



3/4/2025

Re: Testimony supporting HB 2236-MHIT

Thank you Chairman Carpenter and members of Health and Human Services Committee for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 2236.

My name is Kathy Mosher, Licensed Clinical Psychotherapist, and CEO of Family Service & Guidance Center (FSGC) in Topeka. FSGC is a Community Mental Health Center (CMHC) specializing in youth and families for over 50 years. We provide mental health services to all Kansans who need them, regardless of their ability to pay.

FSGC was one of the original six CMHCs who implemented the Mental Health Intervention Team (MHIT) program collaboratively with school districts to establish help for students falling behind due to behavioral or emotional dysregulation. Since its inception in 2018, the MHIT program has expanded its access to reach more youth and its impact, and the value cannot be denied.

2024 FSGC-MHIT Data Points:

- MHIT is operational in 22 Shawnee county schools.
- 648 youth are enrolled in services through the MHIT program.
- 81% showed **improved school attendance**.
- 75% showed **improved externalized behaviors** (e.g., aggression, acting out).
- 82% showed **improved internalized behaviors** (e.g., depression, anxiety).
- 75% showed **improved academic success** (e.g., grades).

We also assisted schools, students, and families by providing 264 mobile crisis interventions.

What started with the MHIT program has further evolved our school partnerships to include the following:

- FSGC provides an array of comprehensive services, including trainings, social emotional skill building groups, 24-hour crisis response, and many interventions that further identify and remove access barriers for high risk youth.
- MHIT staff are now trained in determining presumptive eligibility to reduce uncovered fees for families by connecting them to health insurance. This resulted in 83 individuals getting immediate medical coverage.

What impact are the schools reporting?

- ❖ *“Since the start of MHIT at Topeka High, the benefit of the program cannot be denied. Its steady growth of consistent engagement has benefited the students with*

a safe place to land, process their emotions, and build critical skills to not only survive but learn to thrive. The trust built spans more than the therapeutic and clinical relationships, but into the school staff as well. The consistency of MHIT at Topeka High has created a culture that the students and families can depend on.”

- ❖ *“The MHIT program here at Jardine has assisted in getting kids services here in the school setting to help our kids regulate their social/emotional needs. The members of the team have done a great job of advocating for the youth served. They have helped bridge the gap from school to parents and assisted in getting medications, transporting to school, and assisting in the classroom setting. The agency staff are part of the school team and build relationships with both the youth and the school. This helps provide awareness to mental health and opens a collaborative effort to help each individual youth be successful. It also helps them build rapport and relationships over the summer and provide structure to better prepare them for the next year. We are so happy to have them here at our school!”*

MHIT is effective and works well in our community and could continue to grow, thrive, and evolve for many years to come. It’s important that this committee vote to move the program from a year-to-year proviso to a permanent program. This would allow for more stabilization within the workforce, more opportunity for growth and expansion, and better integration of programs to best serve the youth and families of Shawnee County.

Thank you for the opportunity to support HB 2236 and to put MHIT into statute. Your support would leave a long-lasting legacy that helps generations of families get healthier and become more productive adults.

I will stand for questions at the appropriate time.

Respectfully,

Kathy Mosher, Licensed Clinical Psychotherapist and CEO
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