

# Director's Report

July 15, 2020



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(805) 681-5220 ♦ <http://countyofsb.org/behavioral-wellness>

## DEPARTMENT AND COUNTY NEWS

**Research and Evidence-Based Strategy Sharing:** First 5 Santa Barbara County is leading the way in their use of research and evidence-based strategies to inform data driven decision making. First 5 Executive Director, Wendy Sims-Moten, recently shared the importance not only of preparing children for Kindergarten, but the need also for addressing social factors that have proven to be barriers to the equity and access of children of color, immigrants, and those that face adverse childhood experiences to no fault of their own. In addition, Sims-Moten recently co-chaired a County Board of Supervisors meeting on Black Lives Matter. “We must continue to endeavor to stand for the human right of all African-American children to grow up in unprejudiced societies with access to high-quality education, equitable health care, and a criminal justice system that is nondiscriminatory,” states Wendy Sims-Moten. Wendy goes on to share “All leaders must stand in solidarity with the African-American community. Those with influence and privilege must use this power to address inequitable systems and hold one another accountable.”

In a recent communication surrounding the use of research and evidence-based strategy sharing, First 5 Santa Barbara shared what is informing at the moment:

- Talking to young children about race and racism is important. Children are never too young to learn about diversity, how to be inclusive, and to recognize what is fair. In the article, “How to Talk Honestly to Children About Race and Racism”, Dr. Aisha White, Director of the P.R.I.D.E. Program within the Office of Child Development at the University of Pittsburgh shares that as young as 3 months old, children may look differently at people who look or don't look like their primary caregivers. The research continues to show that children recognize skin color differences very early on and at age 2 ½ can begin showing biases towards those that don't look like them. For more on this, visit <https://www.pbs.org/parents/talking-about-racism>.
- Most people have heard about "the talk" — the conversation many African American parents have with their kids about how to avoid altercations with police or what to do and say if they're stopped. The recent unrest sparked by anger over police brutality against African Americans has parents who aren't black thinking more about how they talk to their kids about race. Michel Martin, weekend host of All Things Considered, spoke with Jennifer Harvey, author of Raising White Kids: Bringing Up Children in a Racially Unjust America. [You can access this NPR podcast here.](#)

- Equity in education is a goal everyone in education can get behind. What educator doesn't want to see all students have an equal opportunity for success? But it's not always easy to define precisely what we mean when we talk about equity. Is it about outcomes? Resources? Funding? Academic support? Achieving true equity will require looking at all of these aspects and more, from both a larger systems perspective and an individual student perspective. In the article "Equity in Education: What it Is and Why it Matters", the author takes a closer look at what we mean by educational equity and what school leaders and teachers can do to improve equity at the school and classroom level. More can be found at <https://www.thinkingmaps.com/equity-education-matters/>

"We are all called at this moment, all of us to live our values, to stand together, to work together, and to be courageous together because all young children deserve better" says Wendy Sims-Moten, "We must hold on and stay strong!"

### **Behavioral Wellness Commission Public Hearing for the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Fiscal Year 2020-23 Annual Plan Update:**

The Behavioral Wellness Commission and **MHSA Chief, Lindsay Walter**, invites you to join the conversation on Wednesday July 15, 2020, 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm for the Public Hearing for the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Fiscal Year 2020-23 Annual Plan Update.

This plan document can be found on our website at: [Draft 2020-2023 MHSA Three Year Plan](#).

The meeting will be hosted through Zoom. The public may observe the meeting online at Zoom.us by going to <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81045274131?pwd=NjJKUktNUlBZVnBVZ2lBQ213MU5iZz09>. The Meeting ID is 810 45 27 4131 and the password is 649552. If you are unable to join the online meeting, you may also call in to (669) 900 6833 and when prompted, enter the Meeting ID 810 4527 4131 and the password 649552. Persons desiring to address the meeting participants can attend via online Zoom, by phone, or submit a comment via email.

If you wish to send in a comment prior to the meeting, please try to limit to 250 words or less, and submit to the Program Administrator at [kcampos@sbcbswell.org](mailto:kcampos@sbcbswell.org) prior to noon on Tuesday July 14th. Your comment will be placed into the meeting record and distributed appropriately, including being read at the meeting.

Individuals with disabilities who desire to request a reasonable accommodation or modification to observe or participate in the meeting may make such request by contacting Karen Campos at (805) 681-5221 or by sending an email to [kcampos@sbcbswell.org](mailto:kcampos@sbcbswell.org). The request should be made no later than noon on Tuesday July 14<sup>th</sup> in order to provide time for the County to address the request. Additionally, to request interpretation or if any more information is needed, please contact Lindsay Walter at: [lwalter@co.santa-barbara.ca.us](mailto:lwalter@co.santa-barbara.ca.us)

**New and Revised Policies Approved:** Behavioral Wellness frequently updates policies to reflect enhancements and changes to programs and practices. The following policies were recently approved and are available on the Behavioral Wellness website at <http://countyofsb.org/behavioral-wellness/policies>. You can find policies approved within the last 6 months under the tab “View Only RECENT Policies”. You can also search alphabetically, by category, or by keyword.

1. **Mandatory Trainings (Revised)** – This policy outlines all trainings that Department and CBO staff are required to take in order to be with the requirements of the Mental Health Plan, the Drug Medi-Cal Organized Delivery System waiver, as well as other relevant laws regulations, contracts, and guidelines.
2. **MHSA Community Services and Supports (New)** – The purpose of this policy is outline how MHSA funds are to be used in order to implement and operate a CSS program as a component of the MHSA Three-Year Plan and Expenditure Program.
3. **MHSA Community Program Planning Process (New)** – The purpose of this policy is outline the Department’s procedures for collaborating with stakeholders to determine the appropriate uses of available MHSA funds.
4. **MHSA Workforce Education and Training (New)** – The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures that will create and support a Department workforce that is culturally competent, provides client/family driven mental health services, and adheres to wellness, recovery, and resilience values.
5. **MHSA Innovations Projects (New)** – The purpose of this policy is to outline how the Department will use MHSA funds to develop and implement MHSA Innovations Projects.
6. **MHSA Capital Facilities and Technological Needs (New)** – This policy establishes standards and procedures for incorporating MHSA services through Capital Facilities and Technological Needs projects.
7. **MHSA Full Service Partnership Services (New)** – The purpose of this policy is to inform staff of services available to unserved and/or at-risk beneficiaries who meet the necessary criteria under the Mental Health Services Act.

### **Santa Barbara Regional Partnership:**

**Children:** Ali Cortez, clinical youth outreach worker with the SBUSD, shared about her work with the youth during the pandemic. Ali provides education about life skills, diving into education about emotional awareness and expression. She shared that the engagement of youth started high and has since decreased over time. She also shared that child abuse reports have decreased in the past few months. Suicidality increased in March and has started to go down in April. She expressed that the positive aspect of the COVID-19 experience was that it has strengthened the systems that were in place to utilize as we move forward.

Saul Serrano who is a manager with CAC and leads the South Coast Youth Safety Partnership, shared that the team started in early 2010 to address youth gang incidents in the South Coast. To inform strategic planning, the partnership completed a Youth Needs Assessment and Focus groups in 2019 to get a clear picture of the needs of our youth and offering the youth a place to express their voices. The report was

commissioned by CAC and produced by UCSB Gewirtz Graduate School. The South Coast Youth Safety Partnership Strategic Plan can be found [here](#) or by the following url

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1P5j-f0FSgh1KBdteovmQ8rbbJSB7jk91/view>

In early 2020 there was an uptick in gang incidents of violent amongst youth and then in April local youth adopted a call to peace and there has been a significant decrease in violence. The Partnership will continue to monitor how this takes effect as we transition to re-opening.

**Adults:** Shana Burns, Forensic Manager and Nicole Horne, Team Supervisor presented program information on the Santa Barbara Justice Alliance (JA) team and shared that it is a time-limited, *outreach and engagement*, specialized Full-Service Partnership (FSP) program that seeks to provide transitional, supportive services and linkage to individuals with mental health needs, who are criminal justice-involved. The JA program was designed to remove barriers to accessing treatment, while assisting individuals with navigating both the criminal justice and behavioral health systems. They provide services that promote stabilization, reintegration in the community and reduced recidivism with the goal of linking them to longer-term care, such as the ACT program or an outpatient clinic. There was robust discussion and a question and answer portion to the meeting which proved very educational as it was agreed this specialized population is typically involved in many parts of our county's system and partner agencies.

**Change Agents:** Change agents met to review current process improvement projects and lend support for initiating new projects within the department. Current projects discussed include: increasing attendance to telehealth groups and problem solving around client IT issues, making the lobbies more welcoming given the current placement of signage for COVID-19 and lack of seating, and increasing access to telehealth practitioners and case workers for walk-in clients. The Change Agent team also discussed potential process improvement projects such as reducing the rate of no-shows after launching RxNT (a new scheduling system) and a process for improved hand-offs from the homeless service system to the outpatient clinics.

**Children's System of Care (CSOC) Action Team:** The Children's System of Care Action Team met on June 25 to review history of action items historically implemented. The team discussed and clarified the mission, purpose and vision of the CSOC. Group members identified various areas to enhance our current children's system of care within Santa Barbara County. A compilation of these identified areas was shared with the team with the request that members select their top few areas of preferred focus for the upcoming year. The next CSOC meeting will meet on July 23 from 10:30 a.m. to Noon. Please contact Janal Lopez at [janlopez@sbcbswell.org](mailto:janlopez@sbcbswell.org) for more information.

**Cultural Competency and Diversity Action Team (CCDAT):** During the June CCDAT meeting, members were able to listen to the President of the Santa Maria chapter of the NAACP speak about the Social Justice Solidarity March that took place in June and joint efforts of the CCDAT team to host a "channeling your energy into Mental wellness" forum. Members were also provided information on organizational departmental and the Help@Hand update. Additionally, we discussed the CCDAT focused goals that are going to lead our efforts this fiscal year.

**Forensic Action Team:** The Forensic Action Team Meeting seeks to connect a wide variety of leaders and stakeholders invested in cross-sector collaboration and ongoing systemic enhancements for services provided to criminal justice-involved juveniles and adults. Meetings occur monthly on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays @ 1:30-3:00 pm (via Zoom until further notice). The most recent, June meeting, included presentations by Behavioral Wellness' Forensic Psychologist, [John Lewis, PhD](#), regarding the Prop 47 Jail Diversion & AB1810 Department of State Hospitals (DSH) Felony Diversion Grants. In addition, a presentation was made by Amber Nunes, Wellpath Health Services Administrator and the Sheriff's Office Commander Sullivan, regarding Jail Based Competency Treatment (JBCT) Program. The next Forensic Action Team meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, July, 22<sup>nd</sup> @ 1:30-3:00 pm**. Please contact [Shana Burns, LMFT, Forensics Services Manager](#), at (805) 335-4263 or [Celeste Andersen, Compliance Officer](#) and Forensics Action Team Co-Chair at [candersen@sbcbswell.org](mailto:candersen@sbcbswell.org), with any questions and/or if you would like to be added to the invite list.

## NATIONAL AND STATE NEWS

**National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month:** Mental health conditions do not discriminate based on race, color, gender or identity. Anyone can experience the challenges of mental illness regardless of their background. However, background and identity can make access to mental health treatment much more difficult. [National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month](#) was established in 2008 to start changing this. Each year millions of Americans face the reality of living with a mental health condition. Taking on the challenges of mental health conditions, health coverage and the stigma of mental illness requires all of us. In many communities, these problems are increased by less access to care, cultural stigma and lower quality care.

### How can you help share the word?

NAMI's *You Are Not Alone* campaign features the lived experience of people affected by mental illness to fight stigma, inspire others and educate the broader public. Now more than ever, the mental health community must come together and show that no one is ever really alone. The campaign builds connection and increases awareness with the digital tools that make connection possible during a climate of physical distancing. NAMI supports all diverse backgrounds, cultures and perspectives, reminding everyone that you are not alone.

Help us spread the word through awareness, support and advocacy activities. Share minority mental health awareness information, [images and graphics](#) for #MinorityMentalHealth throughout July.

America's entire mental health system needs improvement, including when it comes to serving marginalized communities. [Learn more about how you can get involved](#) with Minority Mental Health Awareness Month.



## SYSTEMS CHANGE CALENDAR

**Please Note:** Due to COVID-19, to protect the health and safety of our staff and other partners, no Action Team meetings will be held in person for the foreseeable future. All will be held remotely.

- **Behavioral Wellness Commission:** The Behavioral Wellness Commission meets on the third Wednesday of every month from 3:00pm – 5:00pm. Video conferencing is available at the Santa Barbara Children’s Clinic large conference room, Santa Maria Clinic Conference Room and the Lompoc Children’s Clinic Newport Harbor Room. Questions: Jacob Ibrahim at [jibrahim@co.santa-barbara.ca.us](mailto:jibrahim@co.santa-barbara.ca.us)
- **Change Agent Meeting:** Change agents meet the fourth Wednesday of every month 9 – 11 am except during quarterly in-person meetings, which are 9 am – 12 noon. Video conferencing is available at the Santa Barbara Children’s Clinic, Small conference room; and the Santa Maria Adult Clinic large conference room located at 500 West Foster Road, Santa Maria. Questions: Janal Lopez, [janlopez@co.santa-barbara.ca.us](mailto:janlopez@co.santa-barbara.ca.us)
- **Lompoc Regional Partnership Meeting:** Meetings occur every other month on the third Tuesday at 301 N. R Street. Questions: Anthony Hollenback, [ahollenback@co.santa-barbara.ca.us](mailto:ahollenback@co.santa-barbara.ca.us)
- **Santa Barbara Adult Regional Partnership:** meets every 3rd Monday of the month from 10:00 am – 11:00 am at the Santa Barbara Children’s Clinic, large conference room. Questions: Veronica Heinzelmann, [vheinzelmann@co.santa-barbara.ca.us](mailto:vheinzelmann@co.santa-barbara.ca.us)
- **Santa Barbara Children’s Regional Partnership:** 3th Thursday of the month from 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm at the Santa Barbara Children’s Clinic, large conference room. Questions: Veronica Heinzelmann, [vheinzelmann@co.santa-barbara.ca.us](mailto:vheinzelmann@co.santa-barbara.ca.us).
- **Santa Maria Children’s Regional Partnership Meeting** is held every 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month at 10 am in the large meeting room at the Foster Road Clinic. Questions: Roberto Rodriguez at [robertor@co.santa-barbara.ca.us](mailto:robertor@co.santa-barbara.ca.us)
- **Santa Maria Adult Regional Partnership** occurs every 3rd Monday of the month at 11 am in the large meeting room at the Foster Road Clinic. Questions: Questions: John Winckler at [jwinckler@co.santa-barbara.ca.us](mailto:jwinckler@co.santa-barbara.ca.us)
- **The Housing, Empowerment, Action and Recovery Team (HEART)** meets the second Wednesday of every other month, 1:00-2:30 p.m. Locations: Behavioral Wellness Conference Room 261 and Santa Maria Annex via videoconference. Contact Laura Zeitz, [lazeitz@sbcbswell.org](mailto:lazeitz@sbcbswell.org)
- **The Cultural Competency and Diversity Action Team (CCDAT)** meets the second Friday of each month, 9:30-11:00 am, Locations: Santa Barbara Children’s Clinic Large Conference Room 119, Santa Maria Annex and Lompoc B St. Contact Maria Arteaga at 805-681-5208 or [marteaga@co.santa-barbara.ca.us](mailto:marteaga@co.santa-barbara.ca.us)

or Anthony Hollenback at 805-737-6610 or [ahollenback@co.santa-barbara.ca.us](mailto:ahollenback@co.santa-barbara.ca.us) to get zoom log in information.

- **The Consumer and Family Member Action Team** meets the second Thursday of the Month from 2 – 4:00 pm. Locations: Behavioral Wellness Santa Barbara Conference Room 261, Lompoc Children’s New Port Room the Santa Maria Annex Room via videoconference. Contact Maria Arteaga at 805-681-5208 or [marteaga@co.santa-barbara.ca.us](mailto:marteaga@co.santa-barbara.ca.us)
- **The Crisis Action Team** meets the second Thursday of the month, 2:30 – 4:00 pm, Santa Barbara Children’s large conference room 119. Contact Jeff Shannon, [jeshannon@sbcbswell.org](mailto:jeshannon@sbcbswell.org) .
- **The Children’s System of Care Action Team** meets the 4th Thursday of the month, 10:30 am - 12:00 noon. SELPA Conference Room, 240 E. Hwy. 246, Suite 200, Buellton CA 93127. Contact Anthony Hollenback at [ahollenback@co.santa-barbara.ca.us](mailto:ahollenback@co.santa-barbara.ca.us)
- **Forensic Action Team** will be meeting every other month on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday from 1:30 - 3. Meetings are held at the Behavioral Wellness Children’s Mental Health Services building, room 119, located at 429 N. San Antonio Rd in Santa Barbara. The **July 22** meeting will be occurring via Zoom. For questions or Zoom log in information, please contact Shana Burns at [sburns@co.santa-barbara.ca.us](mailto:sburns@co.santa-barbara.ca.us) or Celeste Andersen at [candersen@sbcbswell.org](mailto:candersen@sbcbswell.org)