

CYBHI

Children and Youth
Behavioral Health Initiative



May Update



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A Message from CYBHI Director Melissa Stafford Jones

As we come to the end of [Mental Health Awareness Month](#), I am grateful to the Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative's (CYBHI) partners and collaborators for all you do to raise awareness of and reduce stigma around mental health and substance use issues.

It has been inspiring to see so many agencies, organizations and individuals bring attention to youth mental health needs and services, from the Governor's [proclamation](#) of Children's Mental Health Awareness Week to CalHHS and California Department of Education's (CDE) joint [letter](#) spotlighting schools' efforts to support student mental health and linking them to [CalHHS](#) and [CDE](#) resources that can help further create nurturing learning environments.

One major theme this Mental Health Awareness month has been widening our idea of what behavioral health support looks like and who provides it. I recently saw this in action at the first annual [California Moves](#) event, which focused on the intersection between movement, mindfulness and mental health, and it is central to many of the CYBHI's efforts to expand our behavioral health workforce and services, such as the forthcoming Wellness Coach Role.

The CYBHI and its workstreams continue to make progress. In May, we saw the opening of applications for [grant](#) and [scholarship](#) opportunities, as well as the awarding of more than \$23 million in grants through the [Substance Use Disorder Earn and Learn program](#). Building on our [Youth at the Center Report](#), the CYBHI also launched a new Children, Youth and Family Network which will help guide the initiative's engagement efforts over time.

While Mental Health Awareness Month may be over, the work of supporting California's youth mental health needs continues every day of the year. Thank you for your commitment, your hard work and your passion for helping our kids and families.

In Partnership,

Melissa Stafford Jones, Director, Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative

Current Funding Opportunities

Youth Suicide Prevention and Outreach Campaign (CDPH) Grants

Applications due by 1 p.m., June 6, 2023

The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and The Center at Sierra Health Foundation are partnering to implement the Youth Suicide Prevention Media and Outreach Campaign for youth at increased risk of suicide. This funding opportunity is intended for 501(c)(3) community-based organizations, Tribal organizations and coalitions/collaboratives. Information is available on The Center at Sierra Health Foundation [website](#).

Scholarship - Behavioral Health Scholarship Program (HCAI)

Application due by 3 p.m., August 15, 2023.

Applications are open for the Behavioral Health Scholarship Program, which aims to increase the number of appropriately trained allied and advanced behavioral health professionals providing direct patient care and support individuals pursuing behavioral health careers in reproductive health settings. Information is available on HCAI's Behavioral Health Scholarship Program [webpage](#).

Updates

Training a New Generation of Substance Use Disorder Counselors in California

In a significant move towards the fight against the opioid epidemic and substance use disorders (SUD), California has awarded \$23.3 million in grants to support students training to become certified SUD counselors.

The [SUD Earn and Learn program](#) seeks to build a skilled workforce that provides empathetic, compassionate care. The program, which is supported by the CYBHI, and administered by the Department of Health Care Access and Information (HCAI), provides students with specialized education in addiction treatment and counseling, along with hands-on experience working with clients in a supervised setting.

With a growing demand for SUD services and an ongoing workforce crisis, this program breaks down the barriers to entry that make it difficult for an individual to become a certified SUD counselor. The program also allows providers to offer paid time for schooling activities, cover costs of certification incentive programs for

educational instructors and SUD experience mentors, and offer career placement bonuses.

See the list of awardees on the [HCAI website](#).

Stories From the Field: Alameda Behavioral Health Collaborative

*To help youth and families get mental health and substance use support where, when and in the way they need it, the CYBHI is **developing a larger, more skilled and more representative behavioral health workforce**. The following story demonstrates approaches that can help advance that goal and the impact they can create.*

To address California's rising youth mental health needs, California created the **Wellness Coach** role, a new, certified position to provide wellness promotion and education, screening, care coordination, pre-clinical individual and group support and crisis referrals in a variety of settings, such as schools and community-based organizations.

Open to associate's- and bachelor's-degree-holders who meet certification requirements, the position will enable a diverse applicant pipeline while supplementing existing behavioral health roles and filling workforce gaps.

Roles of this type can be found across the state, including in Alameda County. Members of the [Behavioral Health Collaborative of Alameda County](#) have created, highlighted and expanded roles that 1) provide individual and group support; 2) integrate between systems and within broader teams; and 3) are accessible to people who are interested in behavioral health careers but have not earned a master's degree, creating accessibility to a wider range of candidates.

"Formal education is important, but it's not everything," said Collaborative Executive Director Matthew Madaus. "It should be a supplement to life experience, character and values."

So, what can these types of roles look like in practice? One example can be found at [East Bay Agency for Children \(EBAC\)](#), which for 70 years has helped East Bay children, youth and families to recover from trauma, build resilience and avoid exposure to adverse childhood experiences.

Integrating Mental Health in the School System: Behavioral Health Counselors

As a Behavioral Health Counselor at EBAC, Harold Johnson works in partnership with the school system to help students understand, respond to and heal from the effects of

trauma. “These kids are amazing and wonderful, and if you come in with an open heart, you can make some breakthroughs,” Harold said.

Addressing youth mental health needs begins with meeting them where they are. Behavioral Health Counselors are embedded into the classroom, where they can give kids the support they need, when, where and in the way they need it.

For Harold, that means doing a little bit of everything. “I provide academic support, emotional support, one-to-one counseling, group counseling,” Harold said. “I’m pretty much a good listener.”

When Harold started with EBAC 28 years ago, youth behavioral health work was mainly focused on talk therapy, treated separately from educational needs. Today, it’s integrated directly into the classroom, and roles like Harold’s form a critical bridge between our education and mental health systems. The resulting environment is conducive to learning and healing. “To learn, kids need trust and to feel safe. Meeting them where they are, you can connect, build a relationship and make that happen.”

Harold has seen the education and mental health systems grow more collaborative over the years. Looking forward, Harold believes that finding ways to combine their strengths will help them serve students together from a place of empathy.

“I would love for schools to implement trauma-informed training for all staff,” Harold said. “Training everyone, from the teachers to the front office, custodians and cafeteria staff, would help not just students but the whole school.” (*In Summer, 2023, The Office of the California Surgeon General will release a [free, online professional learning module](#) designed to help early care and education personnel respond to trauma and stress in children.*)

EBAC’s Behavioral Health Counselors are just one innovative approach being used in Alameda County to expand the behavioral health workforce in areas from education to social services and substance use recovery. “The compassion and ability to restore hope that paraprofessionals exhibit can be extraordinarily effective,” said Matthew.

Integrating systems, coordinating care and embracing trusted voices for education and skill-building can make our systems more equitable and effective for all our children and families. “When kids see us, all pulling in the same direction for them, that’s big,” said Harold. “They see all that love and attention coming, and they know it’s for them.”

To learn more about the Wellness Coach model, visit [HCAI’s CYBHI webpage](#).

Upcoming Meetings and Participation Opportunities

May 31, 2023 – 10-11:30 a.m. – The Behavioral Health Scholarship Program Webinar

Learn how the Behavioral Health Scholarship Program (BHSP) Program works, and how to apply for scholarships in this informational webinar. Registration information is available on the [BHSP webpage](#).

June 9, 2023 – 2-4:00 p.m. – CYBHI Quarterly Webinar

[Register to join this webinar](#).

Stay Engaged

The CYBHI welcomes all input. To learn more about the CYBHI and to sign up to receive regular updates and engagement opportunities, please visit the [CYBHI webpage](#).

To engage on workstream-specific topics, please use the following information:

- Department of Health Care Services:
 - Contact information for questions/feedback: CYBHI@dhcs.ca.gov
 - Children & Youth Behavioral Health Initiative [Webpage](#)
 - Student Behavioral Health Incentive Program (SHIP) [Webpage](#)
 - Behavioral Health Continuum Infrastructure Program (BHCIP) [Webpage](#)
 - CalHOPE Student Support [Webpage](#)
- Department of Health Care Access and Information (HCAI): CYBHI@hcai.ca.gov
- Department of Managed Health Care: CYBHI@dmhc.ca.gov
- California Department of Public Health: CYBHI@cdph.ca.gov
- Office of the California Surgeon General: info@osg.ca.gov

About the CYBHI

The [Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative \(CYBHI\)](#) is a five-year, \$4.7 billion initiative that is transforming the way California supports children, youth and families. Serving as the core of California's [Master Plan for Kids' Mental Health](#), the CYBHI works to reimagine a more integrated, youth-centered system where young people can find support for mental health and substance use needs where, when and in the way they need it most. Built on a foundation of equity and accessibility, the CYBHI is

created by and for youth and families. Together with partners across sectors and systems, we are meeting young people where they are—such as schools—to provide access to mental health and substance use services and supports.

Past Updates & Information

- [April 2023 CYBHI Update](#)
- [March 2023 CYBHI Update](#)
- [February 2023 CYBHI Update](#)
- February 2023 Quarterly Webinar ([presentation](#) and [video recording](#))
- [January 2023 CYBHI Update](#)
- [December 2022 CYBHI Update](#)
- October 2022 Quarterly Webinar ([presentation](#) and [video recording](#))
- [September 2022 CYBHI Update](#)
- [August 2022 CYBHI Update](#)
- July 2022 Quarterly Webinar ([presentation](#) and [video recording](#))
- [June 2022 CYBHI Update](#)
- [March 2022 CYBHI Update](#)
- March 2022 Kick-Off Webinar ([presentation](#) and [video recording](#))
- [February 2022 CYBHI Update](#)