Challenges and Capacities for Libraries Supporting Rural Health

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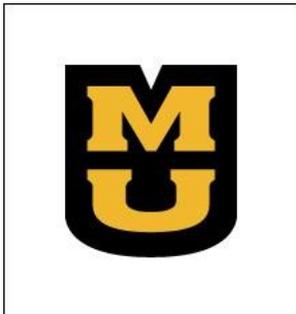
2 projects

School Libraries Anchoring Rural Mental Health

- 2017-2019
- Goals
  - Assess the capacities of rural school libraries for community mental health support
- Partners
  - Missouri Association of School Libraries
  - Missouri Association of Rural Education
  - Missouri School Counselors Association

Librarians as Catalysts for Healthy Communities (C4CH)

- 2019 - 2022
- Goals
  - Interdisciplinary HSL program
  - Recruit diverse students who remain in their communities
- Partners:
  - iSchool
  - NNLM-MCR
  - J. Otto Lottes Health Sciences Library
  - Community partners

Project 1: Rural Mental Health Project

- Mental health is a serious problem
- Suicide is the second leading cause of teen death
- More people die by suicide in rural areas
- Rural communities lack mental health care
- Rural schools serve as the de facto children's mental hea[lth] system

CHILDREN IN RURAL AREAS
WITH MENTAL, BEHAVIORAL, AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISORDERS MAY NEED

► Better access to mental health care for children and parents
► Programs that support parents
► Opportunities to learn, play, and socialize

CDC

CS273411-A

SUICIDE SURPASSED HOMICIDE TO BECOME SECOND-LEADING CAUSE OF DEATH FOR TEENAGERS, AGES 15-19, IN THE UNITED STATES

Deaths per 100,000 Population Ages 15-19

Accidents 33.3
17.7

Homicide 10.4
6.6

Suicide 8.0
8.7

1999 2000 2001 2002 2003 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012 2013 2014
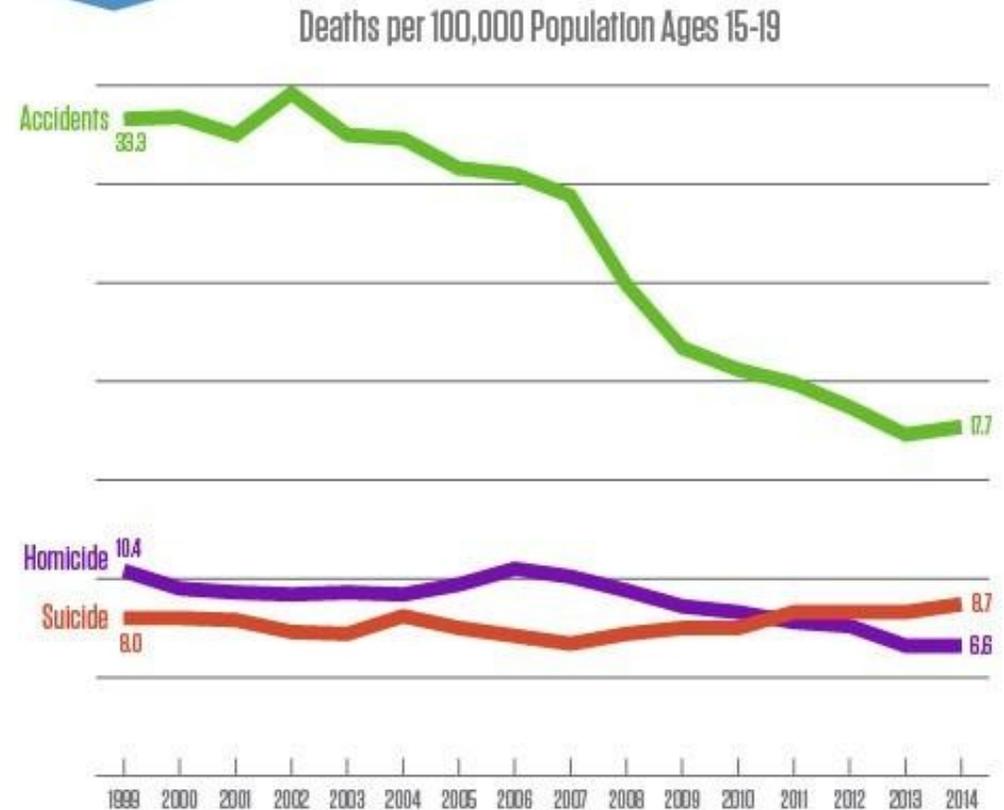
Source: Population Reference Bureau analysis of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, "Underlying Cause of Death 1999-2014," CDC WONDER Online Database, accessed at http://wonder.cdc.gov/ucd-icd10.html, on May 27, 2016.

How can rural school librarians serve as community anchors to support mental health and wellness?

Methods:

- 4 Focus Groups with 14 school librarians
- Member checking
- Grounded theory
  - Transcript Analysis
  - Code for theme
    - Overarching themes
    - Strengths

Credit: Saul Albert, JUne 1, 2017.
https://www.flickr.com/photos/saulalbert/34991210106.

THEME 1: RESOURCES

THEME 2: CHALLENGES

THEME 3: DESIRES

THEME 4: EXAMPLES TO FOLLOW

Resources and Challenges

Theme 1: Resources

- Providing nonfiction resources is challenging.
- High-interest fiction materials have more use than non-fiction.
- The school library serves as a safe space for students.

Theme 2: Challenges

- School librarians do not feel comfortable providing mental health support.
- Mental health stigma can deter students' access to resources.

Desires and Examples

Theme 3: Desires

- School librarians want:
  - more training
  - Better resources
- School librarians and counselors are overworked

→ Partnerships!

Theme 4: Examples to Follow

- Harper's Ethic of Care Model
- Socio-Emotional Learning Models

School-based mental health programs are focused on ameliorating existing problems rather than maintaining student health.

Conclusions and Implications

- School librarians need more support and education in this area

Role of the school librarian:
- Ethic of Care (Harper, 2017; Rubinstein 2012)

- Safe Spaces (Brewster, 2013; Takahashi, 2017)

- Collections and Informational Resources (Harper, 2017)
  - Bibliotherapy (Cornett & Cornett, 1980)

- School librarians are key stakeholders in improving literacy and information literacy – why not also health information literacy and mental health information literacy?

- Curricular Changes: Preparing our students to deal with mental health issues and to use their professional skills in supporting students, teachers, and counselors

Project 2: Catalysts for Community Health

- New Project (in recruitment phase)
- Students will remain in situ:
  - Underserved rural AND urban areas
- Community Partners from libraries and health/wellness environments
- Interdisciplinary MLIS: includes classes in bioinformatics, Health Professions

Health Professional Shortage Areas: Mental Health, by County, 2017

None of county is shortage area | Part of county is shortage area | Whole county is shortage area

RHIhub
Rural Health Information Hub

Source: data.HRSA.gov, 2017.
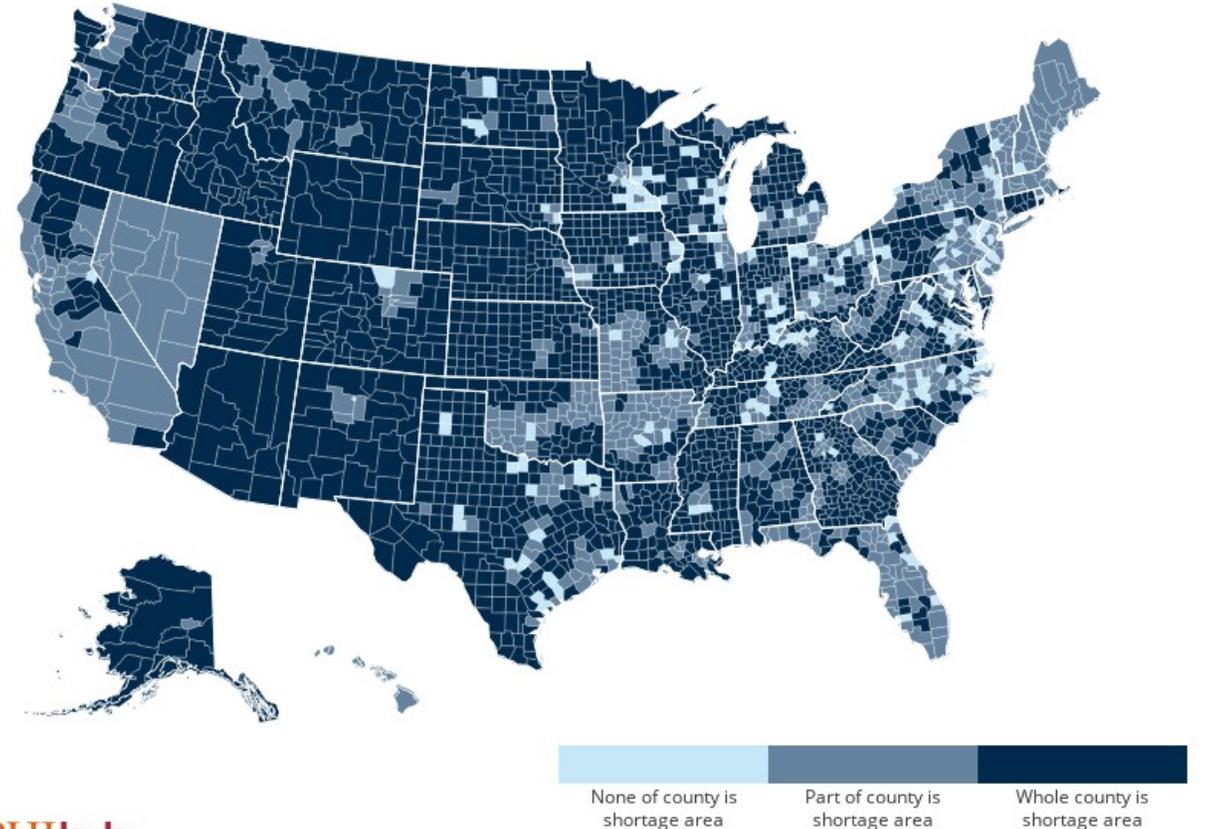
Aims:

NNLM, "Regional Medical Libraries.
https://nnlm.gov/regions.

- Create information and curricular resources for health and wellbeing in LIS
- Develop health information outreach and programming skills
- Train student cohort to lead community health information networks
- Expand a community empowerment framework to library education

Community Empowerment Framework

- Partner with local organizations; students work part time throughout program. Intentionally cross-disciplinary

- Use an "established structure of self-governance" including Community Advisory Board
- Work with NNLM, across MU departments, with community
- All of Us coordinators
- Mentoring program

Helm, Jelly. Wikipedia Community Collage.
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Wikipedia_community_collage.png

Curricular Changes

Work with Health Medical Informatics Department and School of Health Professions to modify existing courses to meet MLIS, Programmatic Needs of C4CH

Project Similarities

- Focus on underserved areas
- Increasing librarians' comfort with health issues
- Developing curricular interventions for LIS students related to health issues
- Community empowerment/embedded information work
- Partnerships

Q&A

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For additional information:

Rural School Libraries: https://schoolmentalhealth.missouri.edu

Librarians as Catalysts for Healthy Communities: https://c4ch.missouri.edu