BRIDGE FOR RESILIENT YOUTH IN TRANSITION (BRYT) AND TRANSITION/RETURN TO SCHOOLS PROGRAMS

Massachusetts Independent Living Centers Conference
Introductions
## Agenda

**Context and overview of BRYT**

The BRYT Model

BRYT Evaluation Data

Starting up a BRYT/Return-to-School Program

Wrap-up and Next Steps
Brenda, a 10th grader, has struggled with depression and anxiety since middle school but has generally been able to function fairly well in school. However, she recently lost her mother, with whom she was very close, to an allergic reaction to a bee sting. Brenda subsequently attempted suicide and was hospitalized. She is now coming back to school after missing 12 days of class.

Talk with your partner about the following questions:

1. In order for Brenda to be successful (from both an academic and a social-emotional standpoint) in returning to school, what supports are she and her family likely to need?

2. In the school[s] you know most about, what would be her likely experience, and how does that experience compare to the supports you just described?
Secondary students need support after missing extensive amounts of school/class due to a variety of causes.

Number vary, but of every 100 students in a given year, absences might result from:

- psychiatric and/or medical crises (4 to 5 students)
- untreated mental health challenges (4 to 5 students)
- long-term suspension (1 or 2 students)
- parenting leave (1 student)
- life circumstances (1 student)
Public schools have become the de facto safety net provider for students with mental health and medical disorders.

- Lack of Hospital Care
- Lack of Aftercare Resources
- Inadequate Insurance Coverage
- Lack of Outpatient Mental Health Treatment
- Limitations of Special Education Funding
- DCF Policies
- Fragmented Service Systems

Public Secondary Schools
## Agenda

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Planning and support extends from return to school/class to the student’s transition out of the program (typically 8-12 weeks) and involves continuous engagement with the student, family, school staff, and outside providers.
The “3 S’s” of BRYT

S
pace

S
ervices

S
stuffing

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Space: BRYT programs are located in a dedicated classroom in the school

- Fully accessible - near an exit
- Open during full school day
- Both work space and informal seating
- Private meeting space
Services

The customized case plan for each student addresses:

- Academic Support
- Clinical Support
- Family Support
- Care Coordination
Staffing

Typically comprised of:
- **Program Leader/Clinician** (Social Worker/Counselor/Psychologist)
- **Academic Coordinator** (Teacher or Classroom Aide/Tutor)

Different schools use different staffing patterns.
Length of Program Enrollment
(median stay- 10 weeks)

- 4 Weeks or Less: 19%
- 5-8 Weeks: 25%
- 9-12 Weeks: 20%
- 13-16 Weeks: 13%
- 17-20 Weeks: 7%
- 21-24 Weeks: 5%
- More than 24 Weeks: 12%
As a student progresses through BRYT, the amount of time spent in the regular classroom increases.
BRYT embraces the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) framework

**Tier I**
- All students
- Core: What all students need and receive in order to be successful

**Tier II**
- ~15-20%
- Supplemental Supports (Core + More): What some students need and receive in order to be successful

**Tier III**
- ~5-10%
- Intensive Supports (Core + More + More): What a few seriously struggling students need

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**BRYT** embraces the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) framework.
Too often mental health supports are not fully integrated into a school’s MTSS map.
We propose a comprehensive and integrated multi-tiered system of supports

**TIER 3 = INTENSIVE**
Academic, SEL & Mental Health supports

**TIER 2 = SUPPLEMENTAL**
Academic, SEL & Mental Health supports

**TIER 1 = CORE**
Academic, SEL & Mental Health supports

SEL (SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING)
Algonquin program aids students returning from illness, injury

By Jim Haddadin/Daily News Staff

NORTHBOROUGH — Algonquin Regional High School will expand a new program that supports students returning from a prolonged absence, whether as the result of a physical injury or a mental health crisis.

https://drive.google.com/open?id=OB0F2m8tpmUC_dE9rSEI4cS1hN2s
Agenda

- Context and overview of BRYT
- The BRYT Model
- BRYT Evaluation Data
- Starting up a BRYT/Return-to-School Program
- Wrap-up and Next Steps

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Data gathered on 375 students in eight schools with transition programs modeled on BRYT

Study includes demographic and clinical characteristics, length of stay, and student outcomes

Journal article with formal findings currently under review

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Presenting Problems among Students in Transition Programs in BRYT Evaluation Study

- Mood disorder: 55%
- Anxiety disorder: 39%
- Concussion: 17%
- Other medical disorder: 10%
- Substance abuse: 7%
- Eating disorder: 6%
- Other psychiatric disorder: 4%
- Autism spectrum disorder: 3%
- Infectious disease: 2%
- Psychotic disorder: 1%
- Cancer: 1%

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Average School Attendance Rates, Before and After Program Admittance

Return to School

Week 6  Week 5  Week 4  Week 3  Week 2  Week 1  Week 1  Week 2  Week 3  Week 4  Week 5  Week 6
Changes in Well-Being Over Time

CAFAS Scores Among Participants with a Mental Health Diagnosis

Lower scores indicate better functioning; all differences are statistically significant.
85% of participants graduate or are on-track to graduate by the end of the year.
Discussion

How could BRYT and Bridge programs best collaborate with ILCs around mental health, transition to adulthood, and any other common issues?
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There are multiple paths to staffing a program.

A champion takes ownership and advocates for the program.

- District funding allocation
- Re-organization of existing resources
- Program start-up without new funds
- Staffing funded by school/district
- Program started up with external (grant) funds
- Resource development
How BRYT works with schools around start-up:

1. Initial contact and possibly a phone conversation
2. BRYT visits a school/district
3. Arrangement of visits to existing transition programs
4. Year zero data collection
5. Program planning using “backwards planning” model and tools
6. Invitation to participate in the transition program network’s monthly meetings
7. Option for more formal technical assistance during program start-up
BRYT offers three kinds of support to schools during the planning phase

- Mapping pre-existing tiered supports
- “Year Zero” data collection
- Developing plans for the four service areas
BRYT supports programs after start-up

Technical Assistance
- Intensity of support determined by school
- Grounded in program self-assessment rubric
- Can focus on family engagement, clinical support, academic coordination and/or care coordination

Data-gathering & reporting
- Tools and support including BRYT Portal (FERPA- and HIPPA-compliant student-level database)

Robust professional development
- Monthly professional development meetings
- Annual conference

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What ended in 1896?

1895
Thank you!

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