

GEORGIA APEX PROGRAM

The Georgia Apex Program (Apex), funded by the Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities, is a statewide, school-based mental health initiative that embeds community mental health providers directly in schools to expand access for children and youth. Apex strengthens district partnerships and delivers a full continuum of supports, from universal prevention to intensive intervention, offered in-person and via telehealth during the school year, breaks, and summer.

What are the goals of the Georgia Apex Program?

-  Early detection of student mental health needs
-  Increase access to clinical care and prevention
-  Sustained coordination of school-community partnerships

How urgent is the crisis in Georgia?

Of the 751,785 6th through 12th graders that responded to the 2024 Georgia Student Health Survey:¹

370,573 (49%)
reported feeling depressed, sad, or withdrawn

38,329 (5%)
reported they had attempted suicide

Suicide remains a leading cause of death for Georgia youth under the age of 18.²

Why invest in school-based mental health?

School-based mental programs, like Apex, address needs of students meeting them where they are and intervening before a crisis escalates.³

Growth of the Apex Program from 2015 to 2025^{4, 5}

	2015	2025
Schools	104	808
Services	19,465	231,531
Students	4,372	16,121

That's a nearly 677% growth rate in the number of schools with Apex from years 1 to 9!

APEX STATS, 2023-2024⁶



16,121

students served



231,531

services delivered



808 (37%)

schools participated

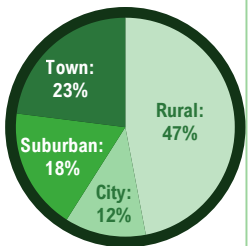


133 (73%)

districts participated

Geographic Reach:

124 (78%)
counties served



Funding & Payer Source:



of services were billed to Medicaid or CMOs, maximizing Georgia's return on investment.





SBMH Programs Support the ABCs of Student Success

Research shows that SBMH programs like Apex strengthen the key pillars of learning environments: **Attendance**, **Behavior**, and **Climate**. The following are results that have been observed in schools implementing SBMH programs:

Attendance

- **20–60% fewer absences** (*national study*)⁷
- Significantly improved attendance observed in Apex schools with an embedded therapist (*Apex study*)⁸

Behavior

- **60% reduction in suspensions and disciplinary referrals** (*national study*)⁹
- **Notably fewer student discipline incidents** compared to non-Apex schools (*Apex study*)¹⁰

Climate

- **Increased feelings of safety** (*national study*)¹¹
- **Stronger student-staff relationships** (*national study*)¹²
- **Higher student engagement** (*national study*)¹³
- **Greater improvement in School Climate Star Ratings** than non-Apex schools (*Apex study*)¹⁴

Youth are **SIX TIMES** more likely to complete treatment in school settings, making Georgia's continued investment a smart, high-impact way to expand access.

Apex fosters safe, supportive, and enriching learning environments.

Multi-tiered System of Supports¹⁵

Apex's three-tiered model delivers universal, targeted, and individualized supports. School-wide programs, such as PBIS, create a strong foundation and are strengthened by a diverse of school support staff. Building on this base, Apex delivers targeted group services and intensive one-on-one interventions from trained professionals, including social workers, to advance student well-being and improve school climate.

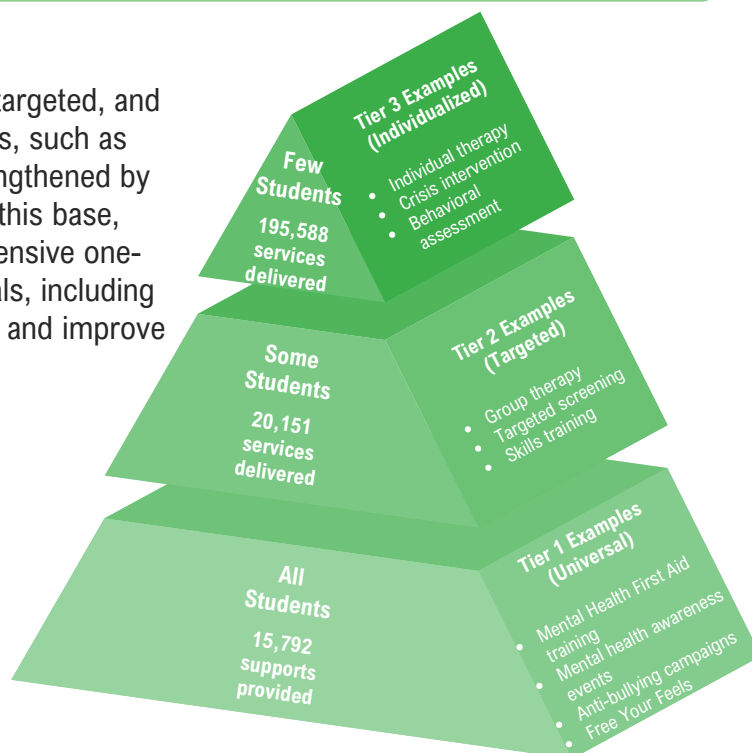
How to bring Apex to more schools:

Providers:

- Become an in-network mental health provider with the Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities or be chosen through the RFP process. Funding is determined by demonstrated need.

Schools:

- Partner with an in-network community-based or funded provider and direct the selection of schools for implementation.



Data is from
2023-2024



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