

# Student Support Services-Mercer

Issue 1.1

## NJ4S is Live and Ready to Get to Work!

In April, Catholic Charities, Diocese of Trenton was awarded an NJ4S grant through the Department of Children and Family Services. Since then, our team has been developing a 3-tier system of services, working closely with school districts, non profits, and family success centers to bring these services to residents of Mercer County.

### Introducing the 3-Tier System

#### TIER 1 Universal Prevention Programming

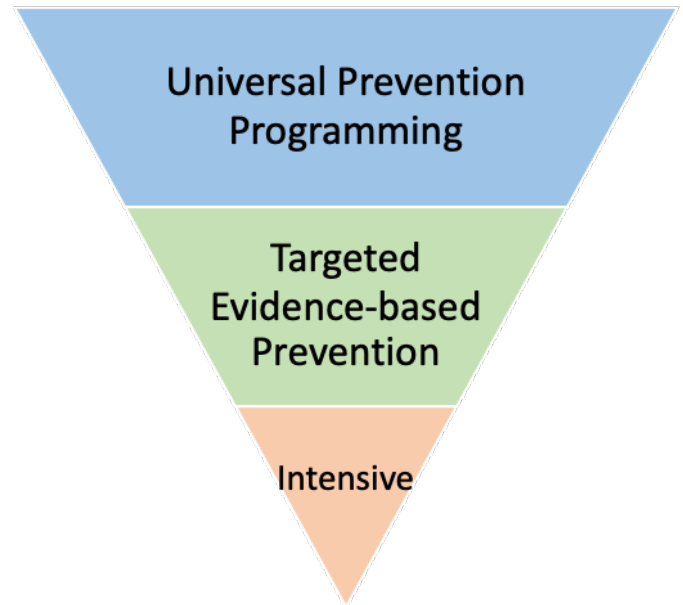
Webinars, assemblies, trainings, evidence-based interventions, community efforts- workshops at libraries, community centers, tutoring at family success centers, prevention programs and job readiness programs, and creating YouTube videos.

#### TIER 2 Targeted Evidence Based Prevention

Small group intervention, linking with existing programs and community resources.

#### TIER 3 Intensive

Assessment and brief clinical interventions.



### Meet the Team

#### Michael Lovaglio, HUB Director,

has served nonprofits from UrbanPromise Ministries to Harlem Children's Zone, Inc. as both an educator and administrator. A graduate of SUNY Fredonia and Princeton Theological Seminary, Michael is excited to work closely with organizations dedicated to serving students and families, their teachers and advocates.

#### Sully Soto, HUB Assistant Director,

has worked as a Program Director for Catholic Charities for close to 4 years. She is a bilingual (Spanish)/bicultural Licensed Clinical Social Worker with over 6 years of clinical experience. Sully has dedicated her career to working with children, adolescents, and adults of Mercer County.

#### Ada Osorio, Prevention Consultant,

has worked with Catholic Charities for over 8 years, serving as support staff for outpatient mental health programs before joining the NJ4S team. Ada is dedicated to supporting and meeting the needs of youth and families in Mercer County.

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## Advisory Board Update

The NJ4S Mercer Advisory Board is made up of Mercer County students, parents, and stakeholders actively involved within the county in their roles as teachers and administrators within the school system and without. While the board will soon transition to meeting monthly, then quarterly, we've met twice in the last month as we prepare for the 2023-2024 academic year.

- At the June 21<sup>st</sup> meeting, the board selected the following Areas of Focus to serve the youth of Mercer County:
  - Mental Health and Wellness
    - including Suicide Prevention
  - Anti-bullying and Violence Prevention
    - including social media awareness
  - Substance Use Prevention
- At the July 5<sup>th</sup> meeting, the board voted unanimously for NJ4S Mercer Prevention Consultants to work from the following curriculum, noting supplemental materials may be necessary, and often welcomed, when preparing lessons.
  - **Positive Action** curriculum for students in K-12, plus the accompanying parent curriculum.
- The board will meet once more in July, on the 19<sup>th</sup>, before transitioning to monthly meetings.

## Long-Term Goals

- Improved healthy development
- Improved social, emotional, and behavioral functioning
- Improved mental health
- Increased resiliency
- *Each month, we'll return to these long term goals and offer an update on progress.*

## Resource Recommendation

***The Deepest Well: Healing from the Long-Term Effects of Childhood Trauma and Adversity*** by Nadine Burke Harris, M.D. Former Surgeon General for the State of California, Burke Harris is uniquely equipped to assess how trauma affects the body. Learning from the ACEs test, she pioneered treatment models proving what many who've experienced trauma already know- the damage it can do to the human body. At a little over 200 pages, *The Deepest Well* is as informative as it is devastating.

*For more information on NJ4S and Student Support Services- Mercer, please contact Michael Lovaglio at 609-394-5157, ext. 2149. Have a Resource Recommendation? Send Michael an email at [MLovaglio@cctrenton.org](mailto:MLovaglio@cctrenton.org)*