



Why Support Mental Health in Schools?

Transcript, Identification of Speakers, and Description of Visuals

Background music

Sammy Holtz, Junior, Hortonville High School

“We've had some, like, tragic suicides in the past few years that have been at the high school. And we never want it to get that far again!

“You never want to lose a life of someone that you know.”

Paul Thome, President, Hortonville Area Board of Education

“There's that a-ha moment, where you say, 'OK, we gotta do something.'

“12.8 percent of our students reported having seriously considered attempting suicide in the last 12 months. That's the worst case outcome.”

Larry Sikowski, Principal, Hortonville Elementary School

“We have students as young as third grade that are coming to us with a clinical diagnosis of bipolar disorder.”

Paul Thome, President, Hortonville Area Board of Education

“23 percent of our students reported feeling sad or hopeless almost every day.”

Breanna Wozniczka, Band Teacher, Hortonville High School

“I know that I can't teach a kid the names of the notes and fingerings on an instrument if they're dealing with something in their lives.”

Larry Sikowski, Principal, Hortonville Elementary School

“We are seeing some extremely aggressive violent behavior out of children as young as six years old and younger.”

Paul Thome, President, Hortonville Area Board of Education

“Most districts in the state of Wisconsin, you know, profile our demographics very closely. If we're like everybody else, then this is one serious problem that needs to be addressed somehow.”

Sammy Holtz, Junior, Hortonville High School

“I can't even explain how much it means to me. I'm just really grateful for everything that the administration has done to make it such, like, common ground for everyone.”

Breanna Wozniczka, Band Teacher, Hortonville High School

“We train our peer mentors, and that's a group of almost a hundred kids. So they're presenting to their peers, they're talking about it, they're posting on social media.

“We've got a whole wall of strength that's going on -- it's everywhere!”

Visual: Wall with banner reading “What are Your Sources of Strength?” surrounded by students’ handwritten contributions

Sammy Holtz, Junior, Hortonville High School

“Sources of Strength makes everyone realize that everyone has anxiety and everyone has these issues, and it doesn't put those people that, um, have these issues in a little corner. I have an anxiety, teachers have anxieties, everyone has anxieties, it's not just you, it's not just me.”

Crystal Ludwig, Case Manager (E3 Screening Process), Samaritan Counseling Center

“I've been impressed with seeing how this can benefit every student. And how many students are wanting to talk about this.”

Jen Parsons, E3 Screening Coordinator, Samaritan Counseling Center

“We're letting parents know that this is a part of the culture here.”

Crystal Ludwig, Case Manager (E3 Screening Process), Samaritan Counseling Center

“We send out three notifications to parents, and if we don't receive, uh, the form back from them indicating that they'd like to opt their student out, then we do offer the screen to students in the classroom.”

Breanna Wozniczka, Band Teacher, Hortonville High School

“We screen all the kids, and then if something shows up on that, then they will be moved into our E3 program.”

Larry Sikowski, Principal, Hortonville Elementary School

“A licensed therapist in the building. And her schedule is full.”

Katie Jensen, Director of Access and Outreach Services, Catalpa Health

“It costs a little bit more to be in the school. You want to take advantage of being in the school, make sure you're collaborating with the staff. That takes time, and that's not billable. But – it is the best care.

“If everybody just went out to the schools and provided their care there, it'd be hard financially to be able to, kinda, maintain.”

Jen Parsons, E3 Screening Coordinator, Samaritan Counseling Center

“They had a large amount of community backing and so that provided a lot of financial support, but that isn't sustainable.”

Dr. Heidi Schmidt, Superintendent, Hortonville Area School District

“By the time the fourth year, and the end of the grant, is complete, we will be funding the full program.

“I think that's what other districts shy away from, is the cost.”

Jen Parsons, E3 Screening Coordinator, Samaritan Counseling Center

“I think what needs to come from the state level is some sort of plan to help all of these programs be sustainable.”

Paul Thome, President, Hortonville Area Board of Education

“Budgets are tight. What are we trying to emphasize? If you don't address the issue of their physical health, and their mental health, your ability to teach them is compromised.”

Breanna Wozniczka, Band Teacher, Hortonville High School

“The more that we can do to help them be successful, the better off we are.”

Sammy Holtz, Junior, Hortonville High School

“I think it has a huge impact. It's brought, like, unity to everyone.”

Paul Thome, President, Hortonville Area Board of Education

“They have understood it, they are talking the language, they're not shy about it, it's not taboo.”

Sammy Holtz, Junior, Hortonville High School

“There was this girl at her locker – and she even used the word "stigma" in her conversation, which I think was awesome!”

Paul Thome, President, Hortonville Area Board of Education

“It's that dialogue that lends me to believe that this could be talked about with anybody if you just let some things go and understand the importance of it.”

Background music

Visual: Logo of Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction