

## Eliminating Barriers for Learning

Eliminating Barriers for Learning is a continuing education program for secondary school teachers that focuses on mental health issues in the classroom and improves the lives of students and the learning climate of their classrooms.

Mental health issues impact everyone in the school setting. Teachers today experience more stress and burnout than in any other profession. (University of Missouri, at Advancing School Mental Health Conference, 2008) As well, research shows that students are coming to school with more issues that deter from their ability to learn and succeed at school.

The overall aim of the Eliminating Barriers to Learning curriculum is to help those working with students to understand and appropriately address mental health issues in the school environment. Developed by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, it offers information on adolescent social-emotional wellness and provides specific skill-based techniques for classroom use. It intends to—

- Increase knowledge of adolescent mental health, including risks and protective factors;
- Show teachers and staff how to develop strategies to help students who need additional support;
- Suggest ways to promote a mentally healthy learning environment through instructional techniques that take into account individual styles of learning and classroom climate; and
- Help teachers and staff identify school and community resources and partnerships to promote youth mental health.

This evidence-based curriculum provides secondary teachers and other staff the tools they need to address these issues and thus Eliminate Barriers to Learning. This subsequently helps teachers to accomplish some of their personal, professional and district goals while experiencing greater job satisfaction.

## OVERVIEW OF MODULES

**Module I:** Eliminating Barriers for Learning: The Foundation

- Social-emotional development, stigma, and discrimination

**Module II:** Social-Emotional Development, Mental Health, and Learning

- Overview of disorders, effects on learning, and risk factors

**Module III:** Making Help Accessible to Students and Families

- Formulating a plan to help students with mental health needs

**Module IV:** Strategies To Promote a Positive Classroom Climate

- Creating a climate that promotes learning and mental health

SLIDE I-D



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Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration  
Center for Mental Health Services  
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