

RGS Partners Consulting Issue Brief

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## **Mental Health Grantmaking Opportunities**

Calls to suicide hotlines increased during and after the pandemic. Fallout from isolation and remote learning continues among teens and young adults. Substance abuse rates have increased for specific cohorts of adults.

The following are a few points for donors and foundations considering supporting critical programs to enhance and promote mental health.

### **Key Considerations**

#### Mental Health Professionals

Individuals with mental illness struggle to find mental health care. Nearly half of the 60 million adults and children living with mental health conditions in the United States go without any treatment. People who seek treatment must navigate a fragmented and costly system full of obstacles. As a result, many people cannot access mental health care when they need it most.

#### Health Factors

Nurture community conditions that we can change to improve health and opportunity, such as access to quality education, living wage jobs, quality clinical care, nutritious foods, green spaces, and secure and affordable housing.

#### Access and Service

Having sufficient healthcare access helps individuals proactively manage their health challenges, leading to positive long-term health outcomes.

#### Teens and Adults

Since mental health conditions typically begin during childhood, adolescence or young adulthood, the ability to identify and support young people who are experiencing mental health symptoms is an opportunity to help.

## **Solutions**

### Education

Locate synergistic opportunities to combine health and education focus areas.

- School-based training targeting teens in the art of behavioral health intervention.
- Build educational supports and curriculum in schools that lead to a Behavioral Health Technician certification opportunity.

### Technology

Geographically dense nature of the county, promote the use of telehealth services. Fund non-profits to purchase equipment and training for professionals to use in delivering services.

### Peers

Utilize peers to support those experiencing mental illness.

- Peer training can form the basis of an organization's program approach to promoting access to mental health services.

### Integrated Care

- Primary Care offices are the first point of entry into the health care system for mentally challenged individuals. Integrate mental and behavioral health care supports on-site in Primary Care offices and clinics.