

## School-Based Counseling Services

- I. East Orange School-Based Counseling
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### **I. East Orange School-Based Counseling 2022-2023**

**Description:** For well over two decades, MHA has applied for and been awarded a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) from the City of East Orange to provide supportive mental health counseling services to the high school and middle school students in several East Orange schools.

**Personnel:** This program utilizes the services of one part-time licensed Clinical Social Worker, working with one or two graduate social work or counseling interns.

**Highlights:** During FY2023, MHA was able to provide mental health counseling services to students in the following East Orange schools: Cicely Tyson Middle and High Schools, Fresh Start Middle and High Schools, and STEM Middle and High Schools. The licensed Clinical Social Worker, along with a Counseling intern, served over 50 middle and high school students. Below are some examples of how students utilized their time with the MHA mental health clinicians:

- To gain social skills and healthy coping mechanisms
- Learn effective ways to regulate emotions
- Explore loss and grief
- Explore situations that provoked anger and violence and healthier ways to react.

### **II. Montclair Child Development Center - Mental Health Consulting 2022-2023**

**Description:** In the past fiscal year, MHA continued to provide clinical mental health consultation services to the Montclair Child Development Center (MCDC) at their four locations; Montclair, Glen Ridge, Orange, and Belleville for their Head Start and Early Head Start programs. This fee-for-service arrangement has enabled MHA to provide MCDC with a licensed counselor to make classroom observations, assessments and in-class supportive interventions. Services and support were also available for staff and parents. Through psychoeducational presentations, both staff and parents are exposed to positive behavioral support strategies.

**Personnel:** One part-time Mental Health Clinician working 20 hours each week was able to provide evaluations, assessments, and counseling to MCDC preschool students and their families.

**Highlights:** The MHA counselor was able to provide in-person support to children and teachers at each location during the past fiscal year. Children were offered individual sessions and techniques such as mindfulness, play therapy, emotional regulation, and self-expression were utilized to assist the children with their behaviors. MHA counselor also completed parent and family outreaches, including hosting a parent/caregiver night out event that included a

therapeutic activity to engage families in the services being offered at MCDC. Education to teachers was also provided by the counselor. This offered guidance and ways to support the children in the program.

**Outcome Data:** Over the 2022-2023 school year, over 600 hours of classroom support to children and teachers and over 90 hours of parent support was provided.

### **III. MHA Collaboration with NJPAC - New Jersey Performing Arts Center Project 2022-2023**

**Description:** Funded by a grant from the Healthcare Foundation, NJPAC and MHA entered into a collaborative venture. This collaboration enabled MHA to provide mental health support for NJPAC students, parents, and teaching artists as NJPAC implemented their creative programming. In-class support was provided to students when tapping into sensitive themes and ongoing parent support groups were co-facilitated by IFSS and CBH Clinicians.

**Personnel:** Part-time staff, known as the “Wellbeing Team” included: Intensive Family Support Services Coordinator/Family Support Counselor, Center for Behavioral Health Therapist, and graduate interns.

**Highlights:** During FY2023, MHA’s “Wellbeing Team,” provided over 450 hours of Professional and Personal Development Sessions, Direct Services, and Support Groups.

Examples of Professional and Personal Development Sessions:

- Education on problem solving, particularly in student engagement.
- Training on signs and symptoms of mental health in youth.

Examples of Support Groups:

- Parent support group was provided where divorce, remarriage and custody concerns were discussed.
- Coffee Talk, where NJPAC parents are given an opportunity to connect with each other and discuss issues that are affecting their children.

Examples of Direct Services:

- Individual sessions with youth that focused on anxiety over school performance, relationship issues with parents/caregivers, and issues around gender orientation and depression.
- Individual parent sessions where feelings surrounding disappointment over college non-acceptance were explored.