

CALIFORNIA AWARDS \$150 MILLION TO SUPPORT MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS FOR YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS

SACRAMENTO — As part of Governor Gavin Newsom’s [Master Plan for Kids’ Mental Health](#), the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) today [awarded](#) \$150 million to 262 organizations to support wellness and build resilience of children, youth, and young adults.

WHY THIS MATTERS: By scaling successful Evidence-Based Practices and Community-Defined Evidence Practices (EBP/CDEP) models throughout the state, California is improving access to critical behavioral health interventions and services, including those focused on prevention, early intervention, and resiliency/recovery, for children, youth and young adults.

“Early intervention programs and practices that aim to address and mitigate the impacts of trauma offer a solution and step in the right direction for California’s children, youth and families. Youth driven programs are an important community support because they are designed with, by, and for youth and young adults to help reduce stigma, embrace mental wellness, and increase community connection,” said **DHCS Director Michelle Baass**.

Collectively, the programs being invested in today will:

- Increase early intervention so children and youth with or at high risk for behavioral health conditions can access services before conditions escalate and require higher level care.
- Support the resilience of children and youth by mitigating the adverse effects of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). Adverse effects may include, but are not limited to, brain development, emotional health and behavioral health conditions, among other, conditions.
- Increase the capacity of child-serving service systems (e.g., child welfare, juvenile justice system) to deliver trauma-informed practices.
- Create and expand youth drop-in centers and/or other youth-driven programs that provide access to culturally responsive services.
- Provide a safe space for youth and young adults to find community, support, and advice.
- Increase early intervention so youth and young adults with or at high risk for behavioral health conditions can access services before conditions escalate and require higher level care.
- Reduce health disparities by improving equitable access to services for parents, caregivers, and youth in California that are culturally and linguistically responsive to the needs of the populations of focus.

With these awards, funded as part of the Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative ([CYBHI](#)) Evidence-based Practices (EBP) and Community-defined Evidence Practices (CDEP) Grant Program, DHCS seeks to scale EBPs and CDEPs in the following areas:

- Trauma-informed practices and programs (\$100 million) designed to address the impact of trauma and support the resilience of children and youth by mitigating the adverse effects of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), build knowledge of trauma-informed support and communication, increase the capacity of child-serving service systems on trauma-informed practices, improve the understanding of how community trauma and racism impact child and youth well-being, and improve grief support for children and youth with COVID-related trauma among other outcomes. Through this award, DHCS is expanding access to trauma-informed behavioral health services across various settings in 58 California counties.
- Youth-driven programs (\$50 million) to provide a safe space for youth and young adults (ages 12-25) by expanding youth-driven community center programs, where young people can access a variety of services and supports in a single location, and other youth-led practices. DHCS, in collaboration with the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission, is expanding youth-driven programs in 30 California counties.

"California's Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative is driving transformative change in our behavioral health system," said **California Health & Human Services Agency Secretary Dr. Mark Ghaly**. "These trauma-informed practice youth-driven programs will increase access, reduce health disparities, and promote health equity."

EXAMPLE OF WORK BEING FUNDED: The allcove™ youth drop-in centers aim to increase access to affordable mental health and wellness services – for youth between the ages of 12 and 25 and their families – that includes behavioral health, physical health, housing, education, and employment support, and linkage to other services. They will provide culturally competent and relevant services for vulnerable and marginalized youth populations, including, but not limited to, LGBTQ+, homeless, and Indigenous youth. The design of the allcove™ centers will be youth-driven with ongoing participation from youth through the establishment of allcove™ youth advisory groups. The overall goal of funding allcove™ centers is to reduce suicide and suicide ideation, homelessness, unemployment, and school failure.

AWARD DETAILS: EBP and CDEP practice models funded under this opportunity include:

- Round Two – Trauma-Informed Practices and Programs: Attachment and Biobehavioral Catch-Up, Child Parent Psychotherapy, Cognitive Behavioral Interventions for Trauma in Schools, Dialectical Behavior Therapy, Family Centered Treatment, Functional Family Therapy, Modular Approach to Therapy for Children with Anxiety, Depression, Trauma, or Conduct Problems, Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Multisystemic Therapy, Crossover Youth Practice Model and a variety of other trauma-informed programs.

The specific EBP/CDEP's selected will maximize impact and reduce disparities for all children and youth with an emphasis on programs/practices that focus on marginalized communities; focus on the upstream continuum of care to reduce the risk of significant behavioral health concerns in the future; affirm the right to access help and provide access to high-quality, appropriate care for all children and youth; destigmatize community support to enable every community to recognize the signs of behavioral health concerns and be willing to support those with behavioral health concerns without stigma; and, have a data driven-approach to expand the use of evidence-based behavioral health services.

- Round Four - Youth Driven Programs: [allcove™ model](#) and other youth drop-in centers, Clubhouse model, Fostering Healthy Futures – Preteen, Transition to Independence Process model, Peer Respite, Across Ages, and a variety of other youth-driven programs.

The practices funded under this round of funding focus on the importance of the youth voice in developing interventions that reach, are wanted by, and are appropriate for youth in their communities. [Research](#) indicates that not only are youth peer coaches qualified to support other youth “because of their experience facing similar challenges,” but this support is crucial for their peers suffering from serious mental health conditions. As part of the CYBHI stakeholder engagement process, youth participants expressed similar sentiments, highlighting the potential for youth-driven programs and practices to make an impact on improving behavioral health outcomes.

The grants can also serve to scale efforts by DHCS and the California Department of Health Care Access and Information in creating a robust wellness coach infrastructure in California by increasing foundational skills and fostering interest in mental health workforce pathways in youth, especially youth of color.

HOW WE GOT HERE: Over the past 18 months, DHCS engaged with more than 1,000 unique and diverse stakeholders and key implementation partners across California, including youth, families and caregivers, local educational agencies and educators, health care providers and payers, behavioral health experts, and community-based organizations. DHCS prioritized hearing from youth, young adults, and families, with more than 300-plus youth and young adults engaged via focus groups, surveys, and regular advisory body meetings.

Through an extensive community engagement process, DHCS identified EBPs and CDEPs to consider for scaling throughout the state, subject to further refinement based on an assessment of sustainable financing mechanisms, including Medi-Cal and commercial coverage and/or other funding streams. DHCS published its [grant strategy](#), which details the goals of the grant program across six distinct rounds of funding.

BIGGER PICTURE: The awards focus on equity, centering efforts around youth and young adult voices, strengths, needs, priorities, and experiences, especially for those most at risk. They also drive transformative systems change and use ongoing learnings as the basis for change and improvement in outcomes for children and youth. CYBHI is an important component of the Governor's transformation of California's mental health system.

#

NUMBER: 23-49 | **DATE:** December 21, 2023
CONTACT: [Office of Communications](#), (916) 440-7660

www.dhcs.ca.gov