



**Press Release**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Mary's Center Launched School-Based Mental Health Clinical Fellowship**

Program Aims to Address the Increased Shortage of Public Schools Mental Health Workforce

**Washington, DC** — Today, Mary's Center launched a School-Based Mental Health (SBMH) Fellowship Program to address the increased workforce shortage of mental health practitioners in the K-12 public school system since COVID-19 started.

The fellowship will also incorporate professional support to aid fellows in further developing the skills, ability, and resilience needed to build their confidence and competence in the work, resulting in improved long-term retention in school-based mental health roles.

"The dramatic departure of healthcare workers — especially in the school mental health setting — and the COVID-19 pandemic, highlighted the silent epidemic the world was already facing in our own and our children's mental health," said Marisa Parrella, Mary's Center Director of School-Based Mental Health Clinical Fellowship Program. "This fellowship program will equip school-based mental health clinicians with the knowledge, support, and strategies to deliver high quality, integrated, culturally competent services to students, families, and communities."

With a focus on health equity and anti-racist practice, candidate recruitment for the fellowship program will prioritize BIPOC clinicians, particularly those with dual language skills. All fellows will receive the support and skills needed by working alongside clinicians in our partner public schools in Washington, DC. Mary's Center will also use its existing partnerships with local experts in public health from The George Washington University's Milken Institute School of Public Health, enter for Health and Health Care in Schools, and clinical care and consultation from Georgetown's Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and the WISE Center at MedStar Georgetown University Hospital/Georgetown University Medical Center.

This fellowship is made possible through funding by [Education Forward DC](#), which invests in the transformation of public schools by supplying grants across DC and offering advisory support to grantees and students to make meaningful improvements in schools.

The program will have its first cohort begin in the Summer of 2023, and more information and the application can be found here. For more information about how to take part in or support this fellowship, please read our [blog post](#) and [an article published by NASW Metro](#) or reach out to Marisa Parrella at [mparrella@maryscenter.org](mailto:mparrella@maryscenter.org) or by calling 202-674-3754.

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### **About Mary's Center**

[Mary's Center](#) is a community health center serving over 65,000 people of all ages, incomes, and backgrounds in the Washington, DC metro area for 35 years. With an integrated model of health care, education, and social services, Mary's Center offers each participant individualized care on the path toward good health, stability, and economic independence. For more information, visit [www.maryscenter.org](http://www.maryscenter.org).