Building Psychological Safety: Prevention and Mental Health in Ohio Schools

Exploring prevention strategies and mental health supports to foster psychological safety in schools.

Feb. 5, 2025

Ohio Department of Education & Workforce

Webinar Logistics

- Use the Q&A feature to ask questions during the webinar.

- Polls will be used throughout the webinar.

- The State of Ohio and Ohio Department of Education and Workforce policies prohibits the use of external AI tools during meetings.

- The slide deck and a feedback form will be emailed after the webinar.

Introductions

Jill J. Jackson, Ph.D.

Education Program Specialist

Sarah Music,

MPH, MPA, CHES, OCPC

Prevention Education Coordinator

Nicole Kahler,

MSSA, LISW-S

Mental Health Consultant

Agenda

Comprehensive School Safety

Prevention Strategies

Mental Health Supports

Resources

Vision for Comprehensive School Safety

Each student learns in an environment that is physically, psychologically, and emotionally safe for students and adults.

A safe school addresses the emotional and physical safety of students and staff by using a comprehensive approach that engages school staff, students, families, and the community.

Ohio

Comprehensive School Safety

- Agencies collaborated to develop a statewide, comprehensive approach to school safety based on best practices and evidence-informed strategies.

| Ohio School Safety Center (within the Department of Public Safety) | Ohio Department of Education and Workforce | Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services |

Goals for Comprehensive School Safety

- Promote social and emotional learning and development
- **Promote mental, emotional, and behavioral health**
- Connect family, schools, and communities
- **Prevent behavioral health issues and substance abuse**

- Serve vulnerable and at-risk populations
- Promote positive school climate
- Create safe and violence-free schools
- Promote academic and career success
- Employ effective and positive school discipline

Ohio

Comprehensive Safe Learning Environment: The M-PHAT Approach
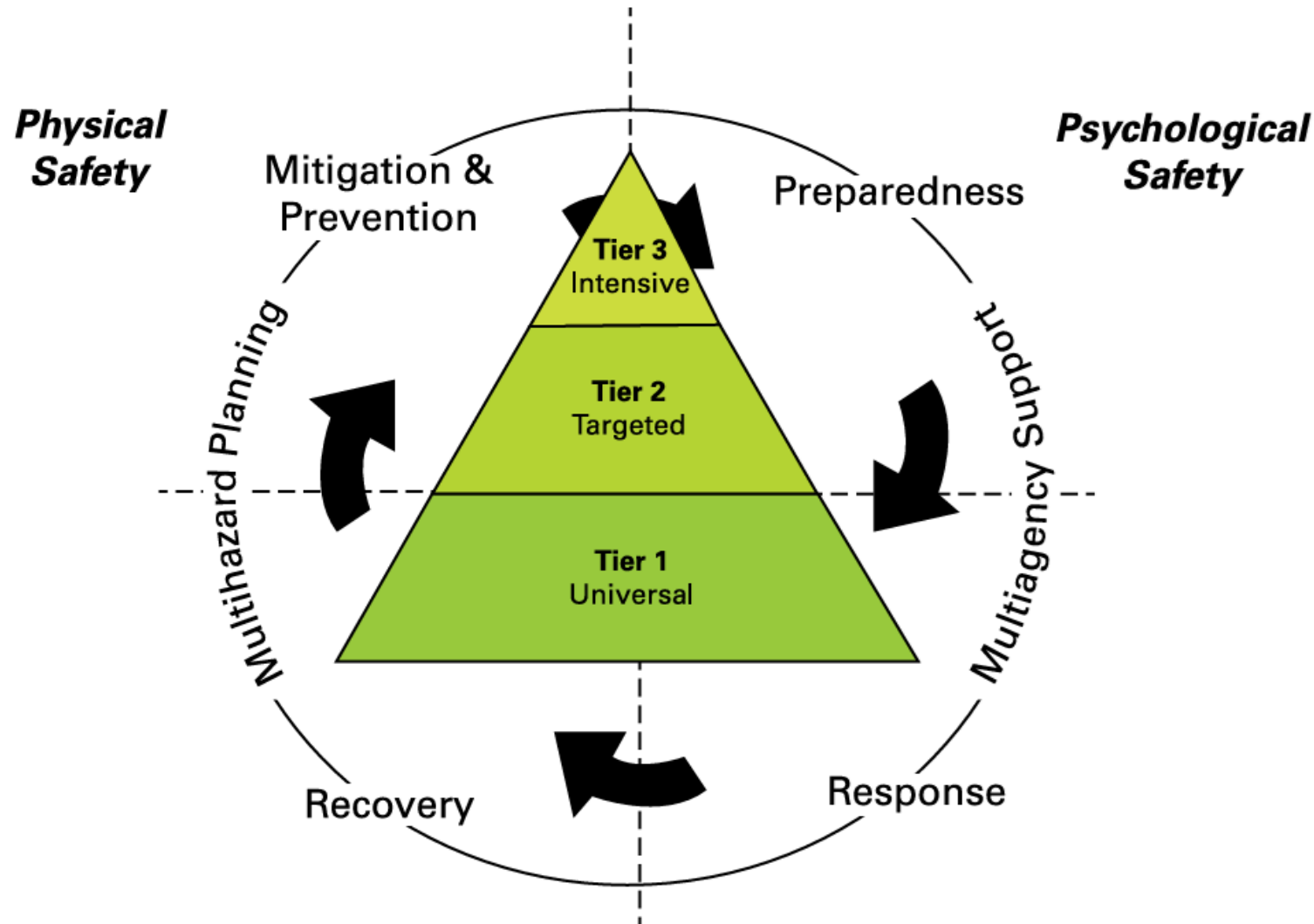
Best Practices

- Implement multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) that encompass prevention, wellness promotion, and interventions.
- Improve access to school-based mental health supports by ensuring adequate staffing levels.

Psychological Safety

- Implementing strategies to prevent emotional harm and build resiliency including teaching students social skills, supporting students' behavioral health needs, and reducing risky behaviors.

Ohio

Current Needs

Ohio Students and Psychological Safety

- In the past year, 8.3% of students rarely or never felt safe and secure at school.

- During the past 30 days, 15.6% of students missed at least 1 day of school because they felt unsafe at school or on their way to or from school.

- Of students that had been bullied in the past year, 60.8% were bullied on school property.

- 23.2% of students did not feel like they belonged at their school.

Ohio

Ohio Students are Facing Challenges

- 1 in 3 Ohio students report challenges with anxiety

- 1 in 3 Ohio students reports feeling sad and hopeless

  - Almost 115,000 high school students in Ohio have experienced depression

- Workforce shortages

Student Outcomes

- School safety is linked to improved student and school outcomes

    - Emotional and physical safety

    - Risky behaviors and student outcomes

- Interconnection of student wellness, learning, and positive outcomes

Psychological Safety: a Multi-tiered Approach

- Continuum of Care to promote:
  - Positive school climate
  - Social skills
  - Mental health and well-being
  - Support for students and staff
  - Trauma-informed practices

Prevention Strategies

Defining Prevention

- Planned sequence of culturally relevant, evidence-based strategies.

- Reduce the likelihood of or delay the onset of mental, emotional, or behavioral health disorders.

- Assist students in developing knowledge and skills to engage in healthy behaviors and decision-making.

- Increase awareness of the dangers and consequences of risky behaviors.

Ohio

Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)

Tier 3	**Few Students**
Tier 2	**Some Students**
Tier 1	**All Students**

Aligning Interventions Based on Need

- Efforts to address mental, emotional, and behavioral health disorders are most effective when matched to level of need.

- Prevention programs and practices can be grouped according to three levels of risk.

Continuum of Care
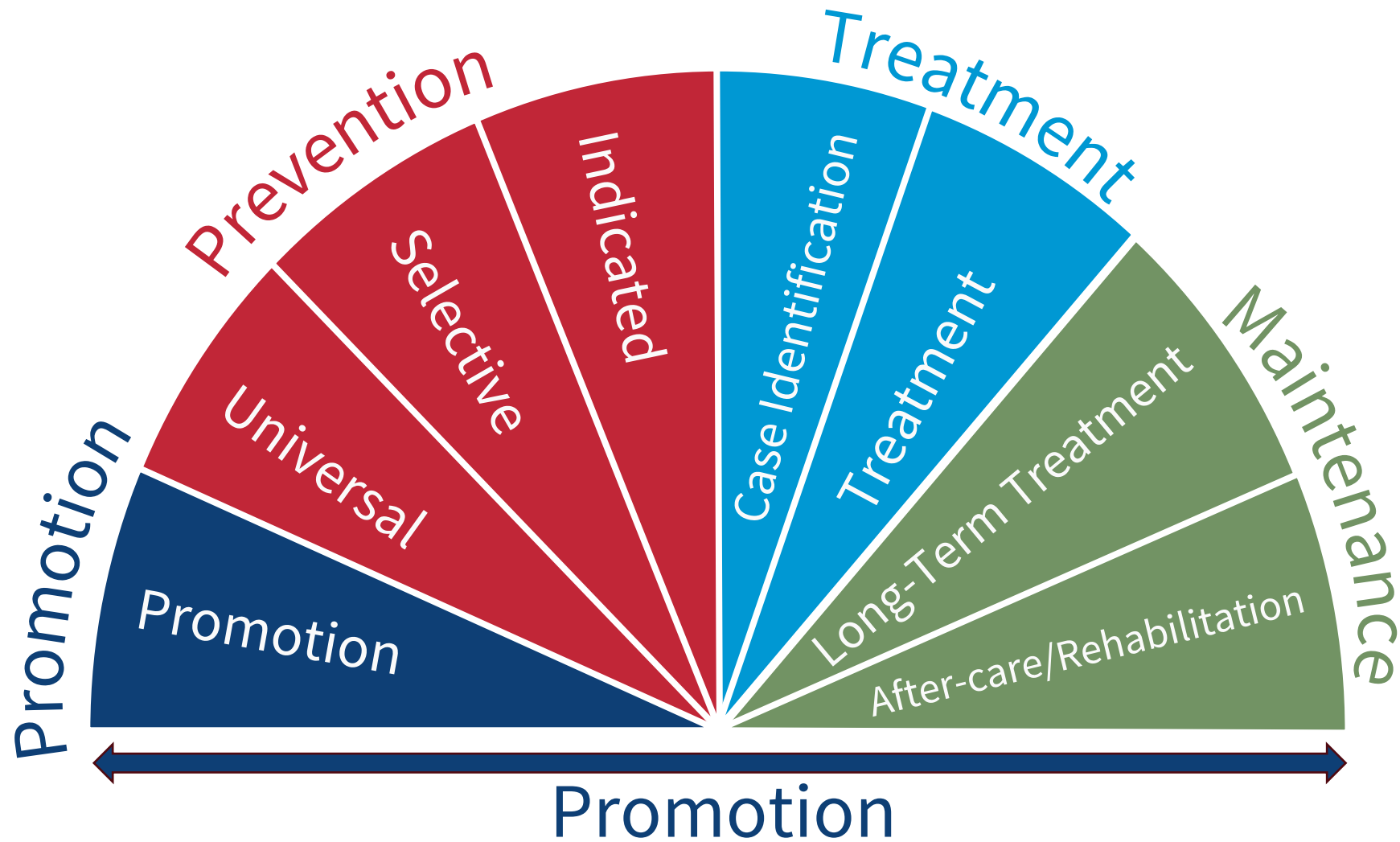
Prevention Best Practices

- Prevention programs and practices are most effective when they are matched to their target population's level of risk.

- Students may be referred to a school counselor, social worker, or appropriate provider when needed supports are outside of the scope of prevention.

- Prevention does not take the place of intensive intervention or treatment.

Ohio

Universal, Selective, or Indicated?

1. School-based suicide prevention program for all middle school students. **Universal**

2. Education program for high school students who have experienced problems related to alcohol use. **Indicated**

3. After-school mentoring program for youth with incarcerated parents. **Selective**

4. Laws that increase penalties for providing alcohol to minors. **Universal**

Selecting Prevention Strategies

- [SAMHSA's Strategic Prevention Framework](#) can be used to ensure appropriate prevention services are being implemented.

- When selecting prevention services, it is critical that the program or practice is a good fit for the specific audience.

- Prevention services should be evidence-based and have both a conceptual and practical fit.

Strategic Prevention Framework

1. Assessment
2. Capacity
3. Planning
4. Implementation
5. Evaluation
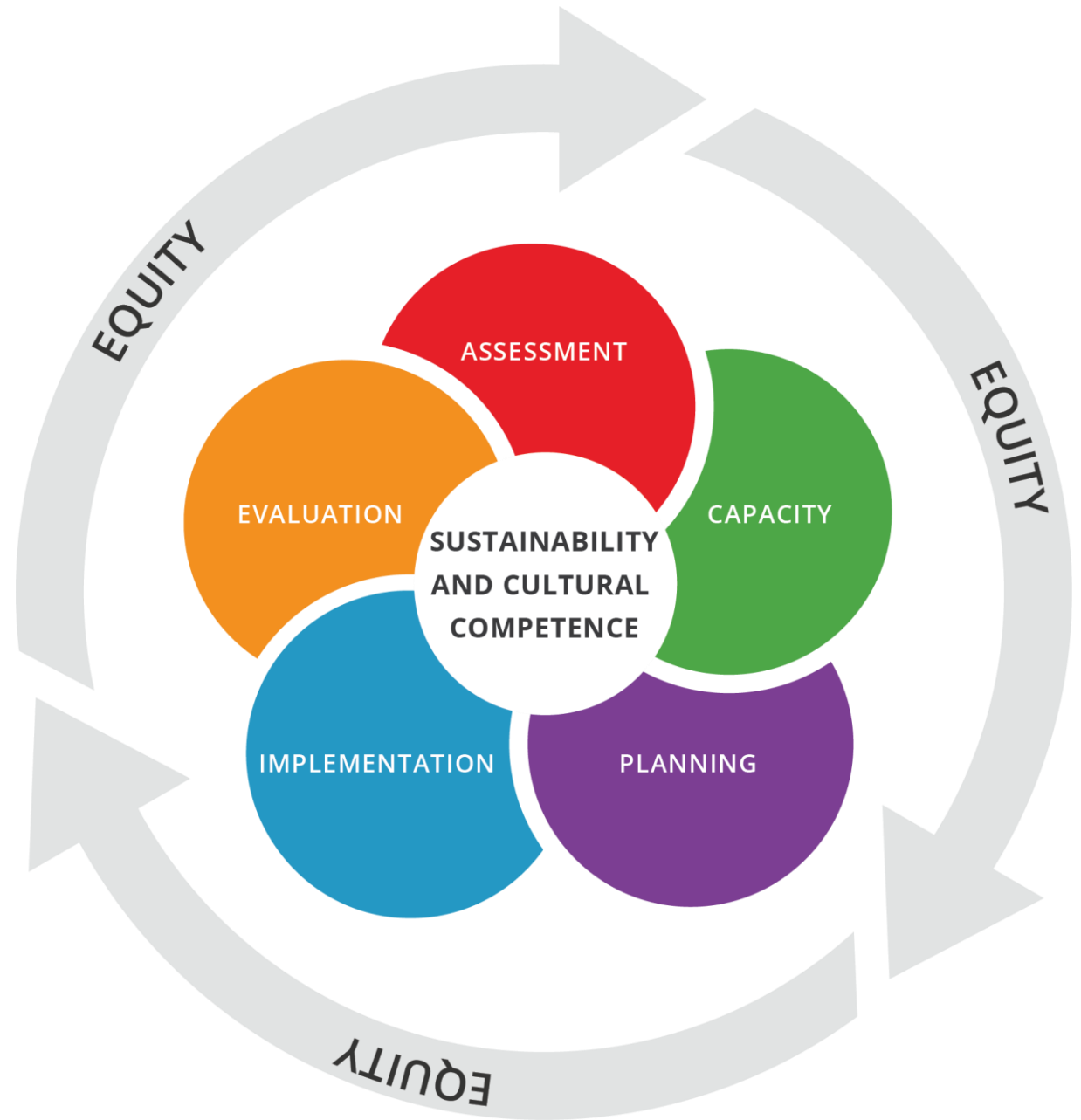
Suicide Prevention, Violence Prevention, Social Inclusion, and School Safety Requirements

	Emergency Management Plans
Physical	Anonymous Reporting Systems
	Threat Assessment Teams and Training
	Suicide Awareness and Prevention and Violence Prevention
Psychological	Social Inclusion
	Student-led Violence Prevention Clubs
	In-Service Training

Ohio

Please respond to the first poll.

Mental Health Supports
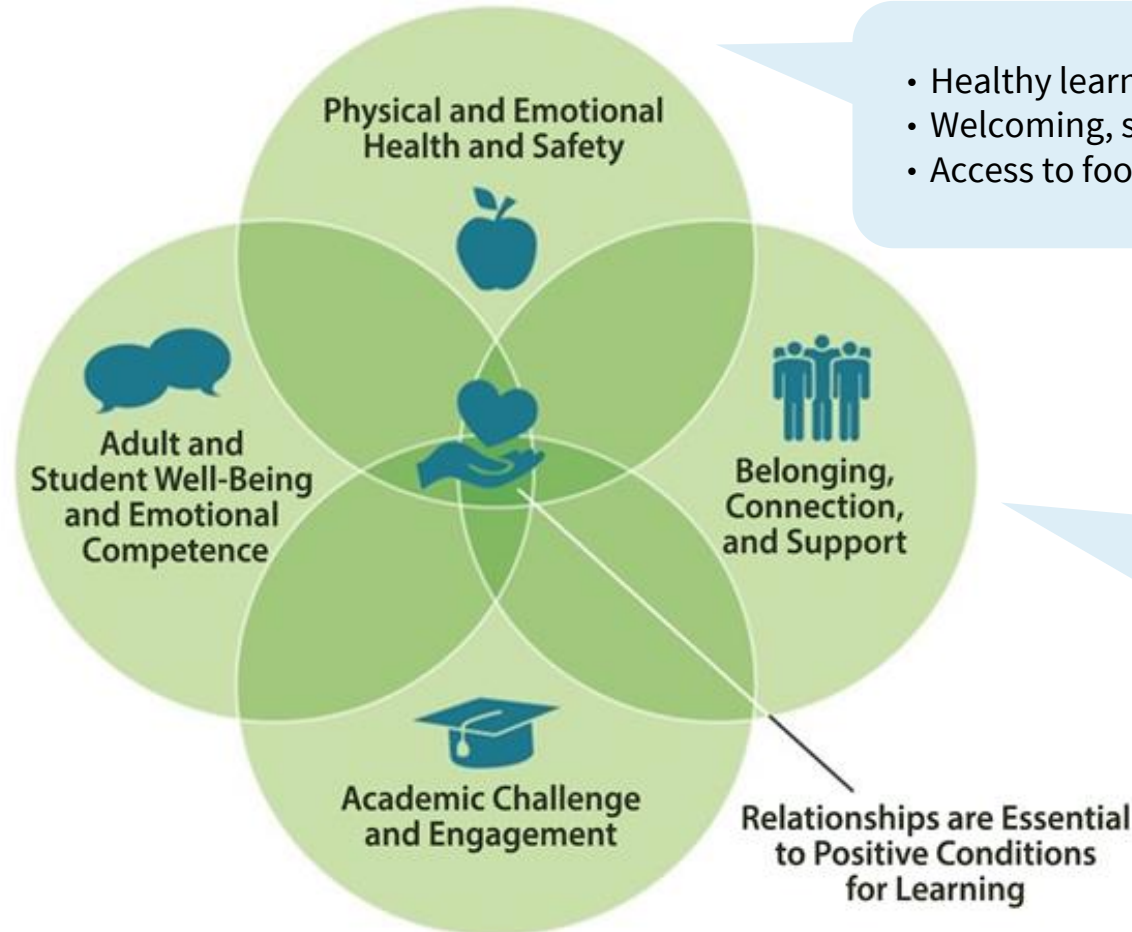
What Schools and Districts Can Do

- Use data to inform decisions
- Develop partnerships
- Prioritize evidence-based practices and strategies
- Implement universal wellness supports
- Strengthen Tier II and III supports
- Offer professional development

Ohio

Strategies to Support Positive Conditions for Learning

- Access to health care and mental health supports
- Trauma-informed practice
- Staff self-care

- Healthy learning environments
- Welcoming, safe school climate
- Access to food and other basic needs

Physical and Emotional Health and Safety

Adult and Student Well-Being and Emotional Competence

Belonging, Connection, and Support

Academic Challenge and Engagement

Relationships are Essential to Positive Conditions for Learning

- Access to tech and internet
- Learning supports
- Project-based learning
- Credit recovery opportunities
- Internships or community service
- Alternative scheduling options

- Active student and family engagement
- Advisories and meetings to build community
- Enrichment and clubs
- Positive peer connections

Ohio

AIR
AMERICAN INSTITUTES FOR RESEARCH

Attendance Works

Psychological Safety in Schools: Protective Factors

Focus on Universal Strategies

- Positive relationships

- Safe environments

- Connectedness

- Regulation and life skills

Trauma-Informed Schools Build Resiliency

- Focus on relationships

- Promote safety and trustworthiness

- Engage in choice and collaboration

- Encourage skill-building and competence

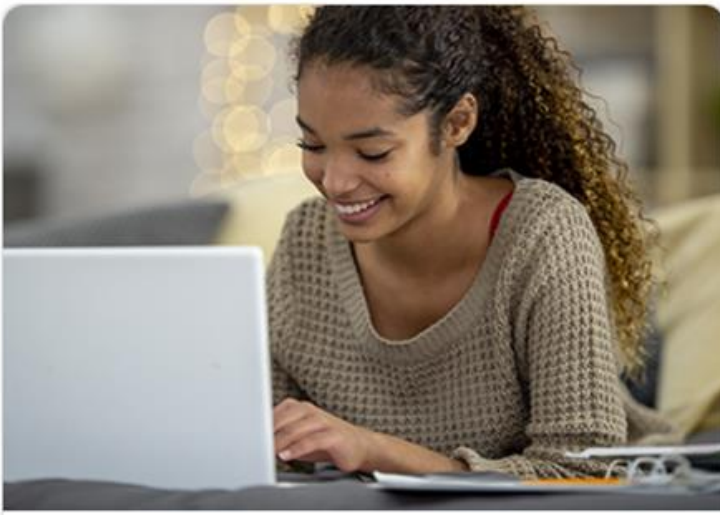# Informed Decision-Making and Sustainability

Informed Decision-Making

Data

- Ohio Youth Surveys
- School Report Cards
- Prevention Services Data Report

Evidence-based Programs and Practices

- Ohio's Evidence-based Clearinghouse
- Youth.gov
- What Works Clearinghouse

OHYES!

The OHYES! uncovers student needs on a local level, empowering high-impact change in schools and communities across Ohio.

Youth Risk Behavior Survey/Youth Tobacco Survey

YRBS/YTS gathers state-representative data on student health risks and behaviors likely to result in adverse outcomes.

School Health Profiles Survey

Profiles surveys principals and health educators to gather insights into Ohio's school health policies and practices.

youthsurveys.ohio.gov

Funding

Ohio Funding

- [Student Wellness and Success Funds](#)
- State agency grants
- Local Alcohol, Drug, and Mental Health Boards

Federal Funding

- Title IV
- U.S. Department of Education
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
- Health Resources and Services Administration
- National Institute of Justice

Please respond to the second poll.

Resources

Prevention

- [Prevention Education](#)
- [Ohio Center of Excellence for Behavioral Health Prevention and Promotion](#)
- [Prevention Technology Transfer Center (PTTC): Substance Abuse Prevention Skills Training](#)
- [SAMHSA: Focus On Prevention, Strategies and Programs to Prevention Substance Use](#)

Mental Health

- [School-based Mental Health](#)
- [National Center for School Mental Health](#)
- [School-Based Center of Excellence for Prevention and Early Intervention](#)
- [Mayerson Center for Safe and Healthy Children](#)
- SAMHSA: [Program Finder](#) and [Resource Center](#)
- [National Attachment and Trauma Network](#)

Please respond to the third poll.

Questions?

education.ohio.gov

Department of Education & Workforce