

# **El Dorado County Behavioral Health Commission (BHC) Ad Hoc Evaluation Committee - Stanford Sierra Youth & Families**

Report by Kathryn Hamilton, Commissioner and Jim Abram, Commissioner.

This report is a narrative summary based on a visit with Stanford Sierra Youth & Families (SSYAF) by the evaluation committee on July 31, 2024. Representing SSYAF were Sara Decoursey, Program Director, Gibran Mendez, Director of Quality Assurance and Christina Cagle, Director of Family Youth and Partnership.

The BHC Ad Hoc Evaluation Committee was evaluating the MHSA PEI program, Prevention Wrap Around Services: Juvenile Services Project, being implemented by the contract service provider.

The evaluation committee submitted a group of questions to SSYAF, who completed an extensive report answering the questions and provided additional information in it. During the two-hour meeting with SSYAF staff, the questions and their program were discussed.

The questions and answers are attached to this ad hoc committee's report out.

"Juvenile Services Project provides comprehensive care to keep children safe, at home, in school, and out of trouble."

"This program supports youth and families involved with Child Welfare or Juvenile Justice, using early intervention to prevent more restrictive and costly placements like group homes, hospitalization or youth detention."

The goal of the prevention program "is to build connections with any system of support that impacts youth in services." SSYAF offers specialty-based program, such as targeted mental health support, prevention and wraparound services for youth involved in juvenile justice and Child Welfare System.

"Services include (but are not limited to): Therapeutic Services (i.e. Individual or Family/Therapy, Skill Building support for symptom management; Caregiver/Parent Support); Support for Permanency Planning; Independent Livings Skills/Support; Linkage to Community Resources; Psychiatric/Medication Support Service Linkage; Case Management to support with Treatment Plan; and Coordination of Services.

Additional Notable information:

The program requires a referral. 76 referrals were received last year, 22 were referred by probation, 35 youth were referred by Child Welfare, and 19 youth were referred by ACCESS, school, or other mental health providers.

The age range of children and youth served in 2023/2024 were: 35 children, who are 0-15 years of age, and 13 transitional age youth, who are 16-25 years of age.

Each Facilitator/Specialist team works with 20 youths and their families. Last year, their staff retention rate in the prevention program was 100%.

“The agency is engaged in an array of partnerships including Behavioral Health, Child Protective Services, Adoption Assistance Programs (AAP), local schools, local psychiatric hospitals, and County Probation Department.”

The agency provides a comprehensive array of services. Family Advocacy and support, prevention/wrap around services for youth involved in the juvenile justice's system, behavioral and mental health support, mentoring, foster care, and adoption services.

The services are short term, not exceeding 6 months. “A youth may extend beyond if an immediate safety need arises for the youth.”

Therapeutic modalities utilized are:

Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT), Eye Movement Desensitization and Response (EMDR) Therapy, Play and Sand Therapy, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT).

The program has day treatment clinic visits and visits to youth and family residential settings.

The facility was easily located, had adequate parking and handicapped access. There was a staff waiting room, kids' spaces for play, several individual counseling rooms, and conference rooms. There was an array of toys used in sessions with children.