

MENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES

Monthly Newsletter

NEWS FROM PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES

National School Psychology Week (NSPW)

November 11-15th

This week celebrates the contributions of school psychologists and the important role they play in schools and communities. NSPW is an annual opportunity to recognize school psychologists' work to help children thrive in school, at home, and in life. This year's theme, "Spark Discovery," recognizes the work that school psychologists do to help their communities seek out new ideas, effect change, and expand horizons for children and youth.

- [National Association of School Psychology: National School Psychology Week](#)
- [Who Are School Psychologists](#)
- [School Psychology in North Carolina](#)
- [5 Things Your School Psych Can Do Printable](#)
- [10 Reasons to be a School Psychologist](#)



Celebrate **#SchoolPsychWeek** on social media by highlighting the dedicated school psychologists supporting our students as they learn and grow!



Congratulations to GCS Lead School Psychologist
Dr. Jackie Tennant
 who has been recognized with the 2024 North Carolina School Psychology Association's **Practitioner of the Year** Award!



This award is given to recognize and exemplify the high level of professional standards and excellent quality of school psychological services that Jackie provides in her daily practice.

Thank you for all you do for our students, staff, and families!



WHAT CAN YOUR SCHOOL PSYCH DO?

Kids and school psychologists work together to achieve great things. Here are a few things the school psych will focus on to achieve successful outcomes.

EVALUATION

- Assess cognitive, academic, behavior, social, emotional, and adaptive **SKILLS IN STUDENTS** to understand diverse learning needs

CONSULTATION/COLLABORATION

- Work with **TEACHERS, PARENTS, AND ADMINISTRATORS** to help create solutions to learning and behavior concerns
- Assist **FAMILIES** in navigating the special education process
- Collaborate with **COMMUNITY PROVIDERS** to coordinate needed services for students and families
- Help families connect with **OUTSIDE AGENCIES** (medical or mental health)

INTERVENTION

- Provide individual or group **COUNSELING** for students
- Help students, families, and the school community **MANAGE CRISES**
- Help develop **BEHAVIOR PLANS** for students

SYSTEMS-LEVEL CHANGE

- Evaluate the **EFFECTIVENESS** of academic and behavioral interventions
- Use evidence-based research to recommend appropriate **INTERVENTIONS**
- Work with district administrators to improve school-wide **PRACTICES AND POLICIES**

PREVENTION

- Promote an appreciation of student **DIVERSITY** within schools/districts
- Develop programs to foster **ACADEMIC AND SOCIAL GROWTH** in students
- Provide whole class lessons for students and teachers focused on **CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT AND BEHAVIORS** to promote learning



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PRISM PROJECT GRANT UPDATES

The PRISM Project recently submitted their interim progress report last month. This report is one of two reports that are submitted to the US Department of Education annually. The purpose of this report is to outline our project's progress toward meeting our approved project objectives.

The PRISM project's goals include the following:

- Increase the number of school-based mental health (SBMH) services providers in Guilford County Schools and retain those providers
- Improve the ratio of students to SBMH services providers
- Reduce the attrition rate of SBMH providers, including specialized instructional support personnel (SISP) such as school psychologists, school social workers, and school counselors
- Increase the number of direct SBMH services provided to students
- Increase the diversity of school-based mental health providers to reflect the cultural, ethnic, and linguistic diversity of our students

Some successes and highlights of the PRISM Project to date:

- Developed a district-wide referral process and paperwork for SBMH services
- Provided school-based mental health services to 1,142 unique students during the 2023-2024 school year, not counting SBMH support provided internally by specialized instructional support personnel
- Provided over 9,000 counseling sessions to students during the 2023-2024 school year
- Hired 13 licensed school-based mental health providers (mental health clinicians)
- Retained 4 of 5 school psychology interns, offering them full time school psychologist positions for the 2024-2025 school year
- Recruited 8 new school psychology interns and 1 school-based mental health intern for the 2024-2025 school year
- During the 2023-2024 school year, \$34,764.18 in re-specialization funding was approved for GCS specialized instructional support personnel, including school counselors, school social workers, school psychologists, and licensed mental health staff.

**Shout out to all our incredible GCS staff
who make these crucial services available
for our students!**

**We appreciate
all that you do**

For more information, visit our GCS School-Based Mental Health webpage at <https://www.gcsnc.com/Page/88574>

SAMHSA TISS GRANT UPDATES

The SAMHSA TISS grant aims to improve access and outcomes for students, regarding mental health. Through the implementation of screeners, coordinated referrals, treatment and care coordination services, GCS and Kellin Foundation have partnered together to improve access to mental health supports. By partnering with Kellin and NCCJ to provide training for staff, families and students, GCS aims to reduce the stigma associated with mental health and improve outcomes for students.

Six SAMHSA Pilot Schools (Falkener, Hairston, Dudley, Northwood, Ferndale, and High Point Central) receive the following supports through the grant:

- Trauma-certified clinicians from Kellin Foundation provide onsite services one day a week, with additional clinic hours on other days
- Staff training in Trauma-informed Practices, facilitated by the experts at Kellin Foundation
- Family engagement workshops on student wellness topics, facilitated by the experts at Kellin Foundation
- Student Wellness Leadership (SWELL) cohorts, facilitated by NCCJ

The SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration) TISS (Trauma-Informed Support Services) Project is thrilled to share some exciting updates. Olha Taras has been hired as a Research Analyst on the SAMHSA TISS grant. She has a Master of Science degree in Educational Research Methods from UNC Greensboro, and a Specialist of Education degree from Ukraine. Olha previously worked in the Local Assessment Department for GCS, and she has a background in project coordination in the private sector. We are thrilled to welcome her to the team!

If you have any questions about the SAMHSA TISS grant, please reach out to Jessica Bohn, Director of the SAMHSA TISS Project, at bohnj@gcsnc.com or 336-894-8061.



Each month a mental health condition that may impact students in our schools will be highlighted. Check out this month's edition on **Seasonal Affective Disorder**.

Interested in developing or refining your school-wide positive behavior support system?

Enroll in the 'Establishing a School-Wide Positive Behavior Support System' Canvas course for step-by-step guidance on developing school-wide expectations, matrices, lesson plans for teaching expectations to students, and formal acknowledgement systems along with establishing practices to respond to student behavior.