



MHTTCs provide technical assistance across mental health prevention, treatment, and recovery supports. In addition, each Center has an Area of Focus for which they serve as experts, develop national products, and host a webpage. This summary highlights our Area of Focus throughout this grant cycle.

The Pacific Southwest MHTTC serves the priorities of SAMHSA Region 9 states and territories, including: Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, and U.S. Pacific Islands of American Samoa, Guam, Marshall Islands, Northern Mariana Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, and Palau. We offer a collaborative MHTTC model to provide training, technical assistance (TA), and resource dissemination that supports the mental health workforce to adopt and effectively implement evidence-based practices (EBPs) across the mental health continuum of care. The Pacific Southwest MHTTC also provides TTA and resources at a national level in a specialty area focused on youth and young adults of transition age.

YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS OF TRANSITIONAL AGE

Youth and young adults (YYA) of transition age (16-25 years of age) are an important population of focus for mental health services and supports. This developmental period involves significant changes, new responsibilities, and decision-making related to school, career, family, personal relationships, finances, and other areas of life. For YYA who experience (or are at risk for) serious mental illness, the transition to adulthood presents unique risks and difficulties that can impact lifelong outcomes.

One of the risks of the transition age is that it coincides with the age of onset for most mental and behavioral health challenges. Most mental health challenges emerge in the late teens to early 20s, with roughly 75% of mental health challenges beginning by the early 20s. Serious mental illness, or diagnosable mental health challenges that substantially interfere with or limit major life activities, are more prevalent during the transition age than at any other period. Recent National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) data show increasing rates of SMI, major depression, and suicidality for YYA of transition age.

Young adulthood also involves the transition from child-serving systems (foster care, juvenile justice, special education, pediatric care, etc.) to adult-serving systems. Eligibility requirements vary across programs, with youth services terminating at ages ranging from 16 to 22, and usually do not take into account the developmental needs and strengths of the specific YYA who receive services. Rather than a streamlined system of care, many YYA experience a series of transition tunnels and cliffs that can lead to their falling through the cracks between systems.

WHAT WE'VE DONE

Over the four years of funding, PS MHTTC has delivered a variety of multimodal, innovative, and evidence-based resources, distance learning, and training opportunities. These tools have supported youth and young adults with or at risk for serious mental illness; youth and young adults in the peer support workforce; and agencies that serve youth and young adults. Across all audiences, our learning opportunities have built the capacity of individuals and organizations to create trauma-informed, developmentally and culturally appropriate practices, interventions, and policies. A sample of our offerings for youth and youth-serving organizations are summarized below, including clinical strategies, leadership trainings, peer support resources, and best and promising practices.

Expressive Arts Therapy: Trauma-Informed

This recorded training offers tools from Expressive Arts Therapy for working with youth and young (YYA) adults. Presenter Suraya Keating, MFT, REAT, RDT, discusses multimodal arts practices that can be used to soothe the nervous system; promote self-awareness; and support the agency, empowerment, and well-being of YYA. Simple interventions using visual arts, visualization, movement, creative writing, music, and theater are introduced as embodied alternatives to talk therapy.

Trauma Informed Youth Peer Support: An Essential Tool for Supporting Youth

The Trauma Informed Youth Peer Support workshop recording walks participants through the foundations of trauma-informed care, including its principles and philosophy, why trauma-informed care is important, and strategies for incorporating trauma-informed practices throughout youth peer support services. The audience for this recording includes mental health professionals, administrators, researchers, educators, peers and others.

UNITE: A Youth Peer Summit

The PS MHTTC partnered with Youth MOVE National for a Youth Peer Summit on April 29-30, 2021. This 1.5-day virtual event for youth peer providers featured professional development opportunities and organized networking sessions. Workshops addressed topics including ethics and boundaries, trauma-informed youth peer support, and self-care. The Summit enhanced tangible skills of attendees in order to better support youth and young adults experiencing mental health challenges.

WHAT WE'VE DONE (CONTINUED)

Youth Advocate Leadership Academy, National Cohort

The National Cohort of the Youth Advocate Leadership Academy (YALA) was a YYA leadership training focused on skills for creating positive change. The training included a copy of PS MHTTC/ Youth MOVE's leadership curriculum and four online training sessions, designed to create a peer-led environment. The facilitators blended experiential learning with peer facilitated group discussions and activities. All YYA aged 14-29 with passion for mental health, and lived experience in a youth-serving system, were encouraged to apply.

Youth and Young Adult Mental Health Resources 2019

Youth and young adults (YYA) of transition age (16-25 years of age) are an important population of focus for mental health services and supports. The resources provided in this document are intended to assist a wide array of stakeholders involved in creating better outcomes for YYA with mental health challenges and serious mental illness. These resources uphold the research-based concept that systems and services should be youth driven, developmentally and culturally appropriate, and trauma informed.

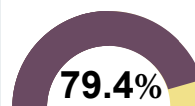
Youth and Young Adults: Focus on Self Care

Self-care is a critical tool to maintain our wellness and work-life balance. Even under normal circumstances, it can be difficult to prioritize self-care. But now, more than ever, it's important for systems-involved youth and the mental health field to pause and be intentional about addressing physical, emotional, spiritual, and relational needs. Self-care looks a little bit different for everyone, and in this new reality of physical distancing and social isolation, we may need to reassess our wellness strategies. This self care tip sheet includes resources and planning templates that may help youth consider new ways of taking care of themselves.

OUTCOMES

The PS MHTTC is proud of the impact our YYA work has had at the local, state, regional, and national levels. We approached the initial design of this project knowing that much of our Center's expertise in mental health centers work with youth and young adults, as well as the agencies and systems that support them. We also recognized it as a field priority. From the beginning, we heard regularly from our stakeholders that this work was vital in terms of both its absolute value and the capacity-building needs of the field. The regular needs assessments we collected for this project asked respondents to identify their primary areas of interest. Our most recent survey resulted in nearly 80% of respondents identifying "engaging youth and young adults" as one of their top priorities. This finding is consistent across project years.

Since the first project year, PS MHTTC has offered 54 events related to youth and young adult mental health. This included quarterly communities of practice that facilitated ongoing dialogue between youth working as peer supporters; large distance learning events offering training in specific clinical interventions; and cohort-based, multi-day training events. In addition to our library of recorded and archived training events, the PS MHTTC also developed and disseminated 18 products related to YYA mental health.



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AREA OF
FOCUS



VOICES FROM THE FIELD

In this section, we provide representative quotes from each of the training activities highlighted in this document.

“

YALA National Cohort

“Learning my unique strengths and leadership style!”

Expressive Arts Therapy: Trauma- Informed Tools for Youth and Young Adults

“100% of the material are very useful in supporting the work that I do with kids.”

“It was particularly important to recognize that healing comes in many forms and searching for MEANING is very powerful.”

UNITE: A Youth Peer Summit

“All of the different resources that were shared and placed in a spot we can go back to, not just the Zoom chat that goes away when the meeting ends.”

“I learned a lot of new activities to engage with youth.”

“Learning new language new names to call my clients when they identify as she/her, they/them, his/him”

Trauma Informed Youth Peer Support: An Essential Tool for Supporting Youth

“I like how the presenters focused on how events can have different impacts on different people.”

“I'm new to this work so it is helping me get an understanding.”

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QUESTIONS?

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<https://mhttcnetwork.org/centers/content/pacific-southwest-mhttc>

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