Florida Health Funders, an affinity group of Florida Philanthropic Network, has prepared this document to share the behavioral health efforts of some of its members. The goal is to provide examples of tangible actions funders can take to address behavioral health issues. Behavioral health is a term that encompasses both mental illness and substance use disorders and that includes promoting well-being through prevention or intervention. Many foundations use definitions that reference emotional, psychological, and social well-being. In short, much like physical health, the topic is broad.

Florida Blue Foundation, Gulf Coast Community Foundation, and Space Coast Health Foundation all agreed to share examples of their work. Notable is that all three funders focus on partnerships—often with non-traditional partners—as a key strategy, as well as innovative approaches.

Florida Blue Foundation: Investing in Innovation

Florida Blue Foundation has invested—and will continue to invest—in a wide range of behavioral health efforts with two goals. First, to create synergy with Florida Blue by developing complementary programming and second, to identify innovative solutions at the community level. Examples include:

- **SPECIAL INITIATIVE ON OPIODS & SUBSTANCE ABUSE**
  This project provides services to overdose survivors, including peer recovery services, rehabilitative yoga, outpatient treatment, and residential treatment. The project has built system capacity by developing Peer Recovery Specialists, training yoga instructors, and training practitioners in SBIRT (a screening tool). At six months, readmission rates among those served were 31%, compared to an estimated 70-80% for those not served.

- **EARLY LEARNING COALITION OF ORANGE COUNTY GRANT**
  This grant will enhance mental health supports in early childhood programs. The project will provide early childhood teachers and childcare providers evidence-based mental health supports to improve workplace wellness, leading to better outcomes for the early childhood staff and the children and families they serve.

- **FLAGLER HEALTH CARE FOUNDATION, INC. GRANT**
  This grant will provide text-based counseling services to almost 3,000 youth in partnership with Crisis Text Line. Texters are connected to live, trained Crisis Counselors who deescalate the situation, link the texter to Flagler Health+ Care Connect, connect them to school resources and community providers, and schedule follow-up care.

**Gulf Coast Community Foundation: A Systems Approach**

Gulf Coast Community Foundation approached behavioral health by posing the question: what is the most impactful way to intervene? In order to answer that question, in partnership with Charles & Margery Barancik Foundation, Gulf Coast commissioned a research scan of mental health services in Sarasota County for young people up to age 24. After reviewing the findings with key community stakeholders, recommendations were made to effectively transform the system of care, resulting in Here4Youth (www.here4youth.com/).

Charles & Margery Barancik Foundation and Gulf Coast Community Foundation convened the process and are providing technical resources and support while the Sarasota County Department of Health and Central Florida Behavioral Health Network are partners in oversight and planning. The Behavioral Health Stakeholders Consortium provides input into plans and products. A core planning group of service users and service providers meets to establish direction, coordinate activities, and review progress. Six work teams, including members from the core planning group and additional stakeholders, make specific recommendations for systems change. The work continues to evolve as the Foundation continues to convene and research.

---

### How common is heavy or binge drinking among Florida adults?*

<p>| | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>All adults</strong></td>
<td><strong>17%</strong></td>
<td><strong>19%</strong></td>
<td><strong>16%</strong></td>
<td><strong>13%</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Hispanic whites</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Hispanic blacks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Florida children who have experienced a major depressive episode

**11%**

**30%**

Share who have received treatment

---
The Foundation’s approach is to promote wellness and mental health not by focusing on funding a list of programs but by ensuring that people’s needs are met early, often, and holistically. Jennifer Johnston, Senior Community Investment Officer, notes that behavioral health is a thread that runs through many conversations staff of the Foundation have, whether those conversations are with law enforcement, schools, or providers. For foundations wishing to get started in this area, she has two recommendations 1) convene non-traditional partners and 2) harness the capacity of existing experts and leaders in your region.

**Space Coast Health Foundation: Convening and Partnering**

Space Coast Health Foundation is known for its innovative behavioral health programming and for its wide range of partners in these efforts, including the school system, government, outpatient and inpatient providers, 2-1-1, higher education, law enforcement, and criminal justice. Three examples that highlight partners, innovation, or both:

- **THE MEET AND GREET**
  For the last four years, the Behavioral Health Task Force met monthly. However, the group recognized that there were more stakeholders to bring to the table and more collaboration that could occur. One strategy? The Meet and Greet. The Task Force created a list of behavioral health stakeholders and the Foundation extended an invitation; attendance almost doubled between the first and second event. The goal is simple: provide a place to build relationships as a first step in collaboration. The effort has already sparked conversations, new collaboration, and brought new people to the table.

- **MULTI-SECTOR PLANNING GRANT**
  The Foundation is a partner on a multi-sector planning grant to develop strategies to improve the accessibility and effectiveness of treatment services for adults who have a mental illness, substance use disorders, or co-occurring disorders, and who are in, or at risk of entering, the criminal justice system.

  Root causes of substance abuse often include co-occurring mental health issues and exposure to adverse childhood events. The National Council for Behavioral Health reports that over 90% of clients in public behavioral health have experienced trauma and that trauma is a risk factor for nearly all behavioral health and substance use disorders.

- **TRANSPORTATION ASSISTANCE**
  The Foundation invested in a transportation pilot which is just ending its first year. By listening to partners, the Foundation found that extra-long bus rides, missed buses, and automobile breakdowns were keeping clients from keeping appointments. The Foundation contracted with Circulation which uses Uber or Lyft to provide rides to appointments. If clients are having trouble making appointments, they are offered the service at registration. Since implementation of the pilot, there has been a reduction in missed appointments. Now that the pilot is ending its first year, the Foundation will be analyzing outcomes such as course of treatment and recidivism.

  Johnette Gindling, President/CEO of Space Coast Health Foundation, suggests as a first step that foundations convene behavioral health providers, consumers, and/or advocacy groups to learn what is happening in their community and where there are gaps. Funders should build from that starting point as each community has very different resources and assets. Michael Corley, consultant to the Foundation, notes that creating a collaborative must be an intentional process where the organizers don’t arrive “with the answer” and truly desire to create trust and input over a period of time from those participating. This is usually a slower but deeper process. Throughout, however, there should be specific actions taken to keep the participants engaged and allow them to recognize that their participation has resulted in a tangible accomplishment.

**Next Steps**

Funders interested in learning more should plan to attend the in-person affinity group meeting at FPN's 2020 Statewide Summit on Philanthropy. One agenda item will focus on shared learning around behavioral health. The meeting will take place from 3:15 to 4:45 pm ET on February 12, 2020, the first day of the three-day summit.