

**BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD
TRANSITIONAL AGE YOUTH (TAY) COMMITTEE
MINUTES ■ Thursday, January 23, 2020**

<p>Members Present Margaret Cortese, Committee Chair Stuart Fiedler, Client Network Georgia Perry, NAMI Cathi Nye, VCOE</p> <p>Others Present Vannessa Cortez, TAY Tunnel Rochelle, Vista Real Charter High School Kira Lashkoff, Vista Real Charter High School</p>	<p>Ventura County Behavioral Health (VCBH) Staff Present Sara Sanchez, Transitions Manager Greg Bergan, Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Jessica Davis, Alcohol & Drug Programs (ADP) Eileen Corona, Alcohol & Drug Programs (ADP) Edith Pham, BHAB Assistant</p> <p>NEXT MEETING: Thursday, February 27, 2020, 10:30 – 12:00 p.m. Ventura County Behavioral Health (VCBH) 1911 Williams Drive, Lake Tahoe Room (second floor), Oxnard</p>
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Note: The committee has not yet approved these minutes. There may be additions/deletions or corrections before the minutes are accepted in final form.

	DISCUSSION/CONCLUSIONS	RECOMMENDATIONS/ ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE
I.	Call to Order Chair Margaret Cortese called the meeting to order at 10:33 a.m.		
II.	Approval of the Agenda Ms. Cortese asked the Committee to review and approve today's agenda. Cathi Nye moved to approve, Stuart Fiedler seconded. The motion carried unanimously.	The agenda was approved as written. M/S/C	
III.	Approval of the Minutes Ms. Cortese asked the committee to review and approve the minutes of the November 21, 2019 meeting. She moved to approve, Mr. Fiedler seconded. The motion carried unanimously.	The minutes were approved as written. M/S/C	
IV.	Welcome and Introductions Ms. Cortese welcomed everyone and asked for introductions.		
V.	Chair Announcements Ms. Cortese announced that the VCBH Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Team is holding a Community Input Session in Fillmore that evening. She encouraged all to attend.		
VI.	Public Comments None.		
VII.	<p>New Business</p> <p>A. Identify Housing Resources for TAY</p> <p>1. Ms. Nye noted that she and Anthony Marron of the TAY Tunnel met in December and created a TAY survey on housing. Changes to the survey were suggested:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ At the top of the survey, add "Have you filled out the survey before?" and "last four digits of Social Security number". ○ Under "Housing Status and Stability", add "Other" option. ○ Under "Are you currently accessing any services in the community?", add "Yes" and "No". <p>Ms. Nye agreed to update the survey and distribute to various organizations, e.g. schools.</p> <p>2. The committee suggested possible ways of distributing the survey (online and hard copies) and having it filled out: at the TAY Tunnel, through Interface outreach program, at local high schools and colleges. Mr. Fiedler suggested getting the survey added to a magazine; he will forward the information on the magazine to the BHAB Assistant.</p> <p>3. The committee discussed launching the survey. It was noted that hard copies would need to be tallied individually, and the committee was unsure as to which organization could do this. Vannessa Cortez noted that the Continuum of Care is conducting the homeless count and uses an app for this.</p>	<p>Update the survey</p> <p>Give information on a magazine to BHAB Assistant</p>	<p>C. Nye</p> <p>S. Fiedler</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ms. Nye agreed to look for the results of the 2019 homeless count as related to the TAY population. ○ Sara Sanchez agreed to follow up with VCBH and explore how the survey can be posted online as a Survey Monkey or as an app. ○ Ms. Sanchez asked to delay the use of the paper survey in the hope of having an electronic survey. ○ Greg Bergan agreed to look into setting up the Survey Monkey. <p>4. Current housing options for TAY were discussed. Ms. Nye agreed to contact Many Mansions, the Housing Authority for Ventura and Oxnard and other organizations to try to get a list of all short- and long-term housing options specifically for TAY. Ms. Cortez noted that the TAY Tunnel usually calls 2-1-1 to find out housing options for their clients. Ms. Nye agreed to contact 2-1-1 and Interface, which manages 2-1-1.</p> <p>B. Identify Gaps in Housing Resources for TAY This was not discussed.</p>	<p>Find out information on 2019 homeless count</p> <p>Look into having survey online</p> <p>Contact several organizations to get a list of housing options</p>	<p>C. Nye</p> <p>S. Sanchez, G. Bergan</p> <p>C. Nye</p>
VIII.	Old Business None.		
IX.	Ventura County Behavioral Health (VCBH) Updates <p>A. Transitions Update – Sara Sanchez The census is 312 clients. Transitions continues to cooperate with Department of Rehabilitation and Pathpoint to assist TAY obtain and retain employment; outcomes are successful. The program has been expanded to all adult outpatient clinics that serve TAY, and the program is now reaching out to Youth & Family clinics that serve 16- and 17-year-old youth. Ms. Sanchez agreed to ask Transitions clinicians about the number of TAY clients who have an unstable housing situation, noting that Transitions is currently offered only in Oxnard and Thousand Oaks.</p> <p>B. Alcohol & Drug Programs (ADP) Update – Anna Flores/Jessica Davis Jessica Davis noted that the following week ADP will undergo a review by the External Quality Review Organization (EQRO), the first since ADP went live with the Drug Medi-Cal Organized Delivery System (DMC-ODS) a year ago. Ms. Davis agreed to find out the number of ADP clients who are 16 to 25 years old.</p> <p>C. Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Update – Greg Bergan The MHSA Team is conducting its last of three Community Input Sessions that evening. The Annual Update to the MHSA Three-Year Plan will include demographics of clients who are served by MHSA Prevention and Early Intervention programs. The Logrando Bienestar program, which is provided in the schools, is an example of a program that will help TAY.</p>	<p>Find out the number of TAY with unstable housing situation</p> <p>Find out the number of ADP clients who are TAY age</p>	<p>S. Sanchez</p> <p>J. Davis</p>
X.	Committee Members' and Participants' Comments, Activities Georgia Perry noted that NAMI will hold its general meeting on January 28. Also, the Farm Bureau's Central Coast Farm & Ranch magazine includes an article on the Growing Works nursery in Camarillo, which employs VCBH clients, including TAY. Ms. Nye spoke about the IRS Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program, which prepares taxes for free for individuals who earn less than \$56,000. Also, she provided some information about two documentaries that will be screened locally, one on bullying and the other on homeless youth; she will provide the details to the BHAB Assistant.		
XI.	Items for Next Meeting Agenda Ms. Cortese agreed to contact Erin Locklear at Interface and request a presentation on housing options for TAY.	Invite Interface to present	M. Cortese
XII.	Adjourn The meeting adjourned at 11:55 a.m.		

	<p>sugirió agregar la encuesta a una revista ; se remitirá la información sobre la revista al Asistente BHAB .</p> <p>3. El comité discutió el lanzamiento de la encuesta. Era nota d que tendrían que ser contados por separado copias impresas, y el comité no estaba seguro sobre qué organización podría hacer esto. Vannessa Cortez señaló que el proceso de cuidados está llevando a cabo el recuento de personas sin hogar y el uso es una aplicación para esto.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o La Sra. Nye acordó buscar los resultados del conteo de personas sin hogar en 2019 en relación con la población TAY. o Sara Sánchez acordó hacer un seguimiento con VCBH y explorar cómo la encuesta se puede publicar en línea como Survey Monkey o como aplicación. o La Sra. Sánchez solicitó retrasar el uso de la encuesta en papel con la esperanza de tener una encuesta electrónica. o Greg Bergan acordó estudiar la creación del Survey Monkey. <p>4. Se discutieron las opciones actuales de vivienda para TAY. La Sra. Nye acordó comunicarse con Many Mansions, la Autoridad de Vivienda de Ventura y Oxnard y otras organizaciones para tratar de obtener una lista de todas las opciones de vivienda a corto y largo plazo específicamente para TAY. La Sra. Cortez señaló que el Túnel TAY generalmente llama al 2-1-1 para averiguar las opciones de vivienda para sus clientes. Ms. N ye acordó ponerse en contacto con 2-1-1 e Interface, que administra 2-1-1.</p> <p>B. Identificar brechas en los recursos de vivienda para TAY Esto no fue discutido.</p>	<p>Obtenga información sobre el conteo de personas sin hogar en 2019</p> <p>Considera tener una encuesta en línea</p> <p>Póngase en contacto con varias organizaciones para obtener una lista de opciones de vivienda</p>	<p>C . Nye</p> <p>S . Sánchez, G . Bergan</p> <p>C . Nye</p>
VIII	<p>Viejo negocio</p> <p>Ninguna.</p>		
IX	<p>Actualizaciones de Ventura County Behavioral Health (VCBH)</p> <p>A. Actualización de Transiciones - Sara Sanchez El censo es de 312 clientes. Transitions continúa cooperando con el Departamento de Rehabilitación y Pathpoint para ayudar a TAY a obtener y retener un empleo; Los resultados son exitosos . El programa se ha expandido a todas las clínicas ambulatorias para adultos que atienden TAY, y ahora está llegando a las clínicas familiares de Youth & F que atienden a jóvenes de 16 y 17 años . La Sra. Sánchez acordó preguntar a los médicos de Transitions sobre la cantidad de clientes TAY que tienen una situación de vivienda inestable , y señaló que actualmente Transitions se ofrece solo en Oxnard y Thousand Oaks .</p> <p>B. Programas de Alcohol y Drogas (ADP) Hasta la fecha - Anna Flores / Jessica Davis Jessica Davis señaló que la semana siguiente ADP se someterá a una revisión por parte de la Organización de Revisión de Calidad Externa (EQRO), la primera desde que ADP entró en funcionamiento con el Sistema de Entrega Organizada de Medicamentos de Medi-Cal (DMC-ODS) hace un año. La Sra. Davis acordó averiguar el número de clientes de ADP que tienen entre 16 y 25 años.</p> <p>C. Actualización de la Ley de Servicios de Salud Mental (MHSA) - Greg Bergan El equipo de MHSA está llevando a cabo su última de las tres sesiones de participación comunitaria esa noche. La actualización anual del plan trienal de MHSA incluirá datos demográficos de los clientes que reciben servicios de los programas de prevención e intervención temprana de MHSA . El programa Logrando Bienestar, que se brinda en las escuelas, es un ejemplo de un programa que ayudará a TAY .</p>	<p>Averigüe el número de TAY con situación de vivienda inestable</p> <p>Averigüe la cantidad de clientes de ADP que tienen TAY edad</p>	<p>S . Sanchez</p> <p>J . Davis</p>
X.	<p>Comentarios y actividades de los miembros y participantes del comité</p> <p>Georgia Perry señaló que NAMI celebrará su reunión general el 28 de enero. Además, la revista Central Coast Farm & Ranch de Farm Bureau incluye un artículo sobre el</p>		

	<p>vivero Growing Works en Camarillo, que emplea a clientes de VCBH, incluido TAY.</p> <p>La Sra. Nye habló sobre el programa de Asistencia Voluntaria del IRS (VITA) , que prepara impuestos gratis para las personas que ganan menos de \$ 56,000 . Además, se proporcionó alguna información sobre dos documentos arie s que se proyectarán a nivel local, una en la intimidación y el otro sobre personas sin hogar juvenil ; ella proporcionará los detalles al Asistente de BHAB.</p>		
X yo .	<p>Elementos para la agenda de la próxima reunión</p> <p>La Sra. Cortese acordó contactar a Erin Locklear en Interface y solicitar una presentación sobre las opciones de vivienda para TAY.</p>	Invite a Interface a presentar	M . Cortese
X me he .	<p>Aplazar</p> <p>Se levanta la sesión a las 11:55 a.m.</p>		

Actas del Comité BHAB TAY del 23 de enero de 2020 ■

**BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD
TRANSITIONAL AGE YOUTH (TAY) COMMITTEE
2018-19 Annual Report
Submitted by Margaret Cortese, Chair**

Committee members

Margaret Cortese, Committee Chair	Diana Hernandez, Client Network
Ratan Bhavnani, BHAB	Stuart Fiedler, Client Network
Jerry Harris, BHAB	Erin Locklear, Interface
Joe S. Ramirez, BHAB	Georgia Perry, NAMI
Ezequiel A. Sánchez, BHAB	Anthony Marron, TAY Tunnel
Anna Guerin, Casa Pacifica	Cathi Nye, Ventura County Office of Education
Laura Estrada, Children and Family Services	Lorena Güereca, Vista Real Charter High School

Participants

Ventura County Behavioral Health	Department of Rehabilitation
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MISSION

The BHAB TAY Committee promotes effective mental health and substance use disorder services, wellness and recovery for youth ages 16 through 25. The committee focuses on these youth in their efforts to become healthy and productive adults.

2018-19 OBJECTIVES OF THE BHAB TAY COMMITTEE

1. Continue to encourage increased participation of community partners serving TAY in the BHAB TAY meetings.
2. Advocate for increased housing options for TAY. Update the housing opportunity brochure.
3. Advocate for and update availability of TAY services related to work and volunteer opportunities and justice system. Identify strategies, including advocacy, to address gaps in services for the TAY population related to mental health and substance abuse treatment, work and volunteer opportunities, and the child welfare and justice systems.
4. Increase community outreach, especially to underserved community, and improve communication among parents, clients, agencies and the Committee.
5. Keep the Behavioral Health Advisory Board (BHAB) members informed on matters pertaining to the needs of the TAY Community. Make recommendations to the BHAB as appropriate.
6. Provide committee level work for the TAY community at the direction of the Behavioral Health Advisory Board.

INTRODUCTION

The BHAB TAY Committee meets on the fourth Thursday of the month from 10:30 a.m. to noon at the Ventura County Behavioral Health Administration building in Oxnard. Attendance and participation are open to Transitional Age Youth and their families, service providers, Behavioral Health Advisory Board (BHAB) members, and anyone with an interest in the TAY community. The TAY Committee is responsible to look into the needs, programs and services for the TAY population and to report on these matters to the BHAB. The committee also receives direction from the BHAB to research issues that come to the attention of the BHAB on matters related to the TAY population.

ACHIEVEMENTS

1. Increased the number of community partners who regularly participate in the committee meetings.
2. Increased employment opportunities for the TAY population through PathPoint and the Department of Rehabilitation.
3. Increased community outreach. Interface has increased its street outreach through Continuum of Care (CoC) funding. Pacific Clinics TAY Tunnel held open house events and participated in various health and wellness fairs. VCBH Logrando Bienestar outreached to the schools.
4. Provided regular updates on the work of the committee to the Behavioral Health Advisory Board.

2018-19 PRESENTATIONS

September 2018: September is Recovery Month, presented by Patrick Jeffries, Pacific Clinics

February 2019: Court-Appointed Special Advocate (CASA), presented by Teresa Romney and Michelle Morgan

April 2019: Screening, Triage, Assessment, Referral (STAR), presented by Julie Glantz and Ana Magbitang, VCBH

June 2019: TAY Rise Expansion, presented by Felicia Skaggs

CHALLENGES

1. Housing is the most important challenge.
2. There is a growing need to communicate with Indigenous-language speakers, whether Mixteco or Zapotec, especially in Oxnard.
3. Continue regular attendance from committee members.
4. Make an impact on helping people with legal issues
5. Increase the advocacy to the BHAB.
- 6.

OPPORTUNITIES

1. Request presentations from Mixteco/Indigena Community Organizing Project (MICOP) and the Oxnard Police Department Clergy Council.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Encourage the ongoing participation of agencies/staff working on housing issues.

2019-20 OBJECTIVES OF THE BHAB TAY COMMITTEE

1. Advocate for increased housing options for TAY.
2. Review the needs of the TAY population. Develop and prioritize strategies to address service needs for the TAY population relative to mental health and substance abuse treatment.
3. Encourage increased participation of community partners serving TAY in the BHAB TAY Committee meetings.
4. Develop approaches to increase community outreach, especially to underserved communities. Improve communication among parents, clients, agencies and the TAY Committee.
5. Engage TAY population membership on this committee.

TRANSITIONAL AGE YOUTH SURVEY

State Born:

- were born in CA
- born in another state outside of CA
- born outside the United States

Ethnicity:

Hispanic or Latino ____Yes ____No

Race: (may check more than one)

- Black/African American
- Native American or Alaskan Native
- Asian
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- White
- No Response

Gender Identity:

- Female
- Transgender, and identify as a girl or woman
- Not sure
- Male
- Transgender, and identify as a boy or man;
- Other
- No Response

Sexual Orientation:

- Gay or Lesbian
- Straight
- Bisexual
- Queer
- Questioning
- Other
- I don't know
- No Response

Has a doctor or health professional ever told you that you have a physical, mental, emotional, or developmental disability?

- Yes, explain__
- No
- No Response

Military Service

- Yes
- No
- No Response

Are you currently pregnant, or have you recently gotten someone else pregnant?

- Yes
- No
- Not Sure\Don't Know
- No Response

How many biological children do you have?

- 0 children
- 1 child
- 2 children
- More than 2
- No Response

How many of your children are currently living with you?

- 0 children living with them
- 1 child living with them
- 2 children living with them
- More than 2
- No Response

Housing Status and Stability:

Where did you stay last night?

- Stayed at the home of parent, guardian or foster parent;
- Stayed at the home of a friend or other relative's home - indoors, on a couch or in place meant for regular sleeping;
- Stayed at the home of a friend or other relative's home - outdoors or indoors in a place not meant for regular sleeping;
- Stayed in a group home;
- Stayed at the home of their partner, boyfriend, or girlfriend;
- Stayed with someone they did not know because they needed a place to stay;
- Stayed at a youth or adult shelter;
- Stayed at a transitional living program
- Stayed at a hotel/motel paid for by a government program or nonprofit organization;
- Stayed at a hotel/motel paid for by some other way;
- Stayed outdoors or in a public place, like a park, the street, a campground, a train or bus station, etc.;
- Stayed in an abandoned building or squatted;
- Stayed in a car, bus, or RV;
- Stayed somewhere else.

TRANSITIONAL AGE YOUTH SURVEY

How long have you been staying there?

- Staying there for days
- Staying there for weeks
- Staying there for months
- Staying there for years
- No Response

Do you think you can stay there for the next 14 days without being asked to leave?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know
- No Response

How long have you been without a home, or a regular place to stay?

- without a home or place to stay for days;
- without a home or place to stay for weeks;
- without a home or place to stay for months;
- without a home or place to stay for years
- No Response

Thinking about the past 3 years, how many different times have you been without a home, or a regular place to stay?

- 0 times
- 1-3 times
- 4-10 times
- 11-50 times
- No Response

Please indicate if any of these have happened to you:

- Ran away/kicked out from my family home.
- Ran away/kicked out from a group home or foster home.
- Violence at home between family members.
- Difference with parents about religious beliefs.
- Left home because of some other reason

Education

Highest grade completed? 8th grade or less

- 9th to 11th grade
- 12th grade (diploma)
- GED certificate
- Some college
- Associate's degree;
- Bachelor's degree;
- Post-secondary training _____
- No Response

Are you currently attending or enrolled in school?

- Yes
- No
- No Response

Employment (have a job, paid internship, or other type of employment)

- Yes
- No
- No Response

Have you ever been in foster care?

- Yes
- No
- Not Sure
- No Response

Justice System Involvement

- Yes
- No
- Not Sure
- No Response

Are you currently accessing any services in the community? If not please check the reasons that apply

- Lack of transportation.
- Did not have I.D./personal documents.
- Did not know where to go for help.
- Did not qualify for services.
- Placed on a wait list and never heard back.
- Did not follow through or return for services
- Language barrier.
- Felt uncomfortable.
- Some other reason.
- Have not experienced any issues

What is your most current need?

COUNTY OF VENTURA – BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD
ACTION PLAN - TAY Committee
 As of 7/26/19

OBJECTIVE TITLE: Advocate for increased housing options for Transitional Age Youth.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE: _____

KEY INDICATORS: 1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____

ACCOUNTABILITY: Cathi Nye

TARGET COMPLETION DATE: 6/25/20

	ACTION STEPS	START DATE	COMPLETION DATE	ACCOUNTABILITY	ACTION STEP		STATUS
					ON TARGET	DELAYED*	
1.	Connect with the Continuum of Care.			Cathi Nye			
2.	A. Create a survey for TAY clients who are not VCBH clients regarding their housing needs. B. TAY Tunnel and Vista Real Charter High School will administer the survey.			Cathi Nye, Anthony Marron, Lorena Güereca			
3.	Collect data on the housing needs of the TAY and the housing options available. Review at the October 24, 2019 meeting.						
4.	Identify gaps in housing for TAY.						
5.	Create strategies to advocate for the gaps in housing for TAY.						

*Explain project delays in status column, revise target dates as required, and state actions required to overcome/remove obstacle(s).



Interface's Runaway & Homeless Youth Shelter Now Open Serving Ventura County Youth

The Runaway and Homeless Youth Shelter is a short-term shelter that provides emergency care to runaway and homeless youth not already receiving services from the child welfare or juvenile justice systems. The shelter supports minors who need help navigating their way back to a safe and secure home. We seek to reunite young people with their families, whenever possible, or to locate appropriate alternative placements.

Expectations of Youth:

- Participate in Case Management, Family Mediation, and Counseling Sessions
- Must attend school or have an alternative education plan
- Participate in individualized activities

Program Services:

- Basic Needs Support (food, hygiene items, clothing, and transportation)
- Temporary Shelter for Maximum of 21 Days
- Crisis Intervention
- Counseling / Family Mediation
- Case Management and Aftercare Services

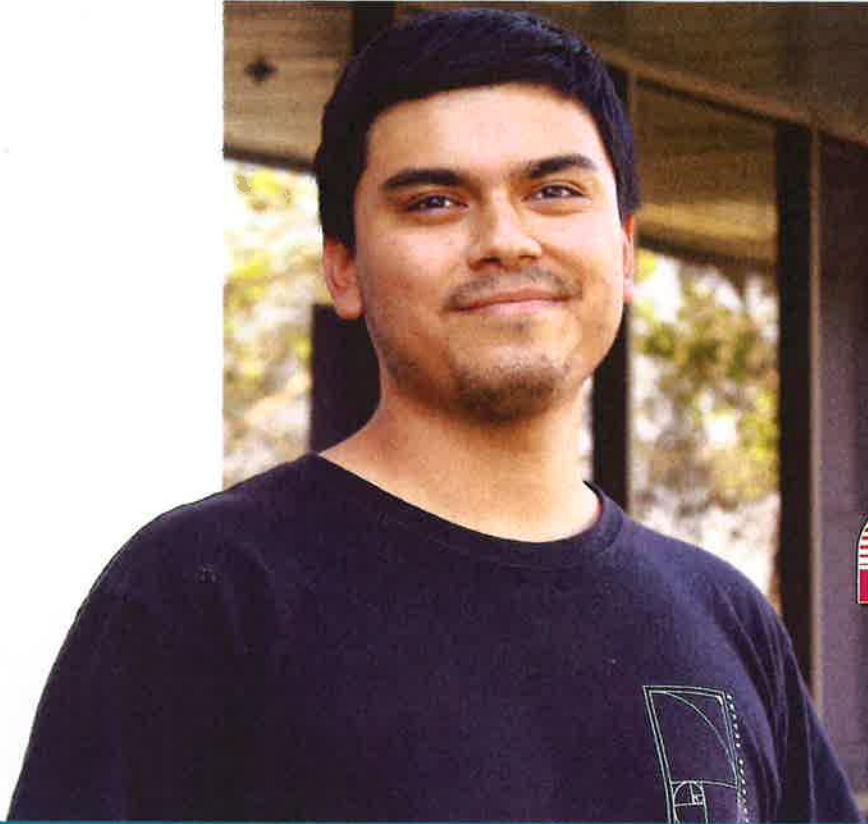
Eligibility Guidelines:

- Youth must be a runaway, homeless, or at risk of homelessness
- Youth must be between the ages of 12-17
- Youth must agree to shelter and program services and guidelines
- Youth is not a danger to self or others
- Youth cannot be on formal probation or a ward of the State

For More Details Contact:

General Information and Referrals

Call Our Youth Crisis Line: **(805) 469-5882**



“They’ve helped me get a place to live, with clothing and food, and to go to school. They support you. They don’t judge you and that’s one of the biggest things that’s helped.”
 — Brandon



Pacific Clinics
 ADVANCING BEHAVIORAL HEALTHCARE

TAY TUNNEL WALK-IN CENTER

For Teens and Young Adults (ages 18-25)

Pacific Clinics’ TAY Tunnel empowers individuals to take an active role in creating positive lifestyle changes within a supportive, safe and understanding environment. By creating stepping stones to independent living, we can all light the path to happier and healthier lives.

Everything we offer is completely free and we are open 6 days a week. Walk-ins always welcome. Our services include:

PERSONAL NEEDS AND CARE:

- Clothing
- Showers
- Laundry facilities
- Recreational area
- Computer center

JOB OPPORTUNITIES:

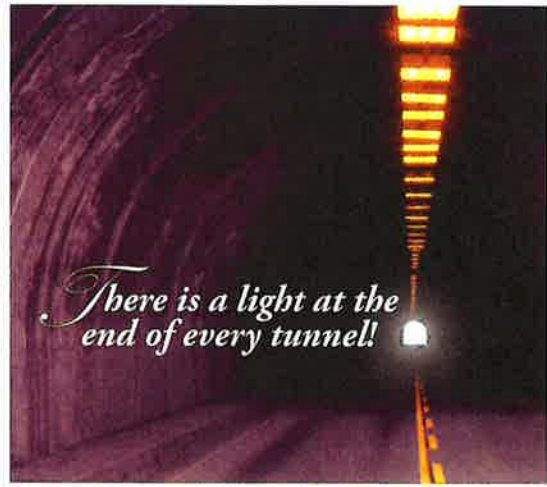
- Job search
- Job preparation
- Employment Specialists

CENTER CLASSES:

- Creative Expression
- Nutritional Health
- Positive interactions
- TAY Spectrum
- Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP)

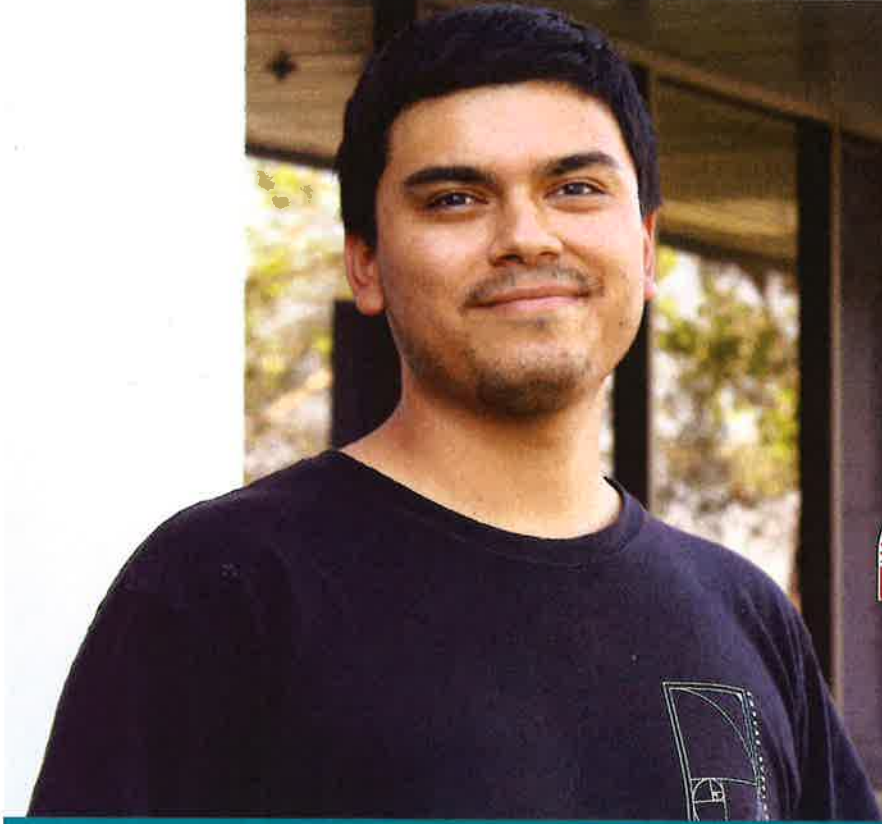
SUPPORTIVE HELP:

- Access to food pantries
- Transportation services
- Housing resources
- Medi-Cal/SSI application
- Healthcare linkage
- Safe Zone for LGBTQ+
- Group outings



Walk-ins welcome! Monday-Friday 9:00am-5:30pm, Saturday 10:00am-3:00pm
 Please give us a call to learn more, for transportation needs, or to confirm hours.
TAY Tunnel | 141 West Fifth Street, Suite D, Oxnard, CA 93030 | (805) 240-2538

STAY CONNECTED
 **@taytunnel**



“Me han ayudado a conseguir un lugar para vivir, ropa, comida, e ir a la escuela. Ellos te apoyan y no te juzgan. Esas son las mejores maneras en que pueden apoyarte.”

— Brandon



Pacific Clinics
ADVANCING BEHAVIORAL HEALTHCARE

TAY TUNNEL WALK-IN CENTER

Para adolescentes y adultos jóvenes (edades 18-25)

Pacific Clinics' TAY Tunnel inspira a los jóvenes a ser activos en la creación de cambios positivos en sus vidas en un lugar que brinda apoyo, seguridad y amabilidad. Mostrando los pasos hacia una vida independiente, todos podemos iluminar el camino hacia vidas más felices y sanas.

Todo lo que ofrecemos es completamente gratis y estamos abiertos 6 días a la semana. No se requiere cita. Nuestros servicios incluyen:

NECESIDADES Y CUIDADO PERSONALES:

- Ropa
- Duchas
- Lavandería
- Área recreativa
- Centro de computación

CLASES:

- Expresión creativa
- Salud nutricional
- Interacciones positivas
- TAY Spectrum
- Plan de acción de recuperación de bienestar (WRAP)

OPORTUNIDADES PARA EL EMPLEO:

- Búsqueda de trabajo
- Preparación del trabajo
- Especialistas de empleo

AYUDA DE APOYO:

- Acceso a despensas de alimentos
- Servicios de transporte
- Recursos de vivienda
- Aplicación para Medi-Cal/SSI
- Vinculación de la salud médica
- Zona segura para LGBTQ+
- Salidas en grupo



¡Bienvenidos sin cita! Estamos abierto lunes a viernes de 9:00 am a 5:30 pm y sábados de 10:00 am a 3:00 pm. Llámenos para obtener más información, para necesidades de transporte o para confirmar horarios.

TAY Tunnel | 141 West Fifth Street, Suite D, Oxnard, CA 93030 | (805) 240-2538

¡Conectate!

 **@taytunnel**

La financiación para TAY Tunnel proviene, en parte, del Departamento de Salud Conductual del Condado de Ventura a través de la Ley de Servicios de Salud Mental de California.



PLANTING HOPE

Nursery jobs aid healing from mental illness

BY KIM LAMB GREGORY // PHOTOS BY KAREN QUINCY LOBERG

Maricel Martindale walks along wooden tables holding neat rows of potted plants, one hand brushing the tops of the leaves.

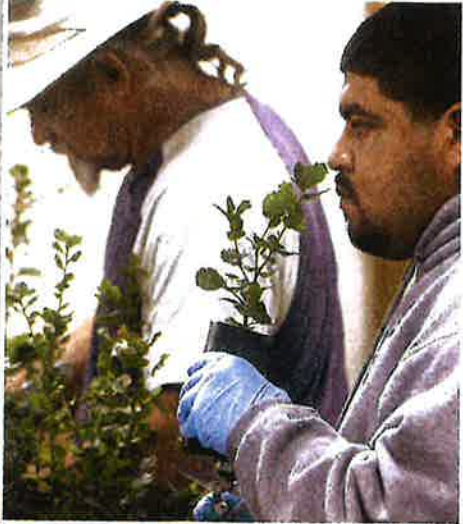
"These are all my babies," she said.

Martindale, 38, recently earned employee status at Growing Works, a nonprofit wholesale nursery in Camarillo that offers 316 varieties of drought-tolerant landscape plants.

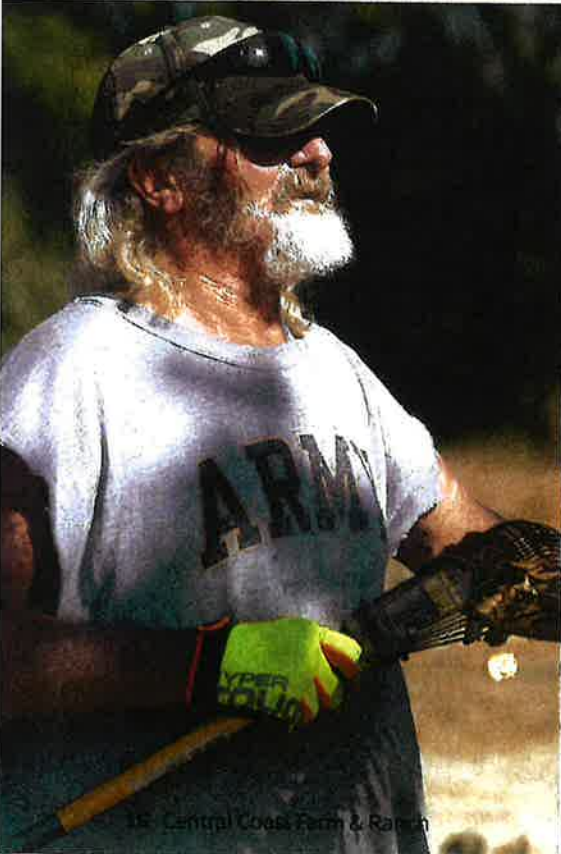
Growing Works also harvests healing through a vocational training program for people with mental-health challenges who are receiving services from Ventura County Behavioral Health.

"The premise behind Growing Works is to give those who have experienced mental illness the opportunity to have access to employment," said Executive Director Jason Meek of Turning Point Foundation, which operates the nursery. "So people can gain employment skills in an environment that is safe and conducive to recovery."

Continued



LEFT Dennis Perry and Maricel Martindale test the quality of water used to grow young oaks at Growing Works in Camarillo. The saplings will be planted at the memorial for victims of the mass shooting at the Borderline Bar & Grill in Thousand Oaks. **ABOVE** Tom Hayduk and Jorge Lagunas, holding the plant to his nose, inspect oak saplings. **BELOW LEFT** Michael Moore rakes garden debris on an early November day at the nursery. **BELOW** Jorge Lagunas wheels flats of succulents across the grounds. **OPPOSITE PAGE** Growing Works employee Maricel Martindale enjoys the hands-on nature of plant nursery work.



Planting hope

Continued from page 17

Ventura County District 2 Supervisor Linda Parks seeded the project, which began in July 2018 and has since served 78 individuals.

“It is performing even better than we had thought,” Parks said. “We have a lot of participants who are now getting paychecks.”

“... A lot of the nonprofits provide for basic needs, but what this organization offers is an opportunity for people to feel valued. Something beyond survival. It’s essential for all of us to feel useful.”

David Martinez
Marz Farms

Plants are sold to landscape companies, retailers and nonprofit gardens such as the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden, Ventura Botanical Gardens and the Theodore Payne Foundation in Sun Valley.

Seven years in the making

A similar program in San Luis Obispo County impressed Parks, and she wanted to use it as a model for Ventura County. After seven years of waiting for the stars to align, she found the perfect spot — county-owned land on Lewis Road in Camarillo, donated by the state when Camarillo State Hospital closed.

Parks called Meek, who was enthusiastic. “It couldn’t have worked better in terms of having both the human capital to do the project and the actual land,” Meek said.

Somis rancher David Martinez of Marz Farms owns property behind the almost nine acres earmarked for Growing Works, so Parks gave a courtesy call to Martinez to let him know about the

development that would be taking place next to his land. Martinez assured her it would not affect his farming operations as he no longer used the land and, in fact, would donate \$40,000 for fencing.

"I thought the vision behind it was great," Martinez said. "I think a lot of the nonprofits provide for basic needs, but what this organization offers is an opportunity for people to feel valued. Something beyond survival. It's essential for all of us to feel useful."

The Growing Works journey begins with "supported employment" for individuals who perform 24 months of volunteer gardening along with group and individual therapy, according to Growing Works Project Manager Mark Schumacher.

"As you earn hours as a volunteer, you move forward in the program and eventually can become an employee," he said.

Martindale is thrilled to have graduated to employee status.

"I was isolated for a long time. I'd say about 10 years. I was in a rough relationship," said Martindale, who manages her anxiety and depression. "Being in the program taught me how to work with people again — how to socialize."

Ron Quasebarth, 60, joined the program three months ago after doing prison time in 2003, experiencing homelessness, mental illness and substance abuse.

"I was pretty strung out," Quasebarth said. "I rode a bicycle all the way here from San Francisco. I had no food, no money. ... I almost died."

He was admitted to the county's Crisis Residential Treatment program and then went to Turning Point.

The camaraderie, the understanding when he has what he calls "episodes" and working with plants placed him on the path to wellness.

'Positive endorphins'

"You're getting Vitamin D, you're outside, you're working in the sun, you're exerting yourself and getting positive endorphins," Meek said. "From a clinical perspective, you're focusing on a task that is not overly complex. You're in the moment, concentrating on something that is going to grow and bring oxygen and smell beautiful."

"Plants are inherently a hopeful thing," said Nursery Manager Jenn Rodriguez. "A seed is just a little bit of dust, and from that you get a plant that smells good and blooms."

Parks and Meek have plans for Growing Works. Both want to include more military veterans who may be suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder. Meek also would like to involve members of the Mixteco community.

Rodriguez has a wish list of about 400 plants, and as the nursery expands, it will need equipment and tools, if farmers can spare them.

Parks said she also hopes the agricultural community will consider hiring people trained through Growing Works, so they can truly grow into all they were meant to be.

"We have a lot of miracles here," Schumacher said.

Kim Lamb Gregory, a communication specialist at Cal State Channel Islands, is a veteran print and broadcast journalist.

To donate to Growing Works, email Suki Sir at ssir@turningpoint.org.