

Marshfield Clinic Health System: Accepting applications for behavioral health grants

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MARSHFIELD – Marshfield Clinic Health System and Security Health Plan are now accepting applications from eligible school districts to implement b.e.s.t. Universal Screening in the 2021-2022 school year.

b.e.s.t. ® (Behavioral Emotional Social Traits) is an online screening tool designed to help educators build the emotional health of students and help identify students who may need additional positive behavioral support. Developed by School Psychologist Eric P. Hartwig, Ph.D., the tool provides educators recommended actions to take with students based on their behaviors.

“Mental health was a priority even before the COVID-19 pandemic,” said Allison Machtan, director of community health for the Health System, “but the pandemic piled additional stressors on kids. The disruption in social interaction and familiar routines can affect students greatly and gives us even more reason to carefully observe students’ behaviors and intervene with positive behavioral support when needed.”

b.e.s.t. has been updated to include behavioral observations from adults outside of the school such as parents, tutors and family caregivers. Given the unique and unusual hybrid of services provided to students last year, providing consistent support, both within and outside of school, for children to manage their own

behavioral health is critically important.

“We have maintained continued contact with our b.e.s.t. school partners during this unique and unusual time,” Hartwig said. “What is clearly obvious is the importance of continuing to support ongoing positive relationships with students while we provide the opportunity for them to reflect on how this last year has had an impact on their lives. Children need access to adults who help and provide guidance as they explore their new world.”

Schools awarded a grant receive technical support, biannual screenings for students, and training consultation and support for teachers and staff. School districts eligible to receive the grant are located in one of the following Wisconsin counties: Adams, Ashland, Barron, Bayfield, Buffalo, Burnett, Chippewa, Clark, Crawford, Dodge, Douglas, Dunn, Eau Claire, Florence, Fond du Lac, Forest, Green Lake, Iron, Jackson, Juneau, La Crosse, Langlade, Lincoln, Marathon, Marquette, Monroe, Oneida, Pepin, Pierce, Polk, Portage, Price, Richland, Rusk, Sawyer, Shawano, Taylor, Trempealeau, Vernon, Vilas, Washburn, Waupaca, Waushara or Wood.

For more information or to apply, visit <https://www.securityhealth.-org/about-us/healthy-minds-best-universal-screening>.