



April 20, 2023

INFORMATION ACTION

SUBJECT: EARLY CHILDHOOD BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Strategic Priority Area I: Child Health

Goal: All children thrive by achieving optimal health prenatal through age 5.

SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE

In California, over 284,000 youth cope with major depression and 66 percent of kids with depression do not receive treatment, according to Governor Newsom's [Master Plan for Kids' Mental Health](#). Underserved and marginalized communities are at greater risk because they may not have access to mental health resources. According to a recent study post-pandemic, 70 percent of parents are worried about their family's mental health.

Barriers to Mental Health Care for Black, Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC) Include the following:

1) Socioeconomic Disparities

- Socioeconomic disparities lead to exclusion from healthcare, educational, social, and economic resources.

2) Stigma

- Research shows that many view mental health conditions as a consequence of personal weakness and may experience shame about having mental health illness.
- Many turn to religious institutions to receive support versus medical diagnosis.

3) Provider Bias and Inequality of Care

- Unfortunately, many BIPOC people still have negative experiences when they attempt to seek treatment.

- Provider bias, both conscious and unconscious, and lack of cultural competency can result in misdiagnosis and inadequate treatment.

4) Lack of Available Services, a Representative Workforce, and Connection to Care

F5CA staff have been meeting with California Health and Human Services (CalHHS) Agency staff to determine ways to align efforts to advance shared goals for children's behavioral health with a focus on children 0-5 and their families, deepen impact of investments underway and under consideration, and leverage strengths and capabilities across our respective agencies and departments.

Governor Newsom included \$4.4 billion in the 2021 Budget Act to enhance, expand, and redesign the systems that support behavioral health for children and youth, with the Legislature and Governor including an additional \$290 million in the 2022 Budget Act to support youth mental health. And F5CA is uniquely positioned to support the 0-5 component of this initiative.

Background on the Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative

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. It aims to build an ecosystem of behavioral health services and supports to create a more coordinated, youth-centered, equitable, and prevention-oriented system that improves behavioral health and wellbeing outcomes for children and youth ages 0-25. The CYBHI is working to reimagine a more integrated, youth-centered system, so that young people can find support for mental health and substance use needs where, when, and in the way they need it most, including in learning settings through collaboration with early childhood, K-12, and higher education systems. The work of CYBHI is concentrated in four focus areas: expanding the behavioral health workforce, building ecosystem infrastructure, coverage, and raising public awareness/reducing stigma.

Opportunities Identified for F5CA Investment

Through conversations with CalHHS staff, the following opportunities for F5CA investment have been identified:

1) Strengthening the 0-5 strategy, investments, and impact under the Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative (CYBHI) Scaling of Evidenced-Based Practices/Community-Defined Evidence Practices Workstream (\$10M)

- a. Opportunity for F5CA to provide support and technical assistance to early childhood organizations and partners as they implement grant funding in late 2023 for various grant phases of this workstream as applicable.

- b. Opportunity for F5CA to help fund learning collaboratives of grantees to support effective scaling of funded practices.

2) Supporting effective deployment of trauma-informed training in early childhood education by F5CA administering funds to accomplish the following (*opportunity to fund through existing IMPACT Legacy dollars*):

- a. As part of an overall dissemination plan being developed by the Office of the Surgeon General (OSG), there is an opportunity to co-develop a robust roll-out plan to leverage F5CA's unique knowledge of, and relationships with, 0-5 early learning and care settings to increase uptake of the CYBHI OSG trauma-informed training in early childhood education (ECE) settings, with a focus on priority strategies and partnerships to maximize impact in advancing equity.
- b. Opportunity to provide incentives for ECE providers (individuals and/or organizations) to participate in the training.
- c. Opportunity to support ECE communities of practice for trauma-informed care.

3) Public Awareness Campaigns (*non-fiscal*)

- a. Joint and coordinated work is already underway to align efforts, share learnings, embed a 0-5 focus, and coordinate planning across the F5CA public awareness campaigns, OSG ACES and toxic stress public awareness campaign, and California Department of Public Health behavioral health literacy/awareness and stigma campaign under the CYBHI.

4) Supporting Access to Information, Supports, and Navigation (*non-fiscal*)

- a. F5CA and CYBHI/California Department of Health Care Services staff have identified an opportunity for partnership on the virtual services platform, utilizing F5CA's trusted relationship with families with young children to conduct outreach and develop content for the virtual services platform.

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS COMMISSION DISCUSSION AND ACTION

During the January 2022 Commission meeting, F5CA staff provided Commissioners a brief [overview of F5CA's current investments](#), including a summary of each office's portfolio, a description of what's been learned from their programs, and how they align with the newly adopted North Star Statement and Audacious Goal. Investments were summarized through a targeted universalism approach and included the following:

- Data about how groups of children are faring toward the goal of having Safe, Stable, Nurturing Relationships and Environments (SSNREs)

- How targeted investments address disparities among specific groups
- Structural and institutional conditions that continue to be barriers to ensuring all children have the SSNREs necessary to eliminate inequities and ensure healthy development

Staff presented on [proposed future investments](#) at the May and July 2022 Commission meetings, gathering feedback from the Commission on various proposals and determining which to explore further. After these meetings, the list of proposed investments was narrowed down to four and staff were charged with fleshing out formal proposals to bring back to the Commission. One of these proposals was to support early childhood behavioral health, with suggested investment opportunities for F5CA brought by Commissioner Mijic and CalHHS staff.

At the January 2023 Commission meeting, F5CA staff presented an [information item](#) on this early childhood behavioral health investment where the Commission directed staff to proceed with an action item at the April 2023 Commission meeting.

The Program and Evaluation Advisory Committee reviewed this proposal at their April 2023 meeting.

ATTACHMENTS

None.