

alongside

Using Tech to Support a Comprehensive Counseling Program



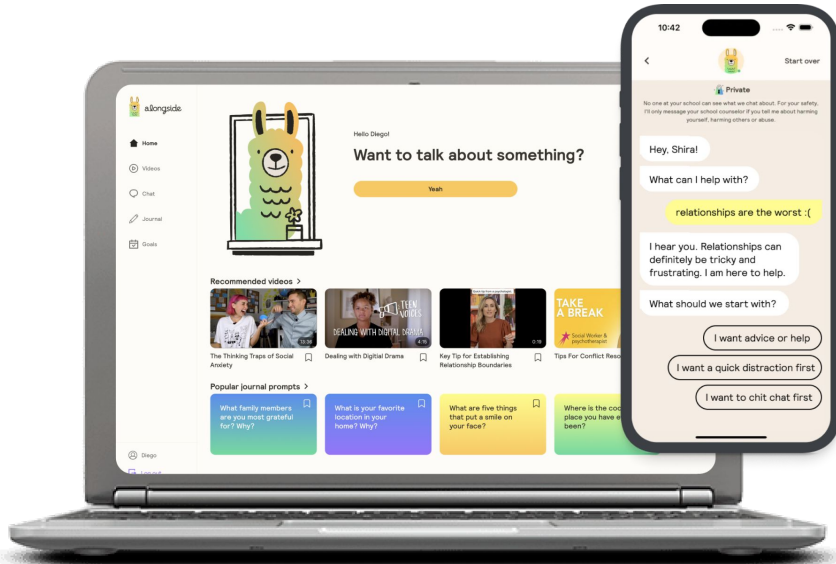
Scott Freschet
Cofounder, Alongside



Brenda Pena, MSW
Director of Social Work
Chelsea Public Schools



Alongside helps schools cover all students with research-based mental health support that adolescents like and trust



Clinician-created content

Provides therapy exercises created by doctoral clinicians



24/7

Available when students have time and feel the desire to open up



Non-judgmental

Provides a confidential place to share thoughts and emotions without judgment



Chatbot magic

Students can chat about any problem they are facing and get validation and advice



Escalation

Connects to school and 24/7 resources in cases of suicidal ideation and severe issues



Native language

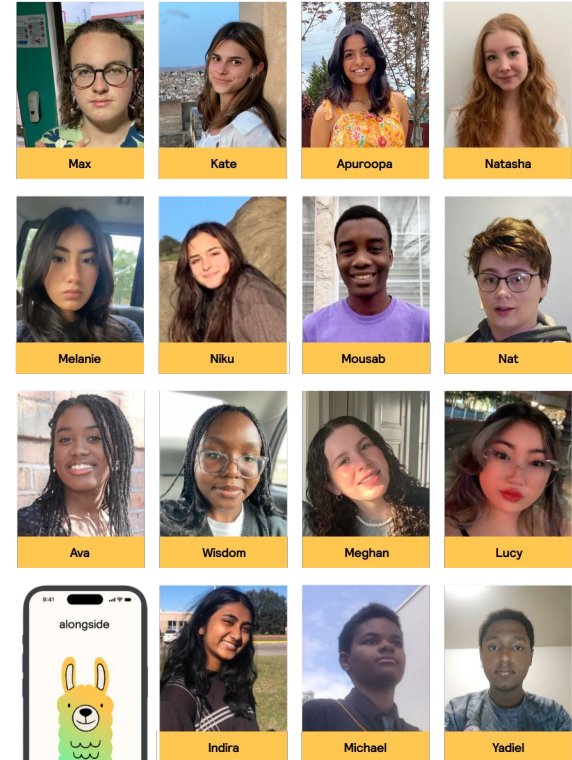
Converses in the student's preferred language, making it easier to communicate feelings

Do you know teens that are passionate about supporting and de-stigmatizing youth mental health?

Have them apply for our ***paid*** summer internship!
Deadline to apply is April 15



Our 2023
summer interns



Student Mental Health in CPS

Chelsea Public Schools

Brenda Pena, MSW

Director of Mental Health | SEL | Specialized Student Supports



Chelsea Public Schools

“Nuestra Comunidad”



11 Schools

Pre-K — Grade 12

District Enrollment

6,611 Students

Student Race and Ethnicity

- Hispanic - 88%
- African American - 4.3%
- White - 6.3%
- Asian - .7%

Populations Served

- First Language not English - 84%
- First Language Learner - 43.7%
- High Needs: 90.6%
- Low Income - 80.5%

Mental Health

DEFINITION

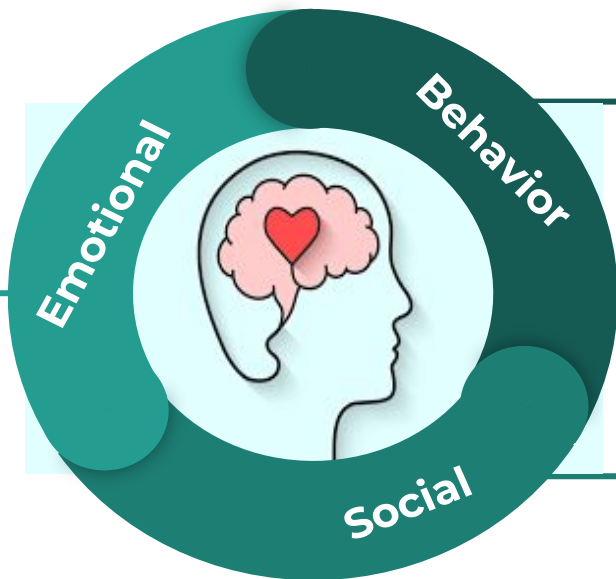
Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make healthy choices.

(CDC - Centers for Disease Control)

How does mental health present within CPS?

Emotional

- Sadness
- Worry, anxiety, and fear
- Safety concerns: self-harm and or suicidality
- Irritability and/or mood changes
- Difficulty concentrating
- Loss of interest or motivation



Behavior

- Inconsistent attendance in class and/or school
- Low frustration tolerance
- Difficulty with emotion regulation: shutting down or verbal/physical outbursts
- Physical (somatic) complaints
- Low energy, fatigue

Social

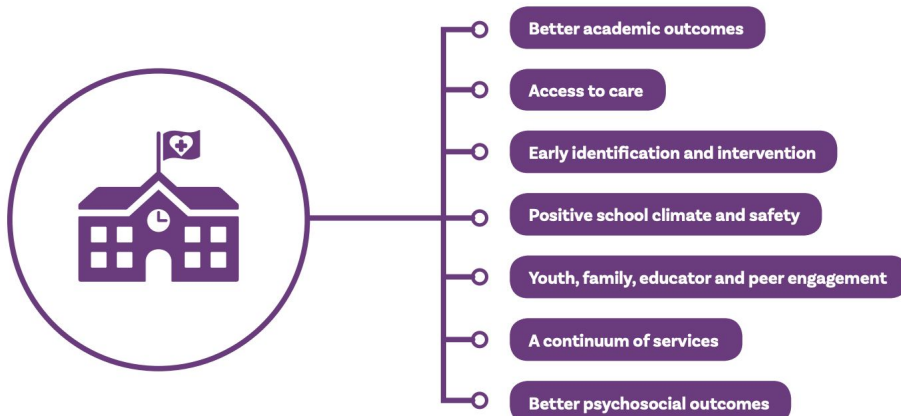
- Difficulty making and/or keeping friends
- Social Isolation
- Peer Conflict
- Verbal/Physical Aggression
- Conflict with adults

Comprehensive school mental health system

Comprehensive school mental health systems provide an array of supports and services that promote positive school climate, social and emotional learning, and mental health and well-being, while reducing the prevalence and severity of mental illness.

CPS Lead Team Members:

- SEL Leads & SEL School-based Teams
- School Counselors
- School Social Workers
- Special Education Staff
- Mediation/MTSS Staff
- Homelessness Liaison
- Young Parenting Coordinator
- Family Liaisons



STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH: MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORT

TIER 2: Group & Individual Supports

- Early Identification, Support, & Progress Monitoring
- Individual and Group Intervention
- Referral and Case Management
- Family Wraparound Support



TIER 3: Individual Supports

- Crisis Intervention
- Counseling/ Treatment Supports
- Collaboration with youth, family, and outside providers

TIER 1: Universal Supports

- Positive Relationships & Safe School Climate
- Universal Screening
- Social Emotional Learning
- Mental Health Promotion and Education

MEETING STUDENT NEEDS

INTERVENTION & ASSESSMENT

- Individual Meetings & Assessment
- Psychoeducation
- Coping Skills Modeling, Practice, and Connection
- Group Interventions

FAMILY & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Communication with Families: Guardian Phone Calls & Meetings
- Connection to Community Providers

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

- Integration of mental health into SEL Curriculum & Advisory
- Integration of emotion regulation skills into the classroom

Tier 1:

**CPS Universal
Supports**



TIER 1: UNIVERSAL MENTAL HEALTH SCREENING

RCADS-25:

Revised Children's Anxiety and Depression Scale

*(Measures levels of anxiety and
low mood)*

- Administered to Students Grades 3-12
- Voluntary Self-Report Measure
- Provided in Multiple Languages
- Families Able to “Opt-Out”

MENTAL HEALTH SCREENER RESULTS & LEARNING



STRENGTHS

- Students take it seriously.
- De-stigmatized mental health.
- Identified students who may not have previously been referred (~50%)
- Allowed for early intervention and connection to resources.

CHALLENGES

- Some students opt out of participation.
- Percentage of students identified through screener can be larger than national norms.
- Limited capacity of available community resources.

CHILDREN'S CABINET

“Bodies typically composed of the heads of government, business, and nonprofit agencies/organizations with child- and youth-serving programs”

Children's cabinets meet regularly to...

- Coordinate services
- Develop a common set of outcomes
- Collaboratively decide upon and implement plans

...all to foster the well-being of young people



CHILDREN'S CABINET SUBCOMMITTEES GOALS



Mental Health

Improve child wellbeing
(alt: increase access & use of mental health resources)



Out-of-School Time

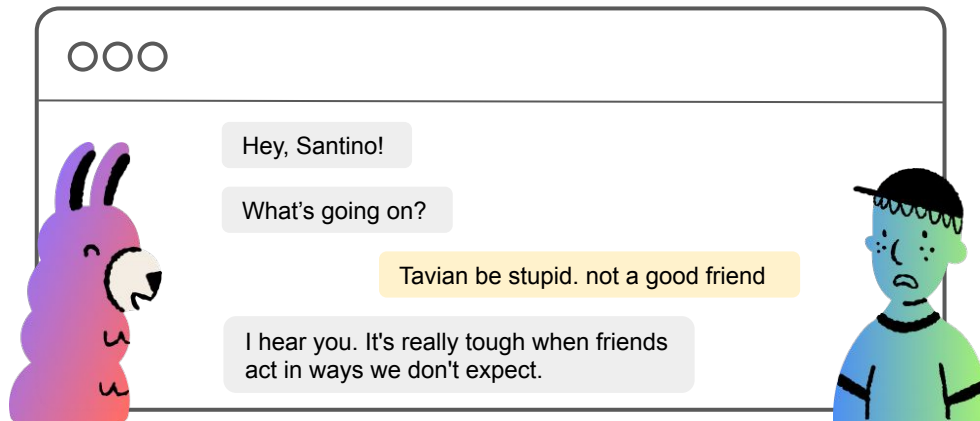
Increase participation of children and youth in out-of-school activities



College & Career Readiness

Increase and broaden post-secondary pathways for students

ALONGSIDE



NEEDS & CHALLENGES

Need effective Tier 1 support and prevention for all middle and high school students

Mental health support must also meet the needs of our Latinx and EL students

HOW ALONGSIDE ADDRESSES

Alongside is a mental health app that provides personalized prevention and early intervention to every secondary student

Students can converse in 30+ languages, making it easier to communicate feelings and get help



What can I
help with?

alongside

WHAT STUDENTS ARE SAYING?

"This conversation made me think more about my health and will take it more seriously"

"I got strategies to help me with the test if i get nervous"

"thank you for helping me for this i think i am ready"

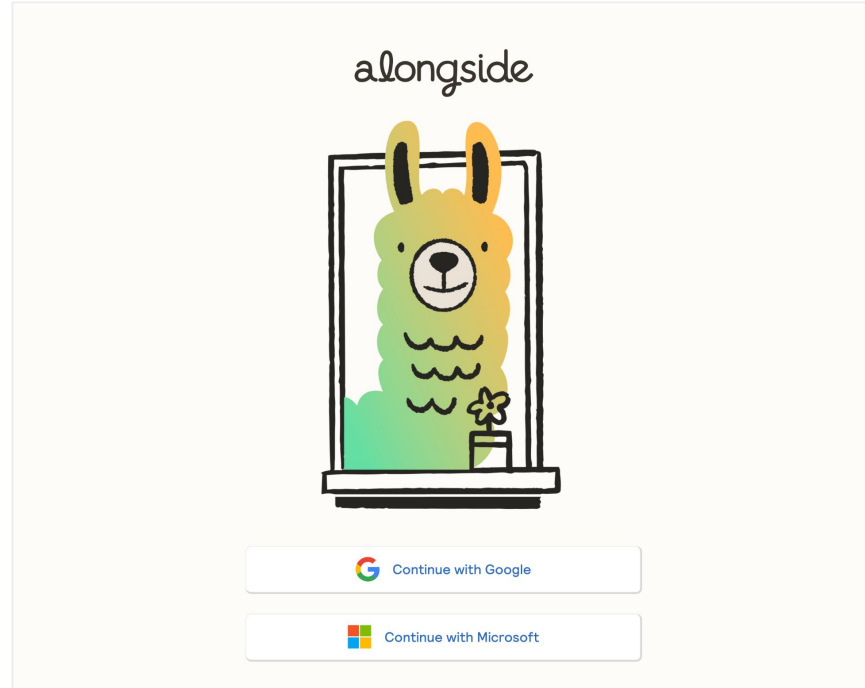
"i liked the help you gave me and the confidence"

"Muchos Gracias!"

"Yes i really appreciate you"

"i liked how we talked through it . ty for helping me and giving me Ideas!!"

LIVE DEMO



app.alongside.care

**THANK YOU
& QUESTIONS**

Brenda Pena

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Explore the app yourself

