

Director's Report

May 19, 2021



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DEPARTMENT AND COUNTY NEWS

May is Mental Health Awareness Month: The past year has presented multiple different challenges that have tested our strength and resiliency. The global COVID-19 pandemic required coping with situations we never could have imagined and as a result, has caused an increase in struggles with mental health for many people. We are fortunate that there are lots of resources available, and many things we can do ourselves, to strengthen our mental health. The theme for this year's May is Mental Health Awareness Month could not be a better fit. As the 2021 theme, **Tools 2 Thrive**, focuses on providing practical tools that everyone can use to improve their mental health and increase their resiliency regardless of their personal situation.

Now, more than ever, we need to combat the stigma surrounding mental health concerns. That's why this year for the month of May, Behavioral Wellness will be promoting mental health awareness as well as what we can do throughout our daily lives to prioritize our mental health, build resiliency, and continue to cope with the challenges of the pandemic as well as others.

Listed below are a few practical tools that everyone can use to improve their mental health and increase resiliency, regardless of the situations they are dealing with:

- Focus on the things you can control
- Stay connected with others and reach out for support when needed.
- Get outdoors, enjoy nature, walk your dog, exercise
- Sleep and eat well
- Take time for yourself and find ways to relax

Throughout the month of May, Behavioral Wellness will be offering a weekly 10-minute guided Headspace meditation space on zoom which will take place every Wednesday in May at 12:30. The zoom link to join these 10-minute session on May 5, 12, 19 and 26 is:

Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87930922765?pwd=ZmlnemtpK0tqZUowaUYyRmxlVGVU5QT09>

Meeting ID: 879 3092 2765

Passcode: D5Pa7h

Pictures reflecting the Behavioral Wellness support for May as Mental Health Awareness Month are shared below.



Santa Barbara Child and Family Services



Calle Real Lobby



Calle Real maximizes outdoor space for groups

Support Provided at Cate School Following Unexpected Student Death: A big thank you to the Behavioral Wellness staff in partnership with the department led Community Wellness Team (with special thanks to the Santa Barbara Response Network) for the immediate and supportive response to Cate school following the notice of the unexpected death of a student. As a small campus and closely connected community, the support to help both students and staff with their recovery from this event has been greatly appreciated. Special thanks to: [Alexa Stevinson](#), [David Bautista](#), [Lindsey Milner](#), [Ted Grunt](#) and [Suzanne Grimmersey](#).

Behavioral Wellness Co-Response Team Receives Commendation: The Santa Barbara Police Department recently recognized the outstanding work of the Behavioral Wellness [Co-Response Clinician Marisol Fregoso](#), and Co-Response law enforcement officers Burleigh (SBPD) and Plett (SBSO). These three Co-Response personnel collaborated to defuse a situation that could have led to use of force and/or incarceration of an individual struggling with mental illness. Commendations of this nature are selectively offered should be celebrated accordingly. Congratulations [Marisol](#) and thank you for all the great work you are doing in the Behavioral Wellness Co-Response program!

5th Annual Bridges to Resilience Conference: The 5th Annual Bridges to Resilience conference, aimed at connecting the Coastal Tri-Counties will take place on June 9, 2021 from 8 a.m. – 3 p.m. This will be a live virtual event hosted by ACE's Aware and the KIDS Network of Santa Barbara County. More information and registration can be found on the conference website here: www.bridgestoresilience.com

Nurses Appreciation Week: This year's Nurses Appreciation week ran from May 6th through May 12th. Not only do our Behavioral Wellness nurses work tirelessly on a regular basis, but this year has stretched them even further with the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has offered yet another reminder of the integral role that all nurses play in keeping our community healthy. The impact of the pandemic is somewhat unique within the Behavioral Health system. For all Behavioral Wellness nurses THANK YOU for all you do every single day. You are appreciated beyond words.



New and Revised Approved Policies: 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 <https://www.countyofsb.org/behavioral-wellness/policies-procedures.sbc>.

1. **Adherence to the County's Acceptable Use Policy (Revised)** – This policy sets guidelines for how staff will be advised on the Santa Barbara County's *Acceptable Use* policy.
2. **Aftercare Planning (Revised)** – This policy ensures that CSU staff initiate and complete the planning of Aftercare Services, starting at intake.

3. **Beneficiary Reimbursement Claim (Revised)** – The purpose of this policy is to inform beneficiaries on how to complete beneficiary reimbursement claims for SMHS and SUD services.
4. **Crisis Assessment Procedures (Revised)** – The purpose of this policy is to guide designated staff on the completion of psychiatric Crisis Assessments for Santa Barbara County residents.
5. **Department Acceptance of Donations (Revised)** – The purpose of this policy is to encourage, recognize, and report cash and non-cash donations in the most proper manner.
6. **EPSDT and TBS Notification for Medi-Cal Beneficiaries Under 21 (Revised)** – This policy implements procedures to ensure that Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment and Therapeutic Behavioral Services notice brochures are provided to beneficiaries under 21 years of age and their representatives at the time of facility placement.
7. **Safety Planning Procedures (New)** – The policy establishes procedures to ensure that Department staff follow up with clients who have Safety Planned in a timely manner.
8. **Second Opinion (Revised)** – This policy establishes procedures for providing a second opinion to beneficiaries.
9. **Telecommuting and Working Remotely - Privacy and Security (New)** – The purpose of this policy is to ensure Department employees are complying with confidentiality and privacy practice requirements for Departmental operations while telecommuting or working remotely.

Santa Barbara Regional Partnership Meeting: The *Children’s Regional Partnership* meeting this month was a robust meeting covering many topics. Some of the highlights included **Melissa Wilkins, Project Manager for Alcohol and Drug Services**, sharing an update on the Organized Delivery System for alcohol and drug services for Medi-Cal beneficiaries in which outpatient treatment is available throughout the county. Melissa was able to overview the screening and treatment process ranging from calling the Access Line, outpatient treatment, residential treatment and medication assisted treatment. Lastly, the newly awarded Youth Opioid Response (YOR) grant which will provide outreach services in Lompoc, was introduced. For questions on this new program, people can contact Jade Kau at jkau@sbcbswell.org

The *Adult Regional Partnership* meeting this month was also full with discussion. At this month’s meeting, a presentation on the Behavioral Wellness Cultural Competency Program was provided. Cultural competency system goals, training opportunities as well as guiding principles were overviewed. The requirements of having an updated plan every three years was shared with the group as well as the state requirements of the plan. To hear the plan described in practice throughout the department was a helpful tool for the team.

Santa Maria Regional Partnership Meeting: Both adult and children’s meetings were held with robust attendance from Behavioral Wellness staff and stakeholders. **Roberto Rodriguez, Santa Maria Children’s Team Supervisor** facilitated the Children’s meeting. In both meetings, **John Winckler, Division Chief** reviewed some Behavioral Wellness staff separations and announced that both the Santa Barbara ACT/Homeless Services Manager and Santa Maria Regional Manager positions have been filled and the new staff will be onboarding over the next month. Slides from the recent Budget Workshops were presented, highlighting the strong financial standing of the department and the addition of numerous grants, including the MHSSA Schools grant in collaboration with the County Education Office and the Early Psychosis Intervention grant.

Change Agents: The recent Change Agent meeting highlighted a number of Behavioral Wellness programs that have active PDSA's operating with the goal of improving clinical operations, client satisfaction, staff wellness and client outcomes. A few examples of projects are noted below.

In the Santa Maria Adult clinic, the team developed a new lobby video that will provide additional information about community resources. The video shows slides of many regional community resources, many slides have QR codes that visitors can use to scan on their phone and pull up the community resource website. A pre-survey showed that 28% of visitors are not familiar with most community resources. After having the video plan in the lobby for a few months they will do another survey of visitors to see if the percentage increases.

The Santa Maria Children's and TAY teams are doing a PDSA to increase chart completion compliance. The supervisors are scanning the Clinical Checklist to each staff monthly. The checklist shows the status of all required documentation in the cart and what is coming up due, due or past due. Since implementing the PDSA the team has seen a sharp decline in past due assessments and CANS.

Childrens System of Care (CSOC) Action Team: The Children's System of Care continues to focus on four primary target areas including youth of color, access to care and engagement, safety and resilience and criteria for services. Most recent groups discussion explored the next phase to implement recommendations made along with responding to the increase in youth/young adult related fatalities with law enforcement. Recommendations made included stronger collaborations/communication with agencies working on this issue. Youth representatives also joined CSOC for the first time and made a commitment to continued support to reflect a voice of youth/young adults in Santa Barbara County. The next meeting will be held on May 27 from 10:30 a.m. to Noon.

Consumer and Family Member Action Team (CFMAT): The Consumer Family Member Action Team met on April 15, 2021. Vanessa Ramos provided an update on Help@Hand expressing that this team is focusing on reaching geographically isolated communities and will be holding a Spanish session on May 8th with Casa de La Raza and with Transition Mental Health Association. **Maria Arteaga, Peer Empowerment Manager**, provided the team with an update on the Peer Certification and Legislation SB 803. Subcommittee leads provided updates. Members were encouraged to provide articles for the newsletter. Articles submission are to be sent in by May 31st. The Transition Age Youth (TAY) subcommittee lead shared that Justice and Amanda are the County's first TAY to serve on the Behavioral Wellness Commission and that they are getting educated and learning how to serve in this role. Currently, they are serving on the Cultural Competency Action Team and many other programs within the department and County. The meeting ended with members sharing updates on upcoming events and announcements. An announcement was made on a vaccine clinic event that is taking place on April 24th. Members were encouraged to take the time to complete the MHSA survey if they have not done so already. CFMAT meets monthly, the third Thursday from 1PM to 2:30PM.

Crisis Action Team: **John Winckler, Division Chief** who previously held the position of Crisis Services Manager will be stepping in to oversee the crisis program as the current manager, **Jeff Shannon**, is departing this role. John will maintain oversight until a new manager can be recruited. The regional Co-

Response teams gave an update on their activity. **Josh Woody, QCM Manager** presented on Access Line data showing an overall drop in Access Line wait times and dropped calls, due to adding additional staffing on the Access Line and ongoing training of staff to improve operational efficiencies.

Cultural Competency and Diversity Action Team (CCDAT): The Cultural Competency and Diversity Action Team met on April 9, 2021. Bethany Le and Nicole Llamas provided the members with the AAPI subcommittee update on *The Promoting AAPI Community Wellness*. This committee will be focusing on addressing the psychological impact of the recent increase in hate crimes against the Asian American community by ensuring awareness of and access to behavioral health services. Their first meeting is on April 23, 2021 and anyone interested is invited to attend.

Next, **Vanessa Ramos, MHSA Innovations/Help@Hand Project Manager** gave an update on Help@Hand. The Help@Hand team has currently started rolling out Headspace, a mindfulness app, for all BWell systems and CBOs. The meeting then broke out into breakout sessions led by Enrique Bautista, Carla Cross, and Amy Lopez. The Outreach and Engagement group discussed methods for increasing engagement in CCDAT. They will be providing flyers to providers to assist with this. The Cultural Competency Training group discussed interpretation training and the challenge of organizational providers to provide interpretation services. Discussion occurred on what kinds of cultural competency trainings are needed going forward, as well as the need for a generic cultural competency training for all staff in addition to specialized trainings.

Alcohol and Drug Program (ADP)/ Santa Ynez Tribal Health Centers (SYTHC), discussed the YOR Grant and the new Prop 64 Cannabis grant. They shared the trainings on tribal populations. Lawanda Lyons-Pruitt was acknowledged for the recent article in the SB Independent highlighting her amazing work done in the community to spread information on COVID-19. **Tony Hollenback, Lompoc Regional Manager** ended the meeting by acknowledging events that are facing world and the nation. CCDAT meets monthly, the second Friday from 10AM to 11:30AM.

NATIONAL AND STATE NEWS

CBHDA Applauds Governor's Unprecedented Proposed Investments in County Behavioral Health Infrastructure for Children, Youth, and Families: The County Behavioral Health Directors Association applauds Governor Gavin Newsom and the Administration for acknowledging the youth behavioral health crisis in today's announcement of a \$4 billion commitment to behavioral health to better support the social-emotional well-being of students.

"The combined \$250 million bricks and mortar and close to a billion in proposed workforce investments, combined with the Governor's existing proposed \$750 million for the county behavioral health continuum, demonstrate a true commitment to taking on the stigma of mental illness and substance use disorders and to widening the doors to comprehensive, accessible treatment," said Michelle Doty Cabrera, Executive Director of CBHDA.

“When surveyed, 85% of California counties reported that they provide comprehensive school-based mental health and substance use disorder services. County behavioral health agencies stand ready to leverage this significant existing public investment to ensure that all California’s children, regardless of insurance, have prompt access to specialty behavioral health services,” said Cabrera. “We look forward to strengthening our partnership with the state in building out our public delivery system through overdue infrastructure and workforce investments in developing these proposals.”

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: Karen Campos at kcampos@sbcbswell.org
- **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
- **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
- **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
- **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.
- **Santa Maria Children’s Regional Partnership Meeting** is held every 3rd 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
- **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: John Winckler at 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
- **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 or Anthony Hollenback at 805-737-6610 or ahollenback@co.santa-barbara.ca.us to get zoom log in information.
- **The Consumer and Family Member Action Team** meets the third Thursday of the Month from 1 – 2:30pm. 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
- **The Crisis Action Team** meets the second Thursday of the month, 2:30 – 4:00 pm, Santa Barbara Children’s large conference room. Questions: John Winckler at jwinckler@co.santa-barbara.ca.us
- **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
- **Forensic Action Team** will be meeting every other month on the 4th 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. For questions or Zoom log in information, please contact Shana Burns at sburns@co.santa-barbara.ca.us or Celeste Andersen at candersen@sbcbswell.org