



Coalition Success Story

Virginia Department of Health

The Campus Suicide Prevention Center of Virginia, based at James Madison University, was charged by the Virginia Department of Health with assisting college and university campuses in developing comprehensive plans for suicide prevention, intervention and postvention. Because effective planning is data-driven, an essential first year goal was to collect dependable data on student mental health risk and protective factors across multiple campuses.

The Commonwealth of Virginia found that the Healthy Minds Study provided clear solutions to their challenges. They found the data very useful and have decided to participate again in the study in 2011:

Challenges	HMS Solutions and Results
<p>Insufficient organization to conduct data collection across the multiple institutions</p>	<p>The HMS had the infrastructure to organize a multi-campus data collection. It also championed a culture of partnership and collaboration. As a result, HMS was able to coordinate across eight Virginia institutions in the HMS 2009 data collection. We welcome larger and smaller Coalitions, as well.</p>
<p>Lack of depth and breadth of mental health measures, including suicide risk, eating disorders, anxiety disorders, etc. Focus on negative mental health precludes an exploration of contributes to positive outcomes</p>	<p>HMS examined a broad and deep set of mental health measures, including demographics, mental health status, lifestyle and health-related behaviors, use of mental health services, barriers and facilitators to services, academic environment and social support. The resulting dataset included over 100 measures, including positive mental health measures such as flourishing.</p>
<p>Limited flexibility to customize existing data collection efforts -- Virginia schools had unique requirements, including school-specific measures</p>	<p>Each HMS school was provided with the opportunity to include up to 10 custom questions, allowing them to explore school-specific issues. Schools in a Coalition can also benefit from a set of custom questions that are asked of all students in the Coalition.</p>
<p>Limited financial and human resources, both at the school and Commonwealth level</p>	<p>The HMS offers Coalitions additional services (data and reports) as well as a lower per-school price. The Commonwealth of Virginia Coalition benefited from a common infrastructure (minimizing individual school human resource requirements), cost sharing between the Commonwealth and each participating Virginia school, and HMS Coalition discounts. Participating as a Coalition made it possible for eight institutions to participate, when only a fraction of them may have been able to participate individually.</p>

For more information on the Virginia Healthy Minds Coalition, go to

www.CampusSuicidePreventionVA.org