



Monday, February 23, 2004 11:15:06 AM

Message

From: ☞ Ken Gaughan
 Subject: Teen Screen
 To: ☞ Gwendolyn Luney
 Cc: ☞ Nelson Luis
 ☞ Pat Smith
 ☞ Liz Valdez

*① Memorandum of agreement
 for implementation of program
 for screening process
 for school staff, K-12
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Dear Mrs. Luney,

Liz Valdez and I met with Cathy Friedman and Justin Doan from FMHI again, on February 19 regarding Teen Screen. The four of us are scheduled to meet with you tomorrow at 3:15 pm in your office. I want to review this last meeting and list some of our concerns.

On February 19, we continued to refine the proposed screening process and reviewed a "draft" of a memorandum of agreement. Guidance Services will play an important role on campus with Teen Screen personnel for students who are considered "at risk", as a result of the screening instrument. This includes notification of the parent/guardian, coordination of services on-site and in the community, follow up with Teen Screen staff, etc. Liz and I believe that there does need to be school staff members on site, trained in confidentiality, who will work with this agency program when they are on campus. As a result, there are some necessary training needs for our district. This training will also extend to select administrative staff and the resource officer.

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FMHI staff want to implement the program at Gaither in the Spring, 2004. They are cautious to add, that they want to coordinate with the administration at the school and be respectful of the student calendar. They estimate that the duration of the program will be 5 or 6 weeks. The Teen Screen instrument is available in Spanish. There are still several confidentiality concerns, including FERPA, HIPPA, and mental health rules and regulations. Liz and I want as much as is appropriate, to make FMHI responsible for any liability issues, without shrinking for our standard practices for students in need. It has been stated often, that the family once notified, may be ultimately responsible. Justin reported some case law he has read.

The proposed Teen Screen team will involve volunteer therapists from the community contracted by FMHI and/or Northside Mental Health: supervised student interns from USF; and licensed or license eligible mental health professionals, some of whom work for agencies. Roles and responsibilities for the Teen Screen team, include screeners, debriefers, therapist, and case managers. The Crisis Center of Tampa Bay, Inc. administration has agreed to provide a telephone "follow up" survey with families of students who were identified with concerns.

Follow up services in the community remain a major concern. FMHI is still working with local mental health services to have agreements for services. We have asked that these

agreements be in writing.

We still need to define the total "continuity of care" for the program. FMHI staff agree, that the program can only be offered when a full agency team is on the campus.

As of this date, I still do not have the names of other school districts to contact, who have implemented Teen Screen. I plan to telephone Columbia University again for this contact information.

We were also advised during our recent meeting, that the editorial board of the "Tampa Tribune" had been contacted by Dean Shearn to write a series of mental health articles, to help with the media campaign for improved mental health services for youngsters. This was a surprise to Liz and me. As a result, we contacted Mark Hart, the principal at Gaither, and you. The first article appeared yesterday.

In short, Liz and I do not believe this pilot program is "ready" for implementation. Our concerns include: confidentiality; the "capacity" in our community for follow up mental services for identified students and their families; the lack of information from other school districts; the lack of written agreements with community mental health providers, "ill defined" levels of "at risk" concerns as a result of the screenings; the lack of a well defined "continuity of care" for this program, despite the time Liz and I have spent with FMHI staff; liability for our school district; etc. There is also a "pressure" element, due to the Governor's visit for mental health month in March and the surprise series of articles being written by a reporter from the "Tampa Tribune", without our involvement.

Cathy and Justin have been willing to work with our concerns. Liz and I recommend, that it is too soon to implement this program at this time.

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