

From: [Lori Kay](#)
To: [FGG, Public Comment](#)
Subject: [External] Letter supporting proposal to create Beh. Health Continuum Framework 0-25
Date: Wednesday, September 18, 2024 5:08:18 PM

On behalf of San Diego Autism, of which I am a member, I am writing to express my strong support for the County of San Diego's proposal to create a Children, Youth, and TAY Behavioral Health Continuum Framework across the 0 to 25 age continuum that is based on data analytics and considers stakeholder insights and current challenges within the broader behavioral healthcare system.

The County has already taken bold action to move our behavioral health continuum from a model of care driven by crises to one centered on continuous care and prevention. The primary focus so far has been on adding capacity and recalibrating the County's Continuum of Care to service the behavioral health needs of adults. With this progress well underway, the County is now poised to **turn its attention to the child and youth behavioral health crisis** and to build upon the work done for adults.

Since 2010, nearly every indicator of mental well-being among children and youth has deteriorated. The impacts are now countywide with residents in the East region concerned with the lack of access to services and residents in the North region concerned with rising levels of anxiety, depression, and substance use.

Ensuring access to prevention and intervention services and to primary care clinicians and behavioral health specialists are critical components of any plan to address the local youth behavioral health crisis and to support children and youth as they navigate these challenges. My son has profound autism and has suffered from lack of specialized care in San Diego. Although he is 33 years old, he was hospitalized in 2022-23 for 6 months in Kaiser and Palomar hospitals. He was medically and chemically restrained. He gained 50 lbs while there and was kept there because there were no residential/group homes available anywhere in San Diego County. He was then sent to the STAR program in Cathedral City, part of DDS' developmental center where he stayed for 12 months during which time the San Diego Regional Center tried to find him placement. He was one of 10 people there (5 adults and 5 children) from around the state. At the time he was there, 3 of the adults or 60 percent were from San Diego County! My son is now in an Enhanced Behavioral Support home in Ramona, but there are others like him, both adults and children who are awaiting placement while "living" in hospitals. This in part is due to the fact that when most of the large developmental centers were closed, there were not enough high level group homes developed to address the needs of this very complex profoundly autistic population. My son is minimally verbal, and was traumatized by this experience, as were we. Please know that there is a family behind every individual who suffers in silence.

We believe this proposed policy can play a vital role in addressing the children and youth behavioral health crisis by identifying service gaps and innovative ways to shore up the

County's system of care across the entire lifespan..

Therefore, I urge your support for this proposal and to vote 'yes' on this item at the September 24th, 2024, Board of Supervisors meeting.

Sincerely,

Lori Kay, Mother of Matthew Kay and member and advocate of the SD Autism Society

From: henkinp@earthlink.net
To: [Desmond, Jim](#); [Anderson, Joel](#); [MontgomerySteppe, Monica](#); [Vargas, Nora \(BOS\)](#); [Lawson-Remer, Terra](#)
Cc: [FGG, Public Comment](#)
Subject: [External] YOUTH BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CONTINUUM FRAMEWORK FOR SD COUNTY (Please include with docs. for agenda item 12)
Date: Thursday, September 19, 2024 12:50:39 PM

Hi Supervisors,

You want more mental health services for youth. Great idea – Suicide rate is way up. Learning problems are way up. My conclusion, and I'm sure a lot of other people can see it too, is that you should have flagged this issue during COVID (maybe earlier.)

Instead, we get a request for the CAO to come up with strategies in 6 months and a plan in 18 months. So how many more will commit suicide or go crazy while we kick the can down the road?

And maybe BHS should look into causes such as ridiculous demands on our youth, many or mostly imposed by government, as well as focusing on the behavioral health. Or maybe not fully thought out mandates and government impositions is another behavioral health issue.

The board letter itself says BHS already has plans to weave in efforts currently underway through the Community Experience Partnership (CEP). The CEP is a collaboration between BHS and the University of California San Diego to integrate data and community engagement to advance behavioral health equity.

So I would recommend that this program be developed and improved as necessary and that the current agenda item be rejected.

Regards,

Paul Henkin