

# Understanding the Key Warning Signs of Mental Health Problems in Children and Adolescents Training Guidelines

## Purpose for Training

School Social Workers are uniquely trained to provide Early Warning Signs of Mental Health Problems to school staff to meet licensure requirements for MDE.

View Minnesota Statutes Section 122A.09, 122A.18 amended by Special Session, Chapter 9, Article 2, Section 7 (<http://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/?id=122A.09>).

- To meet requirement for licensure renewal
- To become better informed about issue

CEU Requirement: The statute does not state the number of CEU's needed to meet the requirement. This is a decision by local re-licensure committees.

## Background Information

SONAR (Statement of Need and Reasonableness), Surgeon General's Report on Mental Health (1999) & President's New Freedom Commission Report (2003)

## Overview of Content of Training

What is the continuum of mental health and mental illnesses for children and adolescents? What is the education professional's role and responsibility for early identification?

Causes and etiology of mental health disorders

Normal development as a context for understanding

Key warning signs and symptoms (not exclusive but training should cover these specifically)

- Depressed mood
- Excessive fears and anxieties, irritability etc
- Changes in behavior and performance (frequency, duration and intensity)
- Impaired concentration and thinking
- Suicidal gestures

Educational implications

Potential connection to substance use

Knowledge of next steps-knows options and provides examples of the processes and procedures at local level

Coordination of mental health services at local level

Partnering with parents/guardians-understanding the home/school connection

How do cultural variables fit into mental illness symptoms?

Confidentiality and privacy concerns

## Learner Objectives

The participant will: Define the concepts of mental health and mental illness Be able to identify the key warning and adolescents. Parents from nonprofit organizations that have been trained and are knowledgeable about mental illness and treatment options.

Please see [www.msswa.org](http://www.msswa.org) for a PPT of Early Warning Signs training.