Abstract

It is estimated that only one fifth of children who need mental health services receive them, primarily through school-based services (Burns et al., 1995). The current research proposal seeks to gain a better understanding of what teachers need to know about student mental health in order to affectively aid efforts to connect underserved children to mental health services. The overall goal of the proposed study is to develop a student mental health curriculum for teachers that can be used to educate current teachers and better prepare teachers-in-training. Proposed methods include running both mental health professional and education professional focus groups that will include a survey and discussion regarding the role of teachers, schools and the community in helping children with mental health needs access mental health services. Future stages of the proposed study will look to combine information gathered from focus groups and the literature to design a competency-based student mental health curriculum that can be used to educate current teachers and better prepare teachers-in-training to aid current efforts to connect underserved children to mental health services.