Pediatric mental health in primary care:

Bridging the gap between the PCP office and first touch point with mental health provider through brief intervention tools

Elizabeth Burton, MD
Ciara Amstutz, DO PGY-2
Morgan Dodson, MD PGY-2
Sam Mansberger-Duchesne, DO PGY-2
Prisma Health- Upstate Pediatrics

South Carolina Chapter
INCORPORATED IN SOUTH CAROLINA
American Academy of Pediatrics
DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™

PRISMA HEALTH
Children's Hospital

Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this presentation, learners will be able to:

- Review the burden of mental health needs in the adolescent population in South Carolina
- Become familiar with brief intervention tools that can be utilized in pediatric clinic for adolescent patients with anxiety/depression.
- Review resources available to public that can be utilized in emergencies, such as crisis hotline and YAP-P.

PRISMA HEALTH Children's Hospital

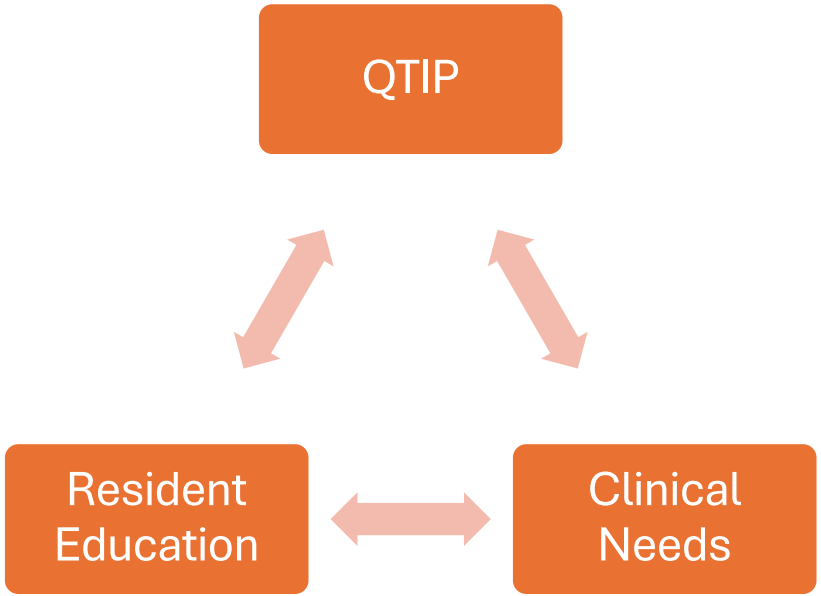
South Carolina Chapter
INCORPORATED IN SOUTH CAROLINA
American Academy of Pediatrics
DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™

Resident Project Integration

PGY-1
- Advocacy Curriculum & Project

PGY-2
- Quality Improvement Project

PGY-3
- Project culmination and/or group transition



Why this topic?

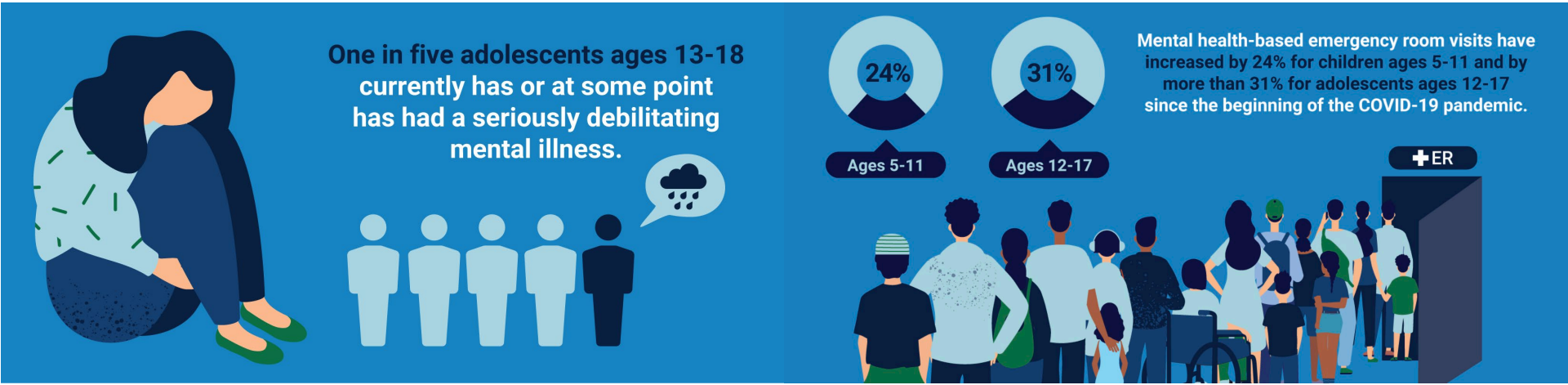
PCP Screening… but then what?

- Wait-lists for counselors
- Not suicidal but hurting
- Normalizing mental health
- Empowering parents and children to take ownership of health

Vision

A practical application approach to providing brief interventions that can help patients build coping skills in the primary care setting

Target Population



- Adolescents in the upstate

Baseline Data/Literature Review

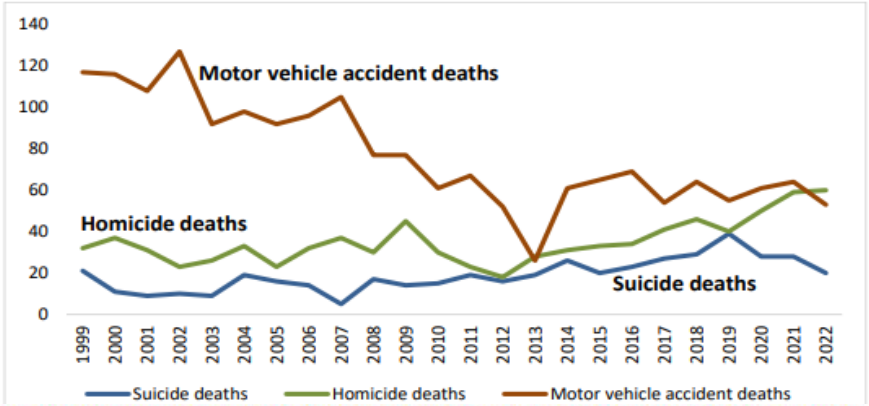
PRISMA HEALTH
Children's Hospital

Pediatric mental health staggering statistics…

- In 2021, more than 4 in 10 (42%) students felt persistently sad or hopeless and nearly one-third (29%) experienced poor mental health.
- In 2021, more than 1 in 5 (22%) students seriously considered attempting suicide and 1 in 10 (10%) attempted suicide.

Mental Health | DASH | CDC

S.C. SUICIDE DEATHS, HOMICIDE DEATHS, AND MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENT DEATHS AMONG CHILDREN BY YEAR (1999-2022)



S.C. MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES PROVIDED BY DMH TO CHILDREN: COMPARING 2022 TO 2021, 2020, AND 2019 DATA

	2019	2020	2021	2022	Compared 2022 to 2021	Compared 2022 to 2020	Compared 2022 to 2019
Number of mental health **services** provided to children by DMH	358,295	397,284	359,424	325,560	-33,864 (-9%)	-71,724 (-18%)	-32,735 (-9%)
Number of **children** received mental health services provided by DMH	32,649	30,725	31,787	31,234	-553 (-2%)	+509 (+2%)	-1,415 (-4%)

By the numbers...

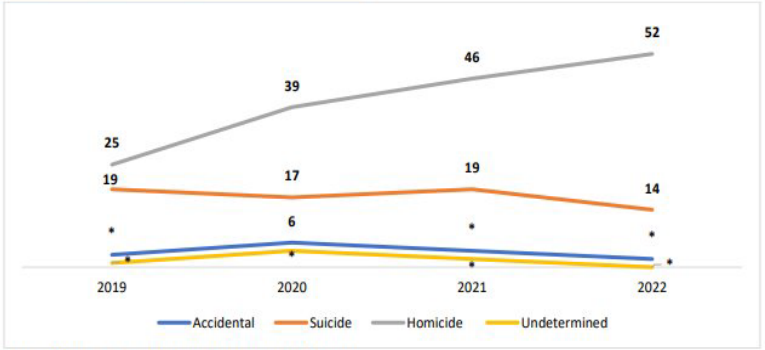
S.C. CHILD GUN DEATHS

68 children died by guns in 2022, **3** deaths or **4%** *decrease* from 2021.

- **52** or **76%** were homicides.
- **14** or **21%** were suicides.

Note. 2022 data are provisional and subject to change.

S.C. CHILD GUN DEATHS BY YEAR AND INTENT



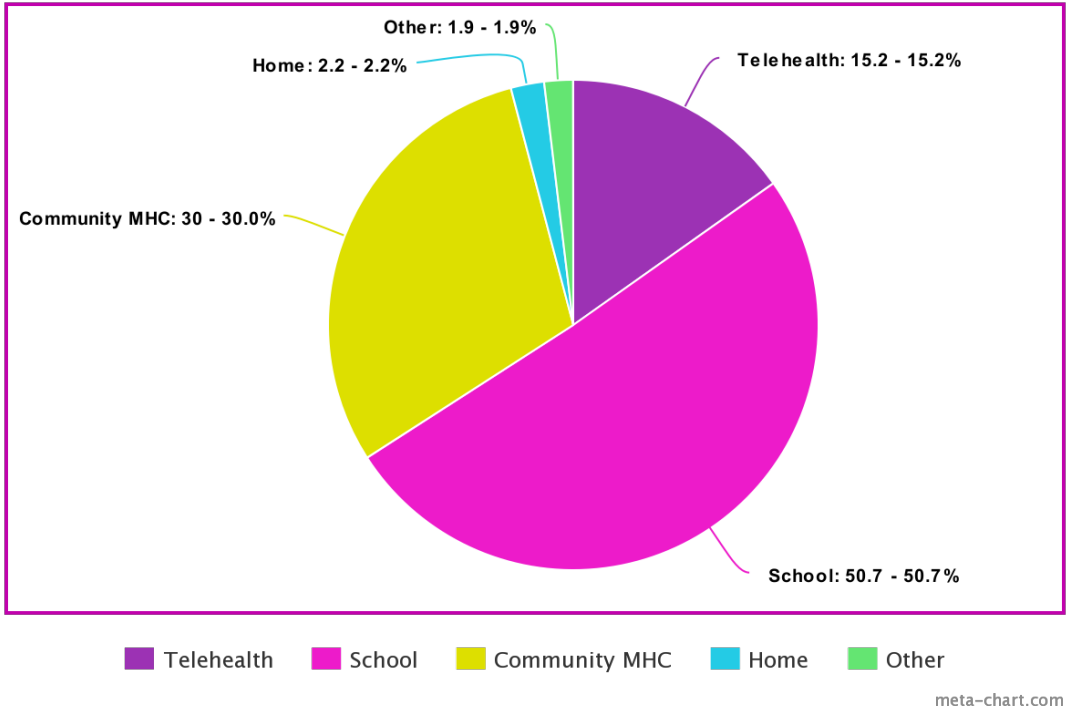
Note. 2022 data are provisional and subject to change.

*<5

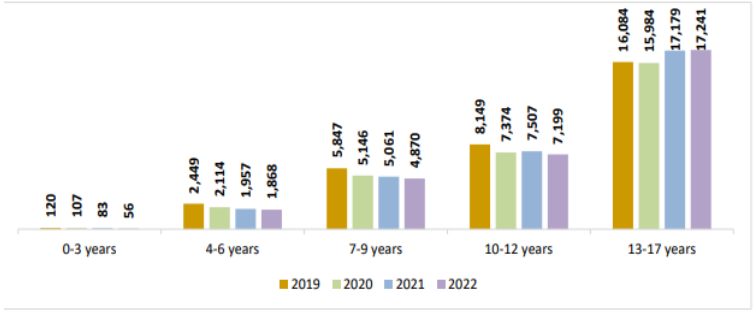
COMPARED TO NATIONAL DATA (2021)

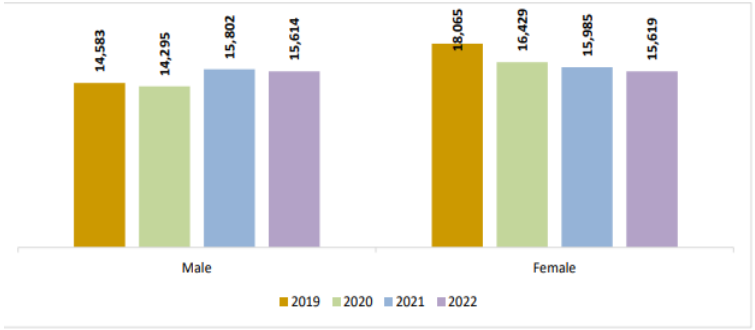
S.C. child gun death rate (Ages 0-17): **6.4 per 100,000 children** > National rate: **3.5 per 100,000 children**

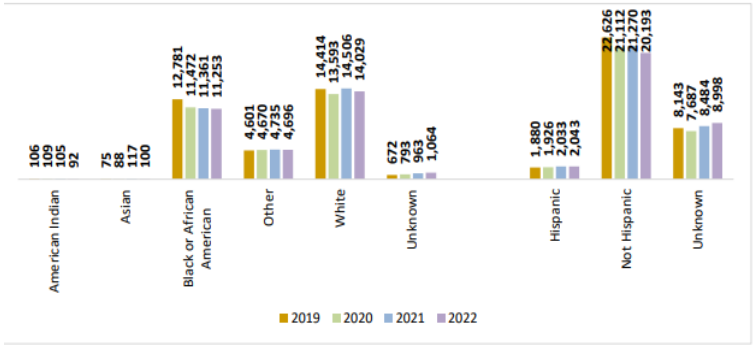
Location of Mental Health Services Received in 2022



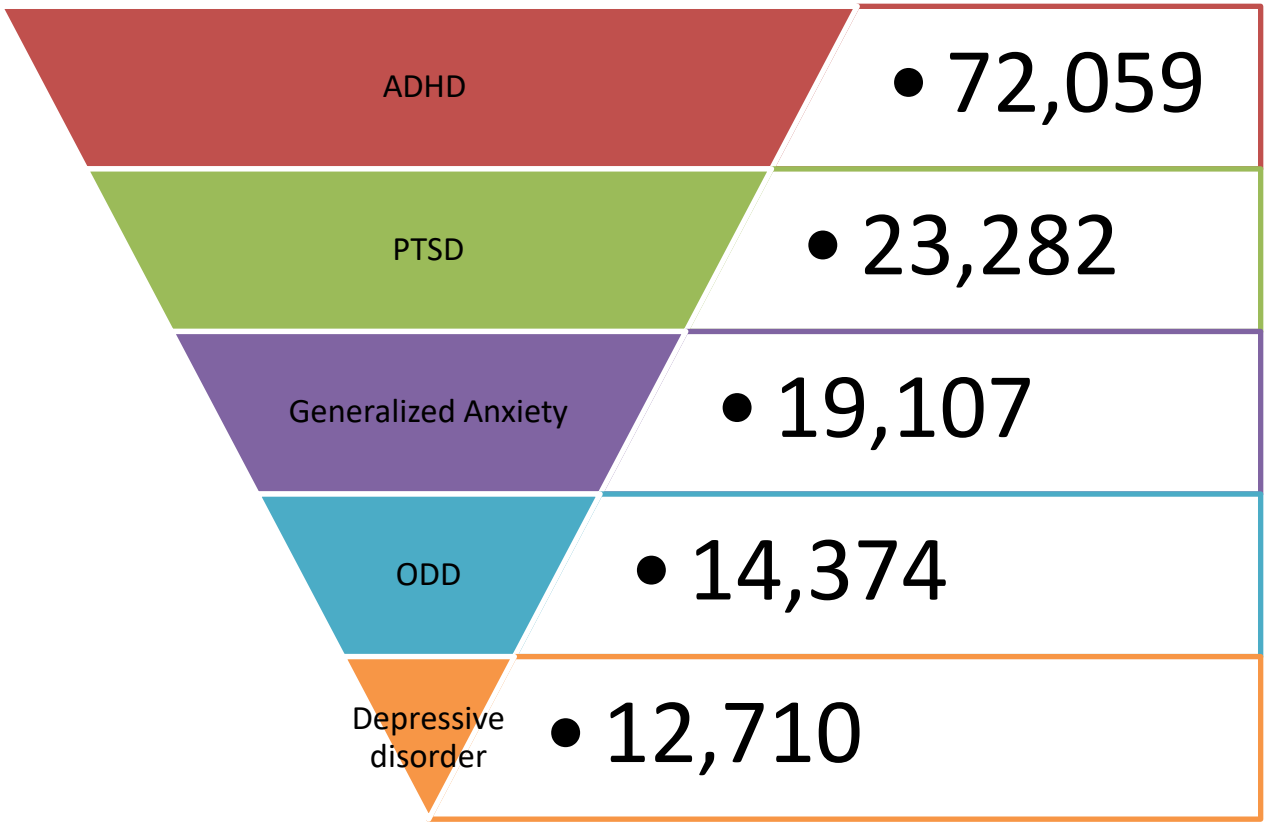
SC children receiving mental health services by age, gender, race







Top 5 mental health diagnoses among SC children



Resources

Greenville County School-based mental health services

CPM Social Work and Case Management

CPM Clinicians

CPM QTIP Program

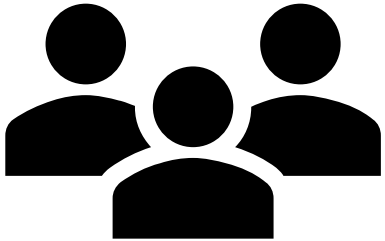
SC Office of Rural Health

SMARTIE Objectives

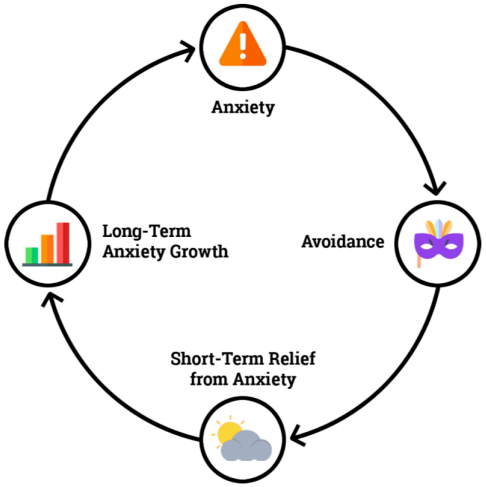
PRISMA HEALTH
Children's Hospital

SMARTIE Objective 1

- ✓ Partner with CPM Social Work/Case Management Team to identify the resources available at CPM for anxiety/depression including, if any brief intervention tools.



The Cycle of Anxiety



Anxiety
An anxiety-producing situation leads to uncomfortable symptoms such as worry, fear, a racing heart, sweating, or a feeling of being overwhelmed.

Avoidance
Uncomfortable symptoms are controlled by avoiding the anxiety-producing situation. Examples of avoidance include:

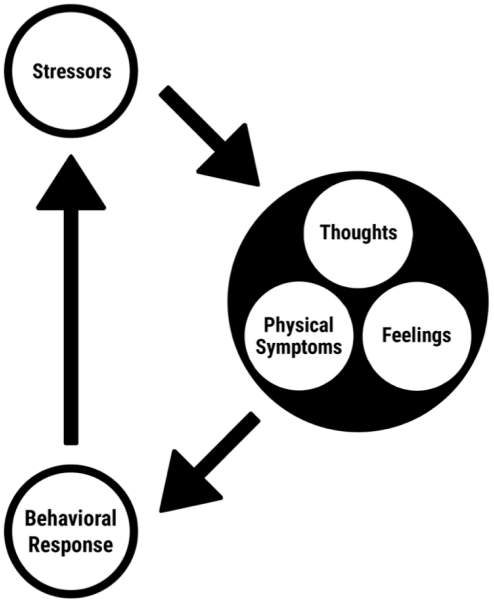
- Skipping class to avoid giving a presentation
- Using drugs or alcohol to numb feelings
- Procrastinating on challenging tasks

Short-Term Relief from Anxiety
Avoidance of the anxiety-producing situation gives an immediate sense of relief. The symptoms of anxiety lessen, but only temporarily.

Long-Term Anxiety Growth
The fear that initially led to avoidance worsens, and the brain learns that when the anxiety-producing situation is avoided, the symptoms go away. As a result, the symptoms of anxiety will be worse the next time, and avoidance is more likely.

PRISMA HEALTH
Children's Hospital

The Cycle of Depression



Stressors
A stressor is any situation that causes strain or hardship. These may be short-term or long-term.

Thoughts
Stressors often lead to negative thoughts, which may be irrational, or exaggerated.

- "I need to be *perfect*."
- "Nobody likes me."
- "I'm not good at anything."

Feelings
The way a person thinks about something has a major impact on how they will feel, and vice versa.

- sadness
- hopelessness
- anger
- loneliness

Physical Symptoms
The body responds to stressors, and negative thoughts and feelings, with physical symptoms.

- fatigue
- poor concentration
- sleep problems
- loss of motivation

Behavioral Response
The way a person acts in response to thoughts, feelings, and symptoms may worsen stressors, or create new stressors.

- social isolation
- abusing drugs / alcohol
- neglecting daily tasks

Coping Skills

Anxiety

Deep Breathing

Deep breathing is a simple technique that's excellent for managing emotions. Not only is deep breathing effective, it's also discreet and easy to use at any time or place.

Sit comfortably and place one hand on your abdomen. Breathe in through your nose, deeply enough that the hand on your abdomen rises. Hold the air in your lungs, and then exhale slowly through your mouth, with your lips puckered as if you are blowing through a straw. The secret is to go slow: Time the inhalation (4s), pause (4s), and exhalation (6s). Practice for 3 to 5 minutes.

Progressive Muscle Relaxation

By tensing and relaxing the muscles throughout your body, you can achieve a powerful feeling of relaxation. Additionally, progressive muscle relaxation will help you spot anxiety by teaching you to recognize feelings of muscle tension.

Sit back or lie down in a comfortable position. For each area of the body listed below, you will tense your muscles tightly, but not to the point of strain. Hold the tension for 10 seconds, and pay close attention to how it feels. Then, release the tension, and notice how the feeling of relaxation differs from the feeling of tension.

Feet	Curl your toes tightly into your feet, then release them.
Calves	Point or flex your feet, then let them relax.
Thighs	Squeeze your thighs together tightly, then let them relax.
Torso	Suck in your abdomen, then release the tension and let it fall.
Back	Squeeze your shoulder blades together, then release them.
Shoulders	Lift and squeeze your shoulders toward your ears, then let them drop.
Arms	Make fists and squeeze them toward your shoulders, then let them drop.
Hands	Make a fist by curling your fingers into your palm, then relax your fingers.
Face	Scrunch your facial features to the center of your face, then relax.
Full Body	Squeeze all muscles together, then release all tension.

Challenging Irrational Thoughts

Anxiety can be magnified by irrational thoughts. For example, the thoughts that "something bad will happen" or "I will make a mistake" might lack evidence, but still have an impact on how you feel. By examining the evidence and challenging these thoughts, you can reduce anxiety.

Put thoughts on trial. Choose a thought that has contributed to your anxiety. Gather evidence in support of your thought (*verifiable facts only*), and against your thought. Compare the evidence and determine whether your thought is accurate or not.

Use Socratic questioning. Question the thoughts that contribute to your anxiety. Ask yourself:

"Is my thought based on facts or feelings?"
"How would my best friend see this situation?"
"How likely is it that my fear will come true?"
"What's *most likely* to happen?"
"If my fear comes true, will it still matter in a week? A month? A year?"

Imagery

Your thoughts have the power to change how you feel. If you think of something sad, it's likely you'll start to feel sad. The opposite is also true: When you think of something positive and calming, you feel relaxed. The imagery technique harnesses this power to reduce anxiety.

Think of a place that you find comforting. It could be a secluded beach, your bedroom, a quiet mountaintop, or even a loud concert. For 5 to 10 minutes, use all your senses to imagine this setting in great detail. Don't just think fleetingly about this place–really imagine it.

- What do you see around you? What do you notice in the distance? Look all around to take in all your surroundings. Look for small details you would usually miss.
- What sounds can you hear? Are they soft or loud? Listen closely to everything around you. Keep listening to see if you notice any distant sounds.
- Are you eating or drinking something enjoyable? What is the flavor like? How does it taste? Savor all the tastes of the food or drink.
- What can you feel? What is the temperature like? Think of how the air feels on your skin, and how your clothes feel on your body. Soak in all these sensations.
- What scents are present? Are they strong or faint? What does the air smell like? Take some time to appreciate the scents.

Coping Skills

Depression

Behavioral Activation

Depression saps a person's energy to do just about anything—even activities they enjoy. As a result, people with depression tend to become less active, which causes the depression to worsen. However, even a little bit of activity can help stop this cycle.

1. Choose activities you are likely to complete.

exercise	walk, go for a bike ride, weightlift, follow an exercise video, swim, practice yoga
socialize	call or text a friend, organize a group dinner, visit family, join a club / group
responsibilities	cleaning / housework, pay bills, professional development, homework
hobbies	sports, gardening, drawing, playing music, hiking, playing with a pet, cooking
personal care	dress up, get a haircut, prepare a healthy meal, tend to spiritual needs

2. Practice your chosen activities. Use the following tips to improve consistency.

start small	If needed, break activities into smaller pieces. Some activity is better than none.
make a plan	Set an alarm as a reminder, or tie an activity to something you already do. For example, practice a hobby immediately after dinner every day.
bring a friend	Including a friend will increase your commitment and make things more fun.

Social Support

Social isolation is a common symptom of depression. Related issues—such as fatigue, lowered self-esteem, and anxiety—exacerbate this problem. Resisting social isolation, and instead leaning on social support, can improve resilience to stress and depression.

- **Lean on your existing relationships.** Make it a priority to socialize with friends or family every day. If this is proving difficult, or if no one is nearby, plan times to interact remotely. Try cooking together on a video call, playing a game together, or sharing a coffee over the phone.
- **Say "yes" to socializing.** Depression makes it tempting to stay home, isolated from friends and family. Make a habit of saying "yes" to social opportunities, even when you're tempted to stay in.
- **Join a support group.** Support groups let you connect with others who are dealing with issues similar to yours. You'll benefit from sharing and receiving advice and support.

Three Good Things

Negative thinking is a defining feature of depression. Positive experiences are minimized, while negative experiences are magnified. Gratitude helps combat this tendency by shifting focus toward *positive* experiences, rather than negative ones.

1. Write about three positive experiences from your day. These experiences can be small ("The weather was perfect when I walked to work") or big ("I got a promotion at work").
2. Choose one of the following questions to answer about each of the three good things:
   - Why did this happen?
   - Why was this good thing meaningful?
   - How can I experience more of this good thing?
3. Repeat this exercise every day for 1 week.

Mindfulness

Mindfulness means paying attention to the present moment. It means taking a step back and noticing the world, and one's thoughts and feelings, without judgment. The goal of mindfulness is to simply *observe*. Mindfulness helps reduce the rumination and worry that often accompany depression.

One way to practice mindfulness is through meditation. During mindfulness meditation, you will simply sit and focus your attention on the sensation of breathing. By focusing on your breathing, you will put yourself in the here-and-now.

Time and Place
Find a quiet, comfortable place where you can practice mindfulness for 15 to 30 minutes every day. Frequent and consistent practice leads to the best results, but some practice is better than none.

Posture
Sit in a chair or lie down in a comfortable position. Close your eyes or let your gaze soften. Let your head, shoulders, arms, and legs relax. Adjust your posture whenever you feel uncomfortable.

Awareness of Breath
Focus on your breathing. Notice the sensation of the air as it travels in through your nose and out through your mouth. Notice the gentle rise and fall of your belly.

Wandering Mind
During meditation, it's normal for the mind to wander. When this happens, gently turn your attention back to your breathing. You may need to do this frequently throughout your practice.

© 2020 Therapist Aid LLC

Provided by **TherapistAid.com**

Mindfulness Exercises

Mindfulness Meditation

Find a place where you can sit quietly and undisturbed for a few moments. To begin, you might want to set a timer for about 10 minutes, but after some experience you should not be too concerned about the length of time you spend meditating.

Begin by bringing your attention to the present moment by noticing your breathing. Pay attention to your breath as it enters and then leaves your body. Before long, your mind will begin to wander, pulling you out of the present moment. That's ok. Notice your thoughts and feelings as if you are an outside observer watching what's happening in your brain. Take note, and allow yourself to return to your breathing.

Sometimes you might feel frustrated or bored. That's fine--these are just a few more feelings to notice. Your mind might start to plan an upcoming weekend, or worry about a responsibility. Notice where your thoughts are going, and accept what's happening.

Whenever you are able to, return your concentration to your breathing. Continue this process until your timer rings, or until you are ready to be done.

Body Scan

During the body scan exercise you will pay close attention to physical sensations throughout your body. The goal isn't to change or relax your body, but instead to notice and become more aware of it. Don't worry too much about how long you practice, but do move slowly.

Begin by paying attention to the sensations in your feet. Notice any sensations such as warmth, coolness, pressure, pain, or a breeze moving over your skin. Slowly move up your body--to your calves, thighs, pelvis, stomach, chest, back, shoulders, arms, hands, fingers, neck, and finally your head. Spend some time on each of these body parts, just noticing the sensations.

After you travel up your body, begin to move back down, through each body part, until you reach your feet again. Remember: move slowly, and just pay attention.

Five Senses

Use this exercise to quickly ground yourself in the present when you only have a moment. The goal is to notice something that you are currently experiencing through each of your senses.

What are 5 things you can see? Look around you and notice 5 things you hadn't noticed before. Maybe a pattern on a wall, light reflecting from a surface, or a knick-knack in the corner of a room.

What are 4 things you can feel? Maybe you can feel the pressure of your feet on the floor, your shirt resting on your shoulders, or the temperature on your skin. Pick up an object and notice its texture.

What are 3 things you can hear? Notice all the background sounds you had been filtering out, such as an air-conditioning, birds chirping, or cars on a distant street.

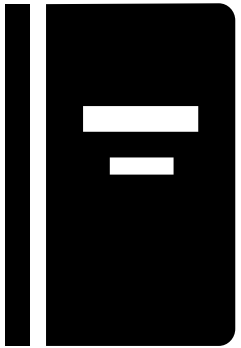
What are 2 things you can smell? Maybe you can smell flowers, coffee, or freshly cut grass. It doesn't have to be a nice smell either: maybe there's an overflowing trash can or sewer.

What is 1 thing you can taste? Pop a piece of gum in your mouth, sip a drink, eat a snack if you have one, or simply notice how your mouth tastes. "Taste" the air to see how it feels on your tongue.

The numbers for each sense are only a guideline. Feel free to do more or less of each. Also, try this exercise while doing an activity like washing dishes, listening to music, or going for a walk.

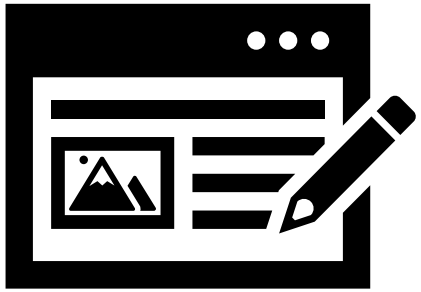
SMARTIE Objective 2

- ✓ By June create a physical folder with brief intervention tools for anxiety and depression to provide to adolescents in both English and Spanish that can be used at all 3 CPM locations.



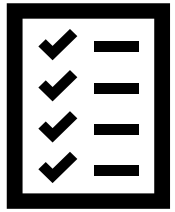
SMARTIE Objective 3

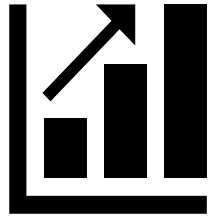
- By May develop an Epic dot phrase that includes brief intervention tools for anxiety and depression to provide to adolescents/older children in both English and Spanish that can be used at all 3 CPM locations.



Next Steps

- QI goals
  - Education of providers how to incorporate brief intervention into practice
  - Assess comfort of providers discussing brief interventions
  - Measure handouts utilized at all 3 CPM locations
  - Develop Mental Health Visit Guide





Special Thank You

Dr. Burton

Dr. Amati

Nate Duchesne, LPC

Q & A

Elizabeth Burton, MD
Ciara Amstutz, DO PGY-2
Morgan Dodson, MD PGY-2
Sam Mansberger-Duchesne, DO PGY-2
Prisma Health- Upstate Pediatrics

THANK YOU!

South Carolina Chapter
INCORPORATED IN SOUTH CAROLINA
American Academy of Pediatrics
DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™

PRISMA HEALTH
Children's Hospital

References

- Racine, N., McArthur, B. A., Cooke, J. E., Eirich, R., Zhu, J., & Madigan, S. (2021). Global prevalence of depressive and anxiety symptoms in children and adolescents during COVID-19: A meta-analysis. *JAMA Pediatrics, 175*(11), 1142-10. https://10.1001/jamapediatrics.2021.2482
- Radhakrishnan, L., Leeb, R. T., Bitsko, R. H., Carey, K., Gates, A., Holland, K. M., Hartnett, K. P., Kite-Powell, A., DeVies, J., Smith, A. R., van Santen, K. L., Crossen, S., Sheppard, M., Wotiz, S., Lane, R. I., Njai, R., Johnson, A. G., Winn, A., Kirking, H. L., . . . Anderson, K. N. (2022). Pediatric emergency department visits associated with mental health conditions before and during the COVID-19 pandemic — united states, january 2019–January 2022. *MMWR. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, 71*(8), 319-324. https://10.15585/mmwr.mm7108e2
- Schoenfelder Gonzalez, E., Jungbluth, N., McCarty, C. A., & Hilt, R. (2022). Barriers to increasing access to brief pediatric mental health treatment from primary care. *Psychiatric Services (Washington, D.C.), 73*(2), 235-238. https://10.1176/appi.ps.202000457
- Szigethy, E., Wolfson, D., Sinclair-McBride, K., Williams, K., Jhe, G., Lee, E. H., Bialostozky, M., Wallace, M., Bhatnagar, S., Demaso, D., Yealy, D. M., & Hollenbach, K. (2023). Efficacy of a digital mental health intervention embedded in routine care compared with treatment as usual in adolescents and young adults with moderate depressive symptoms: Protocol for randomised controlled trial. *BMJ Open, 13*(3), e067141. https://10.1136/bmjopen-2022-067141

PRISMA HEALTH
Children's Hospital

PrismaHealth.org