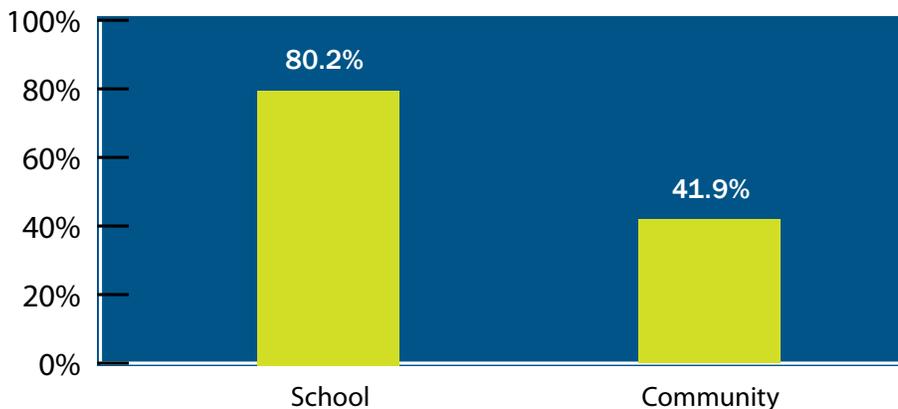




One in Five Ninth-Graders at Risk for Mental Health Problems; School-based Services Accessed More than Community Services

A 2011 study on mental health screening¹ in public high schools found that one in five (19.6%) ninth grade students were at risk for developing mental health problems.² Of these at-risk students, 73.6% had not received any treatment prior to being screened. Students determined to be at risk were provided a referral for treatment, either to school- or community-based services. Those referred to school-based services accessed them at twice the rate as those referred to community-based services (80.2% vs. 41.9%). Studies have found that schools are an opportune venue in which to provide mental health services because of increased convenience and comfort for students; however community-based services offer greater capacity to treat more serious mental illnesses. Authors recommend that continued efforts be made to integrate school- and community-based treatment to provide a full range of accessible, appropriate collaborative services to youth in need.

Percent of Ninth-grade Students Referred to Mental Health Services Who Successfully Accessed Them, 2011



Source:

Husky, M. M., Sheridan, M., McGuire, L., & Olfson, M. (2011). Mental Health Screening and Follow-up Care in Public High Schools. *Journal of the Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*; 50(9):881-891.

Notes:

- ¹ A computerized, self-report screening tool called "Diagnostic Predictive Scales (DPS-8)" was used to identify mental health problems.
- ² An adolescent was deemed to be at risk if any the following criteria were met: current suicidal ideation or prior suicide attempt; presence of any specific recent disorder and a moderately severe impairment score; severe symptom score; or presence of any provisional substance use disorder.

Prepared by the Center for Health and Justice (CHJ) at TASC. CHJ works to build, enhance, and sustain strong and vibrant communities by promoting policies and practices that stop the cycle of drugs and crime. We conduct research and evaluations, and offer policy analysis, trainings, and technical assistance in the fields of health and justice. For more information, visit us online at www.centerforhealthandjustice.org.

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