

School-based services available throughout Southeast Colorado



by Southeast Health Group



Meet Jonah. *Jonah is a kindergartener who has a really hard time leaving his parents when it's time to go to school. Each morning he cries, argues, and refuses to get ready to leave the house. His parents plead in frustration, knowing they could be late for work, and possibly miss work altogether, if they can't get Jonah to cooperate. When they do get Jonah to school, he is fearful and emotional, creating a distraction in the classroom. If you were Jonah's parent, what would you do?*

Fortunately for Jonah, his teacher referred his parents to Southeast Health Group's School-based Counselor. We worked with Jonah, his family, and the school to brainstorm coping strategies to help Jonah deal with anxiety and separation. The counselor provided a fuzzy "traveling bear" that helps Jonah transition between home and school, allowing him to feel connected even while physically separated from his family. We worked with the teachers to model how to provide effective comfort, support, and reassurance specific to Jonah's needs. Over a few months' time, Jonah was able to release his fears and his anxiety decreased. Eventually it got easier to go to school each morning, and he now feels confident and ready to learn when he gets there.

Young children commonly act in ways that we label as "misbehaving," when in fact, they are experiencing intense fear, anxiety and insecurity. School-based services allow us to provide real life, hands-on skills training to help children

deal with the struggles they face. In order to help a child with anxiety, therapy has to happen in a real setting—not in an office—where they can directly apply the new skills they are learning. With the support and assurance of the counselor, children can achieve success.

School-based services can address a variety of youth concerns including depression, anxiety, self-esteem and communication problems. Counselors can provide individual and group therapy, as well as individual and group skills training, intervening in

situations ranging from minor to intense levels of difficulty. We provide Mental Health First Aid training to school staff and teachers, and educational presentations on stress management, bullying, and self-esteem. We often provide referrals to Children's Hospital for complete evaluations. Our counselors can help coordinate care by offering families referrals to other regional and statewide resources.

For more information about School-based Services, please contact Laura DiPrince at 1-800-511-5446.

Southeast Health Group's team of professional counselors provides school-based services in all six southeastern Colorado counties:

Jenn Johnson: Ordway, Fowler, Manzanola, Baca County schools & Eads

Jacklyn Cargill: Rocky Ford, La Junta High School & Swink

Jana Brown: La Junta Primary, New Horizons, Las Animas & Cheraw

Lauren Meyer: La Junta Intermediate

BriAnn Appel: Holly, Granada & Lamar High School

Whitney Lee: Lamar Middle School & Parkview Elementary
Lamar

Jessica Mitchell: Lamar Washington & McClave

Sarah Voigts & Amy Reyes: All CDS and preschools