



CHILDREN AND YOUTH BEHAVIORAL HEALTH INITIATIVE (CYBHI) FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

In February 2024, the California Department of Health Care Services introduced a critical program under the **Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative (CYBHI)** to enhance mental health support for children and teens in schools. Established as part of the Budget Act of 2021 and signed into law by Governor Newsom, CYBHI aims to build a system where young people can easily access the care they need—when, where, and how they need it.

The program focuses on prevention, coordination, and ensuring that all students, regardless of their circumstances, have access to high-quality mental health services.



Why does CYBHI matter in Placer County?

Placer County has the highest youth suicide rate in the entire state.

(Reported by the California Department of Public Health)

Placer County also has a higher percentage of privately insured youth, who often encounter more obstacles in accessing mental health services within their insurance system.

At the same time, Medi-Cal enrollment rates for youth in Placer County are about 22% lower than the state average, creating additional gaps in available services.

1. What is the CYBHI program, and why is it needed in Placer County?

The Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative (CYBHI) is a statewide effort to improve access to mental health and wellness services for children and teens. It focuses on prevention, and meeting youth where they are—often at school. In Placer County, where the youth suicide rate is the highest in California, CYBHI provides vital resources to address this crisis and create a supportive environment for students' emotional and mental well-being.

CYBHI builds on programs that schools and communities already use to support students. This helps bring new resources and tools into schools in a way that fits with what is already working. The program focuses on helping kids early when they start to show signs of mental health struggles and giving teachers, families, and students simple tools to handle stress and support mental well-being.

2. What types of mental health services are offered through CYBHI?

CYBHI provides a range of behavioral health services, including case management, individual and group therapy, crisis intervention, and tools for stress and anxiety management. These services are tailored to meet the needs of students in a supportive, non-clinical setting like their school.

3. Who provides the mental health services in schools?

Trained and qualified professionals, such as school counselors, licensed therapists, and behavioral health specialists, deliver CYBHI services. These providers collaborate with school staff and families to support students' needs.

4. How does CYBHI ensure parental involvement in their child's mental health care?

CYBHI prioritizes family involvement. Parents are essential partners in supporting their child's mental and emotional health. CYBHI services focus on behavioral health, such as emotional support, stress management, and social development—not medical care. Schools and providers are required to follow all laws about parental notification and consent, and informed parental consent is required to provide services and bill insurance under CYBHI. Parents are informed and involved when behavioral health services are offered to their children.

This important work can be supported by the CYBHI statewide multi-payer school-linked fee schedule. Approximately \$3.97 million in capacity-building grant funding has been allocated to Placer County schools to explore the program and to assist in paying for services schools often already provide. This is a completely OPTIONAL program for Placer County schools.

5. Will my child's participation in CYBHI services affect their privacy?

Student privacy is a top priority. All services comply with state and federal privacy laws, including the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Parents can ask for details about how their child's information is handled and shared.

6. How are these services funded, and will they cost families anything?

CYBHI services are funded through a statewide school-linked fee schedule that ensures Medi-Cal and private insurance plans reimburse providers at specific rates. These services are provided at no cost to families, per the Welfare and Institutions Code 5961 and the CA Health & Safety Code Section 1374.722, which helps remove financial barriers to care.

7. How is the Placer County Office of Education engaged in CYBHI?

The Placer County Office of Education is actively engaged in learning and providing valuable feedback to the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) as part of the first cohort of the CYBHI. Through our participation in a collaborative learning environment, we aim to inform state-level policy and operational guidance for the CYBHI fee schedule program, ensuring that the needs of Placer County are effectively met.

8. What does CYBHI look like in Placer County schools?

School districts throughout the state and in Placer County are just in the beginning stages of exploring the program. This is an OPTIONAL program that can reimburse schools for mental health services that are provided to students on an as-needed basis.

9. Is CYBHI and the statewide Community Schools initiative the same thing?

No, the California Youth Behavioral Health Initiative (CYBHI) and the Community School Initiative are not the same. CYBHI is run through the Department of Health Care Services and focuses on expanding mental and behavioral health services for young people, aiming to improve access to support and reduce the stigma surrounding mental health.

The Community School Initiative is organized through the California Department of Education and is a broader initiative, aiming to improve educational outcomes in high-need communities by providing a range of support services such as academic tutoring, family engagement, and mental health counseling. Not all schools in California or Placer county will qualify for Community Schools funding.

While both initiatives address youth well-being, CYBHI focuses specifically on behavioral health, while the Community School Initiative takes a more holistic approach to supporting students' academic, social and emotional needs.

10. How can families get involved or learn more about CYBHI?

To find out if your school district is exploring the CYBHI program, contact your school district directly for more details. Participating schools or districts may offer information sessions or provide materials to help parents understand the program. Parents are encouraged to ask questions, share concerns, and work together with their school or district to support their child's mental health needs.

Additional information can be found online at the Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative Website at <https://cybhi.chhs.ca.gov/>.

