**BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD (BHAB) ACTION ITEM**
**MARCH 5, 2026**

**RECEIVE THE UPDATE ON CREATING A CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND TRANSITION AGE YOUTH BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CONTINUUM FRAMEWORK FOR SAN DIEGO COUNTY; AUTHORIZE COMPETITIVE PROCUREMENTS FOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES (DISTRICTS: ALL)**

In order to address the public health crisis of declining mental health among our youth, the San Diego County Board of Supervisors (Board) approved actions on September 24, 2024 (12) to create a behavioral health continuum framework for children, youth, and transition age youth (TAY) to promote resiliency and well-being amidst increasing challenges of anxiety, depression, bullying, suicide risk, and social media influences. Using national and local data, including input from key stakeholders, this framework seeks to expand access, improve engagement, and achieve ideal capacity across the youth continuum of care. Additional actions included a report back in six months with an outline of strategies, and a return back in 18 months with a final report.

In response to the six-month direction, Behavioral Health Services (BHS) presented a memorandum to the Board on March 24, 2025, outlining strategies tailored to the distinct needs of youth and introduced the Youth Optimal Care Pathways (Youth OCP) model which informs future capacity needed to best serve children, youth, and TAY. Building upon the work and recommendations of community leaders and informed by department engagement activities, the Youth OCP model reflects community priorities and aligns with recent policy changes under the Behavioral Health Services Act. In response to the 18-month direction, today's update includes the findings from Youth OCP analytic modeling; immediate capacity building efforts currently underway to enhance and expand the continuum of services; and recommended strategies to expand access and improve engagement through family systems, school-based partnerships, and health care integration. In alignment with school-based partnership priorities, today's item also includes a request to issue competitive procurements for the School-Based Incredible Years and School-Based Skill Building Programs which provide early intervention and treatment services for youth.

These actions support the County of San Diego's vision of a just, sustainable, and resilient future for all, specifically the communities and populations that have been historically left behind, as well as our ongoing commitment to the regional *Live Well San Diego* vision of healthy, safe, and thriving communities. This will be accomplished by enhancing the behavioral health continuum of care for children, youth, and TAY throughout San Diego County.

**It is THEREFORE, staff's recommendation that BHAB supports the approval and authorization of the Youth Optimal Care Pathways (OCP) Framework Board Letter Draft.**