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## Summary

**Next Steps**

This monograph has provided the reader with a wealth of information on an array of topics influencing the effective delivery of school-based mental health services. The topics in this monograph include models of SBMH services, definitions of prevention, policies affecting school based mental health delivery, lists of evidence-based practices, and an overview of the research on the financing of mental health services. It is hoped that these materials will confirm some long held beliefs and practices as well as provide the impetus to develop and implement new strategies to help meet the needs of children. Within the current climate of transformation and reform it may be an opportune time to implement school-based mental health services with new tools and perspectives. The public health model provides a framework for school-based mental health services that can span the vast age groups and problems encountered in public schools today. Using this framework as a guide, the following considerations are provided as you build or re-build your school-based mental health service model:

- Develop and instill a clear vision based on sound values and principles about the importance of meeting the social and emotional needs of children and youth because social and emotional learning is an essential part of education across all ages;
- Implement school-wide prevention programs and acknowledge this will require new roles for community workers and school staff;
- Improve the educational outcomes of students by using evidence-based and empirically-supported selective and indicated prevention programs with particular attention to the academic needs of students with ED served in special education; and
- Take a systematic approach that goes beyond the individual school and uses district-wide and community-wide data on programs to inform decision-making.

**The convergence** of these two perspectives is the hallmark of “school-based mental health.”

In this era of accountability and school reform, the mental health community should be aware that their interventions must align with the major concern of the schools—academic achievement. Likewise, the education community must be aware that mental health professionals do have strategies to improve instruction and achievement as well as improving social and emotional functioning in children. The convergence of these two perspectives is the hallmark of “school-based mental health.”