



# Meeting the Health Care Needs of Children and Adolescents: School Based Health Centers in Connecticut

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## What is a School Based Health Center?

In CT, the Department of Public Health Standard Model is:

- ✓ A service delivery model that *concurrently* blends medical care with preventive and behavioral health services
- ✓ Staffing *must* include a team of licensed inter-disciplinary professionals (*at minimum, medical and behavioral*) with particular expertise in child/adolescent health (nurse practitioners, physician's assistants, medical directors, clinical social workers, consulting psychiatrists, dentists, hygienists)
- ✓ Staff works side-by-side to address and coordinate a broad spectrum of students' health needs
- ✓ Anticipatory guidance and health education are routinely offered to students that utilize the SBHC
- ✓ This model represents the highest standard of care available (National Gold Standard) with respect to the range and quality of SBHC services (*Making the Grade: State and Local Partnerships to Establish School Based Health Centers, 2003*)



## Why is the Comprehensive Model the “Gold Standard”?

*“Children bring all of their issues to school”*

Asthma

Tooth pain

Domestic violence

Illnesses and injuries

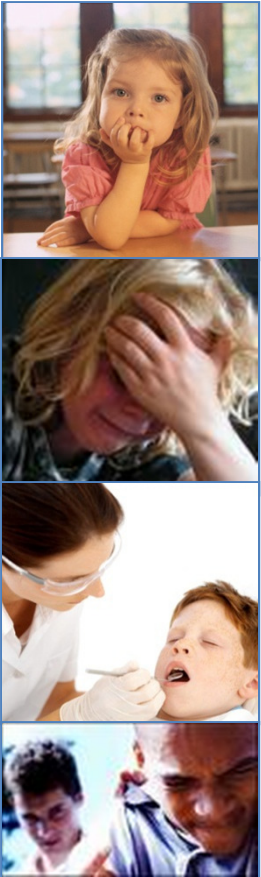
Learning disabilities

Peer conflict

Diagnosed and undiagnosed mental health  
conditions

Homelessness

And many more issues...





## SBHCs: A Model that Works



- ✿ The medical – mental health model addresses the whole child

- ✿ A recent study indicated a significant increase in attendance for [adolescent] SBHC medical users compared to nonusers. Grade point average increases over time were observed for mental health users compared to nonusers\*

- ✿ 96.4% of children that receive an asthma breathing treatment in the SBHC return to class (CASBHC data)

- ✿ 5,337 CT children/adolescents received mental health treatment in their SBHC, enabling them to remain in school and continue to learn (2007-2008 school year)

\* Journal of Adolescent Health 46 (2010) 251-257



## SBHC Mental Health Services

### Services include:

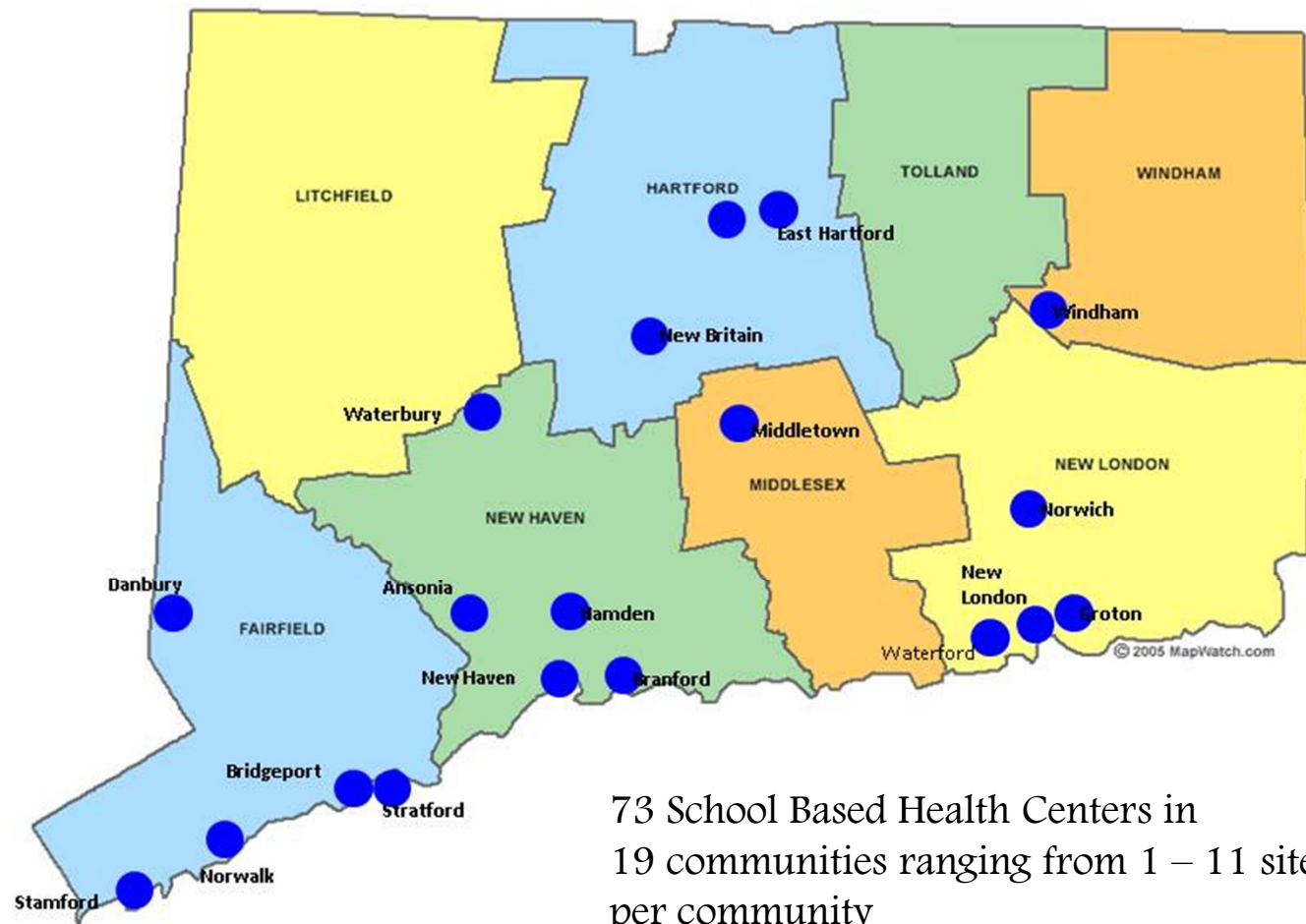
- Individual, group, and family therapy
- Referral for medication evaluations and specialty care
- Risk assessment and health education
- Psycho-educational groups
- Support groups for topics such as anger management, substance abuse, bereavement, parental illness
- Case management





## Where are the Centers located?

# Distribution of SBHCs in Connecticut



73 School Based Health Centers in  
19 communities ranging from 1 – 11 sites  
per community



# *Healthy Kids Make Better Learners*

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