Behavioral Health Infrastructure Development for Enhanced Communication and Collaboration in Care Teams

Didactic Presentation:
Jeremiah D. Simmons, PhD (Navajo/Yankton Sioux)
Post-Doctoral Fellow
Stanford Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences
Center for Youth Mental Health & Wellbeing
Jeremiah Simmons, PhD

Jeremiah D. Simmons, PhD (Yankton Sioux/Navajo) is a Psychologist by training and a Post-Doctoral Fellow in the Department of Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences in the School of Medicine at Stanford University.

He currently provides direct clinical services to the AIAN student population at the Vaden Student Health Center. He helps coordinate the Stanford Native Youth Mental Health ECHO Project, as well as providing consultation, training, and grant support to CA tribal and state partners through the Center for Youth Mental Health & Wellbeing.

While he was raised on the Mescalero Apache Indian Reservation, his family originates from the Dakota and Navajo tribes.
Learning Objectives

• Define the key components of behavioral health infrastructure in the context of enhanced communication and collaboration within care teams, schools, and Native youth and families.

• Recognize the role of complementary grants, such as service delivery grants, infrastructure building grants, capacity building grants, and school climate transformation grants, in supporting and enhancing the impact of Project Aware in building capacity and services.

• Identify the benefits and outcomes associated with the implementation of a Project Aware grant, specifically focusing on building mental health and wellness infrastructure to improve communication and collaboration within care teams, schools, and Native youth and families.
Mental/Behavioral Health Infrastructure Building

Equifinality
- different actions lead to same outcome

Multifinality
- same action leads to different outcomes

Efforts to address Suicide

Efforts to address Substance Use

Efforts to address SMI/SED

- Working in silos
- No data sharing
- Lack of communication
- Lack of coordinated care
- Lack of referral network
- No BH/MH infrastructure
- Lack of BH/MH protocols
- Lack of leadership
- Lack of political will
- Turf issues - "duplication of services"

- Circle of Care
- Systems of Care
- Project AWARE
- Native Connections
- School Climate Grant

Lessons learned to inform coordinated planning/approaches

- Shared vision
- Outcome/resource mapping
- Stronger sense of integrated services
- Partnership Building
- Trust
- MOUs/Data Sharing Agreements
- Providers are more aware of community resources
- Reduced professional isolation
- Stronger focus on sustainability
Components of Behavioral Health Infrastructure: Communication & Collaboration Within Care Teams, Schools, & Native Youth & Families

• Integrated Care Teams
• Communication Protocols
• Culturally Safe Practices
• Site-Based Services and Support
• Capacity Building
• Monitoring and Referral Systems
• Community Engagement and Partnerships
Grants For Integration & Synergy Building

• Garrett Lee Smith (GLS) Suicide Prevention Grant Program: Service Delivery
  — These grants can complement Project Aware by providing resources and support for mental health services, crisis intervention, and suicide prevention initiatives in schools serving Native American youth.

• Circles of Care (COC): Infrastructure
  — Develop local capacity and infrastructure to assist tribal communities in obtaining funding and resources to implement a system of care model to improve the mental health and wellness of their children, youth, and families.

• Systems of Care Grant (SOC): Infrastructure + Service Delivery
  — The SOC grant focuses on promoting a comprehensive, community-based approach to mental health service delivery for children and youth with serious emotional disturbances. This aligns with the holistic approach of Project AWARE, which seeks to address the mental health needs of youth within the school and community context.

• Project AWARE: Infrastructure + Service Delivery
  — Develop a sustainable infrastructure for school-based mental health programs and services.

• Native Connections Grant: Infrastructure + Service Delivery + Capacity Building
  — Native Connections grants emphasize community-driven approaches to suicide prevention and mental health promotion and can foster collaboration and partnership with schools participating in Project AWARE.

• School Climate Transformation Grant: Capacity Building
  — Promoting positive school environments, reducing mental health stigma, enhancing social-emotional learning, building capacity, integrating behavioral health supports, and incorporating culturally responsive practices—all of which compliment Project AWARE Goals.
SAMHSA Project AWARE Grant

The purpose of the Project AWARE (Advancing Wellness and Resiliency in Education) program is to develop a sustainable infrastructure for school-based mental health programs and services. AWARE grantees build collaborative partnerships with the educational agencies, community-based providers of behavioral health care services, school personnel, community organizations, families, and school-aged youth.

HOW TO GET THERE:

• Increase literacy and awareness of behavioral health issues among school-aged youth.
• Promote social and emotional learning.
• Connect children, youth, and families who may have behavioral health issues with appropriate services.
• Improve school climate.
• Promote positive mental health among youth and families through social and emotional learning.
• Build the capacity and leadership to sustain community-based mental health promotion, prevention, early identification and treatment services.
• Provide training to detect and respond to mental health issues in children and young adults. The training should be for all school personnel and other adults who interact with school-aged youth.

WHAT DO PROVIDERS GAIN:

• Being part of this grant allows providers to collaborate with schools, care teams, and community stakeholders to address the comprehensive needs of students, promoting wellness and resilience beyond clinical settings.
• They have the opportunity to identify at-risk students, provide timely interventions, and implement preventive measures within the school environment, ultimately reducing the burden on clinical services.
• AWARE can offer providers with opportunities to enhance their cultural competence and tailor services to the unique needs of the communities they serve.
• Providers can gain valuable skills in working within educational settings, collaborating with diverse teams, and implementing evidence-based practices for youth mental health, enriching their professional experience and expanding their scope of practice.
Project Aware Grant Coordination Study

Grants involved:
• School Climate Transformation Grant (SCTG) - Dept of Ed.
• Project Aware Grant – HHS
• Now is the Time Grant – DOJ

All 3 grants were coordinated within the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) framework.

Better integration of efforts to improve school climate with mental health services (e.g., by training staff in student identification and referral practices) was the most commonly reported accomplishment of coordination for grantees (75 percent).

Presenter Contact Information

- Jeremiah D. Simmons, PhD (Navajo/Yankton Sioux)
- Post-Doctoral Fellow
- Dept of Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences
- School of Medicine (SOM)
- Stanford University
- Email: sioux52@stanford.edu