Consent for School-Based Mental Health Screening

School Year: 2025-2026

What is Mental Health Screening?

Mental health screening evaluates the possible presence of issues such as **anxiety, depression, and suicidality**. It is not a diagnostic tool, but it helps identify students who may need support or services. Screenings will only occur after caregivers give **written consent**, actively opting their child into the program or event. This screening is conducted in partnership with the **Utah School Mental Health Collaborative** at the **University of Utah**. Contact:

- **Dr. Sean Weeks** – sean.weeks@utah.edu
- **Dr. Aaron Fischer** – aaron.fischer@utah.edu

What is Consent?

Caregiver consent is required **within 8 weeks** before administering the screener. A **separate consent form** is necessary for each screening event and cannot be combined with other consent forms, regardless of the student's age. You have the option to revoke consent at any time by contacting your child's school.

Training on Consent: School staff involved in the screening process will undergo mandatory training to understand consent procedures per **Utah Code Title 53E, Chapter 9, Section 203**. Training will also cover student privacy, data protection, and responding to caregiver concerns.

Purpose of the Project

The goal of this project is to provide tiered mental health services, including screening and triaging students who may need support. Screeners used could include:

- **Short Mood and Feelings Questionnaire (SMFQ):** ages 6-17 to detect depressive symptoms.
- **Generalized Anxiety Disorder -7 (GAD-7):** ages 11-17 to detect symptoms of anxiety.
- **Revised Child Anxiety and Depression Scale (RCADS):** ages 8-18 to detect symptoms of anxiety. and depression.
- **Patient Health Questionnaire – 9 (PHQ-9)**: for ages 11-17 to detect mood and depressive symptoms.
- **Columbia-Suicide Severity Rating Scale:** for ages 6+ to determine severity of suicidal ideation.

These screeners will be administered in the **fall, winter, and spring**. The results will be de-identified and shared with the state. Caregivers will be notified if their child is deemed "at-risk" and will be offered appropriate services.

What's the Process?

After a student is opted into the screening, they will complete one of the **Utah State Board of Education (USBE)-approved screeners**. Results will not provide a diagnosis but will help identify if a student is at risk.

- Results and resources will be shared with caregivers or guardians.
- If a student is at risk, they may be referred to **school-based or community-based mental health services**, with caregiver consent.
- Personal information will be collected to identify students at risk, including the following: Name, Age, Date of Birth, Race/Ethnicity, Gender, Grade and/or School Information.

FAQ

Are You Diagnosing My Child?

No. The screening is a tool to **identify potential concerns**. Further **assessment** is required for a diagnosis if concerns are identified.

Will I Receive the Results of My Child's Screening?

Yes, caregivers will receive results if the screener indicates a **potential mental health concern**, along with resources for school-based or community-based services.

What Do the Results of the Screening Mean?

The results may indicate the **possible presence of a concern**, helping determine if a full assessment is needed. Caregivers are free to seek outside resources in addition to the services offered by the school.

Do I Need to Pay for This?

No. The **screening is free** for all students.

Data Sharing and Protection Summary

The school district and the **University of Utah** will collaborate on this screening initiative. Data, including survey responses, will be shared and used to evaluate students' mental health needs and identify at-risk students for additional support.

- **Compliance:** Data sharing complies with **Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)** and **Utah Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)**.

- **Security:** Data will be stored in a secure, HIPAA-compliant system, accessible only to authorized personnel.
- **Data De-Identification:** No personal information will be shared publicly.
- **Results Sharing:** At the end of the study, results will be shared with the district, and de-identified data may be used for further research.

This ensures compliance with **FERPA** and the **PPRA**, prioritizing transparency, security, and ethical data use.
The school will provide a deidentified end-of-year report to the **USBE** summarizing:

Number of students screened	Number of schools conducting screening
Number of students referred for services	Types of interventions provided
Format of the screening (e.g., grade level)	Referrals to external services
Number of students exhibiting mental health concerns	

Consent Acknowledgment

I, the undersigned, acknowledge that I have been informed about the mental health screening program and give my consent for my child to participate. I understand that participation is voluntary and that I can withdraw my child at any time by providing written notice.

Student's Name: _____

Caregiver/Guardian's Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Emergency Consent Form (Supplemental)

If your child is identified as being at immediate risk of harming themselves or others, you will be contacted immediately. In partnership with the **Utah Department of Health and Human Services**, the mobile response team may be contacted to assist in managing an acute mental health crisis. This is a **free service** that offers the following support, with the option for **free follow-up services**:

- Ensure you and your child are safe during the crisis.
- Provide a **crisis assessment** to evaluate the kind of help your child or family may need.
- Create a **safety plan** for handling future crises or challenges.
- Connect your family to other helpful resources and ongoing support options.

Please see the mobile response Consent and Conditions document for more information.