



# Universal Mental Health Screening

for the  
**Rural Education Advisory Council**

September 24, 2025



# Frequently Asked Questions

## What is a mental health screener?

- A screening **tool to help identify symptoms** of mental health conditions allowing for early intervention and connection to appropriate services and support for students.

## Which grade levels are mandated to complete health screenings?

- PA 104-0032 requires school districts to offer mental health screenings to **students enrolled in grades 3 through 12.**

## When do schools have to implement screening?

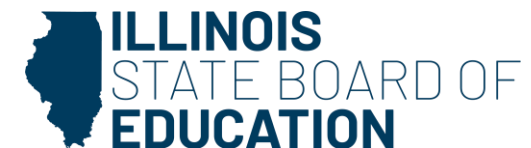
- At least once a year, **beginning with the 2027-28 school year.**
- Only in effect if the state has successfully procured a screening tool that offers a self-report option for students at no cost to the district.

## Do SEL screeners meet the requirements of a mental health screener?

- **SEL screeners do not meet** the requirements of a mental health screener.

Public Act 104-0032

School Screening Readiness Report





## Public Act 104-0032

(d) Mental health screenings shall be offered by school districts to students enrolled in grade 3 through grade 12, at least once a year, beginning with the 2027-2028 school year. A district may, by action of the State Board of Education, apply for an extension of the 2027-2028 school year implementation deadline if the school district meets criteria set by rule by the State Board of Education, which shall be based on the recommendations of the report issued in accordance with subsection (c). Notwithstanding the provisions of this subsection, the requirement to offer mental health screenings shall be in effect only for school years in which the State has successfully procured a screening tool that offers a self-report option for students and is made available to school districts at no cost.



# Benefits of Screening to Rural School-Communities

School based mental health services are the only such services available for many families in rural areas.	Schools are the sole source of care and most frequent entry point for receiving mental health services.
Social and economic inequities prevent the access of health care outside of school.	Screening is integrated into larger support system (PBIS; MTSS).
Families don't have to choose between work and health supports for their children.	Lack of childcare options are detrimental to working families seeking care from providers from significant distances away.
Schools may offer broadband vouchers or wifi access for academic and telehealth supports.	Schools can intentionally partner with community-based providers to offer services to families.
Youth in rural counties have access to fewer mental health services than those in urban and suburban counties.	Suicide prevention services are much less likely to be offered in rural counties.
Schools can also be a source of trusted adults.	





# Supports

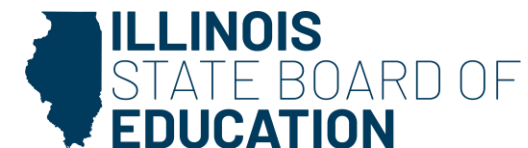
## Social Emotional Learning Hubs

- Direct support for social emotional learning and universal mental health screening.
- The Hubs provide coaching, professional development, training and capacity building to districts and regional offices in their area.
- Assist school-community leadership teams to implement data driven strategies to address student trauma and mental health needs and build resilient communities.



## Resilience Supportive Schools Illinois

- Free and voluntary support that uses school-specific data to connect educators with evidence-informed tools and resources to improve the mental health and well-being of their school-communities.
- Choose a focus:
  - Trauma-responsiveness
  - Social and Emotional Learning
  - Mental Health
  - Cultural Responsiveness





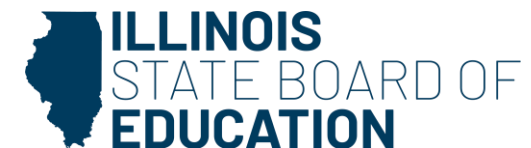
# Additional Supports

- **Free screening tool**
- **ISBE guidance** and support resources
- **Learning and Resource Hub** - Free educational resource in support of strategies pertaining to the four RSSI pillars and professional development.
  - **Learning Playlists** Structured courses about a specific topic that meet your level of readiness.
  - Mental health literacy resources
- **Children's Adversity Index**
- **BEACON** - Free resource to help families find the behavioral and mental health services they need, where they need them including telehealth services. **Flyer**
- **SPIDER** - Free database that connects service providers, individuals, families, and communities to useful and timely social service resources.
- **UMHS Information**
  - **Slides**
  - **UMHS Webpage**



## Comprehensive School-Based Mental Health Programs

- Universal mental health screening is a critical Tier 1 screening tool helping schools identify students who may need supports before problems escalate.
- Screenings can help address disparities in access to care, especially for students in underserved communities who rely heavily on school-based services due, in part, to long standing systemic inequities in education and **students in rural areas.**
- The data gathered through screening informs tiered interventions, ensuring students received the right level of support from universal wellness promotion to targeted and intensive services.
- The programs and systems are designed to reflect the needs and strenghts of the local school and community context.







# Community-Based Mental Health Service Providers

Collaboration with families, community providers and other local stakeholders is essential to building trust and a sustainable, responsive school system.

# SPIDER

Mental Health Treatment

▼

Counseling/Therapy - Telehealth

▼

All

▼

English

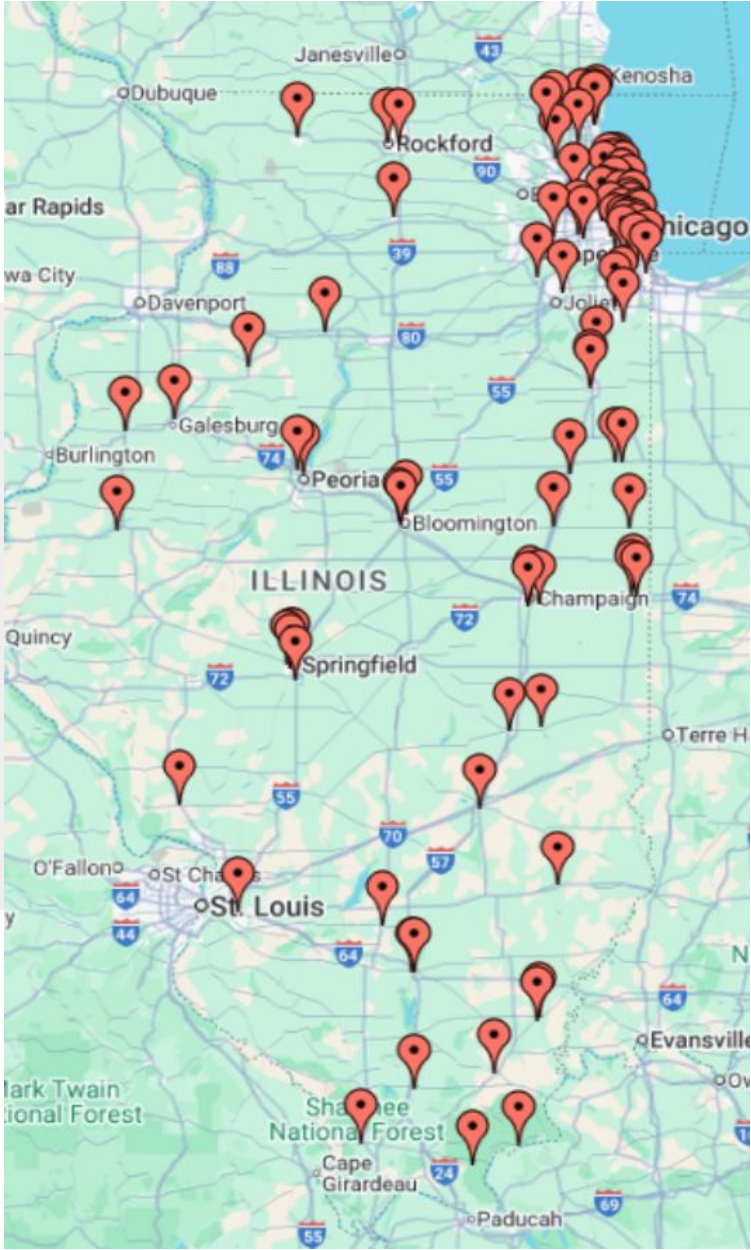
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All

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## Feedback

Submit questions through this [link](#) or this QR code.

UNIVERSAL MENTAL HEALTH  
SCREENING (UMHS) - Illinois State  
Board of Education





Sarah Littrell

[Slittrel@isbe.net](mailto:Slittrel@isbe.net)

SEL Lead

217-557-7075