County Health Collaborative explored the context and the problems currently facing each agency.

Ultimately, the partners identified a significant gap in the support and education of youth development workers to better understand, identify, prevent, or refer children and youth with mental health needs.

The original design for this project included providing a community of youth development workers with high-quality digital and physical tools to better train, educate, and equip them to understand mental wellness.

Clarity Child Guidance Center had an existing online and event-based awareness campaign, One in Five Minds, that would be reconfigured to include content and interactions relevant to teachers, mentors, coaches, and other youth development professionals. The Basecampus online platform was to be a resource for teachers and allow them to manage their own learning about

mental wellness and early detection, with paths to certification. The website would also offer interactive, problem-solving tools to help navigate a mental health challenge or crisis, and a referral database with local professionals.

Communities In Schools of San Antonio had an existing clinical counseling program for children and youth on school campuses that would be modified in combination with social, emotional, and mental wellness training, professional development, and events, to support the youth development workers at the project site.

In December of 2017, the project team met with leadership from North East Independent School District (NEISD) to discuss the potential project site of LEE H.S. Both Clarity and CIS-SA were familiar with the districts' innovative and progressive stance toward mental health support for their students and hoped they would be as interested in their employee's mental wellness.

Initially, the proposal was to pilot the program from March to June at LEE HS, chosen for its diversity of students, programs, and neighborhood dynamics. Due to competing campus priorities and activities, a spring pilot wasn't feasible. But the campus leadership was interested in partnering and helped coordinate meetings with school staff over the summer of 2018 to share their perspectives on the needs of the campus, co-design website content, and provide logistical guidance for how the coach could operate at the start of the 2018-19 school year.

The program officially launched in August of 2018 with information sessions for all staff at LEE and ISA. These sessions allowed CIS-SA and Clarity staff to provide an overview of the project, discuss the role of the Coach, facilitate access to the One in Five Minds website, and administer formative surveys.

YEAR ONE

The programming focus for the first year of this project were staff at LEE and ISA High Schools. The website was introduced at the start of the school year, before students had returned, and the Coach was provided office space on campus to facilitate the awareness and utilization of services.

The website's content and Coach's services intentionally incorporated feedback from the Summer focus-groups and program partners regularly met to review and develop useful resources, events, and supports. The pilot website was launched in August 2018 and included extensive content under three main categories: *introduction to children's mental health*, *how to help students*, and *how to help parents*. A fourth category on *self-care* was added during the first year based on the interest shown by teachers. The site also included a *Forum* and a place for teachers to ask a question to the *Coach*, and a link to resources on the One in Five Minds website.

Over the course of the year, surveys that measured staff attitudes and beliefs regarding mental health and wellness were given in August, February, and June. Key findings from these surveys will be discussed in the Results section of this document. The surveys were administered, typically, at large all-staff events, to increase the likelihood of participation with a large percentage of staff.

Despite CIS-SA's historic presence at LEE HS, the Coach still found it necessary to spend a lot of time on outreach at the start of the program, reminding staff what services could be provided and how this program differed from the traditional CIS-SA program. By the February survey, over a quarter of all staff had attended at least one whole-campus training, group session, and/or one-to-one consulting sessions with the Coach. That number doubled by the end of the school year, with over half of the staff engaging in program at some point. With regards to the utilization of the website, at the end of the year, about 30% of the staff reported having used the website but the interactive tools like the *Forum* and the *Coach Questions* were not used much.

By the end of the year, awareness of this program had officially spread across San Antonio via word-of-mouth, stakeholder conversations, news articles, and other communication channels. The project partners were starting to get requests for the Basecampus services to be expanded outside of the pilot sites while concurrently deliberating the design for year two of the project.

YEAR TWO

Although the qualitative and quantitative evidence for the first year of programming was positive, the project partners were eager to test the impact

and sustainability of this program scaled across a number of participating sites. Noting the need for these services across a community, and the capability to leverage a comprehensive high school as a hub for program activities and events, the next step was to share the platform and Coach with additional campuses geographically proximate to LEE HS. Year two was the start of the Basecampus Hub Model.

Currently, campus staff at Jackson Keller MS and Colonial Hills ES have access to the One in Five Minds platform and the Coach. In order to test the impact of the digital tools without a physical presence, campus staff at Nimitz MS have been given access to the platform only. As part of the hub model, Nimitz staff are invited to attend trainings and events happening at LEE HS.

The second year saw a new Coach installed and a new Principal at LEE HS. Neither change resulted in significant disruption to the program at LEE HS. The relationships and trust between the program partners and the campus staff have largely been maintained in the face of shifting staff.

Additionally, a new version of the website relaunched in 2019, streamlined with three main sections to make it more user-friendly, functional, and clear:

- *A Library*: content where people could learn, including the main content we offered, “teachers choice” professional development hours (PD in Pajamas), and the library of tips of the week which was built by the coach in the previous year
- *A Classroom*: a calendar of upcoming training events organized by the coach
- *A Coach’s Corner* which includes interactive tools to schedule a meeting with the coach or ask a question on the site.

Complexities in year two involve scaling this program across two new campuses while providing continuing support to LEE & ISA. Unlike LEE, the new campuses didn’t have the benefit of an embedded full-time Coach dedicated to raising awareness of the program, encouraging participation in group or individual activities, and collaborating with leadership teams and teachers to strategically leverage the resources. As such, engagement has been less systemic at the new sites. Program staff are currently trying new tactics to elevate participation and integration of the tools and support.

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

- Establishing Principal/Administrator buy-in and belief are paramount.
- Confirming campus leadership is receptive and sensitive to the mental health needs of their students and faculty.
- Creating relationships and trust with campus staff is foundational to all other programming.
- Prioritizing self-care and mental wellness for campus staff.
- Maintaining a third-party (non-district staff) position is a HUGE contributing factor to participation and engagement. Operating a safe space outside of the district's processes and policies for teachers/staff to share concerns, ideas, questions, etc. creates an environment conducive to vulnerable and courageous conversations.
- Safeguarding administrators from using the program as a disciplinary response for teachers who have "done something wrong."
- Incentivizing participation (raffles, CEUs, etc.) effectively increases program engagement.
- Collaborating with district staff who have similar roles to expand the scope of support and build sustaining programming.
- Ensuring the Coach has consistent access to private office space for sensitive conversations.
- Familiarity with program partners shortens time it takes to establish trust.
- Participating in campus committees.
- Tailoring content, activities, and resources to meet the needs of campuses and individuals.
- Developing multiple touchpoints for program interactions (in-person, online, newsletters, announcements, etc.).
- Collaborating with all partners to create content for the platform and newsletters.
- Creating a structured but flexible model of services to ensure the successful replication of programming.

RESULTS TO DATE

- GENERAL OUTCOMES
 - 54% of the teachers engaged in the program, including 17% online, 61% in a learning event, and 54% in a coaching meeting
 - 85-95% are likely or very likely to recommend the program.

- CONFIDENCE INCREASED
 - I feel frustrated or overwhelmed when thinking about how to handle children with mental health challenges in my classroom: **Disagree: from 53% to 34%**
 - How confident are you about recognizing signs and symptoms of children's mental illness: **Not confident 21% to 14%**
 - How confident are you about engaging parents when you notice that a student experiences emotional or behavioral challenges? **Not confident 37% to 25%**

- AWARENESS INCREASED
 - Teachers noticed a student was showing signs of experiencing a mental health issues more than 10 times: **24% to 37%**

- SKILLS INCREASED
 - Teachers were able to dialog with a child in a way that didn't escalate the situation every or most of the times: **60% to 80%**
 - Teachers, when talking to parents, had positive outcomes every or most of the times: **37% to 56%**

- PARTICIPANT TESTIMONIALS:
 - "The Base Coaching program has helped me overall to look beyond the behavior or activity of a student to open dialogue with the

students more, so that they might understand why they are exhibiting a certain behavior.”

- “Have enjoyed the after-school training sessions in the evenings on student mental health concerns, issues and treatment. Very informative—good to learn all of this. I feel empowered with this knowledge—thank you!”
- “It is nice to have someone on campus to dialog with about these issues.”
- “We talked about how to manage problem behaviors in class, the students did improve in class w/ more class work completed and less disruptive behavior.”
- “Kim helped coach me thru a tough situation of being there for a kid that was suicidal and delusional last semester.”
- “She helped our team plan on how to approach and help a student with mental health concerns before we met with his family.”
- “My team used these services for how to effectively communicate with each other in handling problems.”