

## HOW TO ACCESS MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES AT PUENTE CHARTER SCHOOL

PUENTE Charter School offers a range of tiered services to scholars and families to support the promotion of mental health. Services are rendered at school through school-based providers such as Comp Therapy. Services and supports are free of charge and are provided to scholars based on need and availability, regardless of immigration or insurance status.

### Who can receive school based mental health services?

School-based mental health services are reserved for scholars whose social and emotional needs are impairing their academic abilities. For scholars who are experiencing challenges outside of school, referrals to local mental health agencies will be provided.

Reasons for a referral may include but are not limited to:

- Scholar has experienced a loss of a family member or loved one (e.g. death, incarceration, or deportation)
- Scholar has stressors at home that are affecting school performance or self-esteem (e.g. divorce, financial stress)
- Scholar appears more sad, angry, or worried etc. when compared to peers
- Scholar is experiencing difficulty making and maintaining appropriate friendships with peers
- Scholar lacks school motivation to participate or attend school or is extremely distracted
- Scholar exhibits significant change in behavior
- Scholar has experienced a traumatic event that is impacting school performance (e.g. abuse, car accident, bullying, etc.)

### What do school based mental health services look like at PUENTE Charter School?

Scholars may receive support in the following ways based on what is most appropriate:

- *Classroom Support & Teacher Consultation (Whole Group)*
  - Provider consults with the teacher about appropriate interventions and supports (e.g. Calm Classroom, Family Circles) that may help the scholar be more successful in their classroom.
  - Provider may come into the classroom to present on a particular topic (e.g. bullying prevention, appropriate friendships, or suicide awareness for middle school scholars).
- *Group Counseling*
  - Provider will meet with a group of no more than 10 scholars to work on increasing skills in a certain area (e.g. coping with strong emotions, processing grief or social skills).
  - Staff to keep documentation of interactions with families
- *Individual Counseling*
  - Scholar meets with the provider one-on-one to address a particular concern or behavior.
  - Parent classes/sessions.
  - *Referral to a Community Mental Health Agency*
    - Sometimes a referral will be initiated in partnership with the parent/family for outside counseling services or services provided by a contracted therapist.
    - This would occur in instances where the school based mental health services have reached maximum capacity or the scholar's needs exceed what a school based mental health service provider is able to provide.

### How can scholars receive school-based mental health services?

- In order to benefit from these services, scholars must be referred (by staff, parent, or self-referral).
- Parents/legal guardians must also sign for consent for participation in mental health services for scholars; however, providers are permitted to meet with scholars without parental consent up to 3 times and in the case of emergencies (e.g. suicidal ideation or suspicion of abuse).
- Parents and or legal guardians may revoke consent at any time by providing the main office or provider with a written document.

### **Confidentiality & Privacy**

A mental health services provider-scholar relationship must be built on trust and confidentiality. This means that mental health providers are bound by ethical codes to keep conversations between providers and scholars private. Providers maintain the confidentiality of their scholars and their families at all times and will only break confidentiality in the following instances:

- If given specific permission by the scholar;
- Or when scholar may be susceptible to or there is suspicion of:
  - Harming themselves
  - Harm to others
  - Abuse and/or Neglect

Mental health services providers, like all PUENTE Charter School employees, are mandated reporters.

### **Mental Health Agency Partnerships**

The agencies listed below offer mental health services to eligible scholars.

Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health

<https://dmh.lacounty.gov/our-services/children/>

LA County Crisis Line: 800-854-7771

If you would like to learn more about obtaining mental health services through one of the mental health agencies or other above-mentioned options, please reach out to **Brenda Meza at [brenda@puente.org](mailto:brenda@puente.org)**.

### **Who provides Mental Health services at our school?**

Mental services at PUENTE Charter School are provided by Comp Therapy.